CHOCOLATE, POLITICS AND PEACE-BUILDING

An Ethnography of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia

Gwen Burnyeat

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Dedicated to my parents, Ruth Padel and Myles Burnyeat

Many human beings don't know how cacao is grown, where it's produced, who produces it, and the difficulties of producing it and putting it on the market. How it's grown, from harvesting the beans, preparing the soil, maintaining the trees, all the post-harvest work, from cutting the fruit to fermenting it, drying it, getting it to the storage facility; then how you manage the transport to Europe or the United States. We have a whole program for that, an internal coordination, there are the working groups, there is the steering committee, the accompaniment from the Internal Council for this whole process, and all the work to get the organic certification; it's a very long process. […] Cacao is an appealing product for human beings, for its taste and for everything cacao represents. I like to drink sweetened hot chocolate, in water, with panela sugar cane, or with sugar, sometimes with a little milk too, with bread […].
—J.E., member of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó

FOREWORD

'Victim' is the most commonly used word in the discussions about conflict and peace processes in Colombia. It emerged and spread especially after the passage of the Victims' Law,[1] the first instance in which the term was formally institutionalised. But this law drew on and recognised a social process that was already deeply rooted in Colombia—as well as in other parts of the world—in which hundreds of heterogeneous civil society organisations and individuals voiced their testimonies of experiences of violence, and clamoured for recognition and justice. 2008 was an especially pivotal year: multiple protests were held calling for the victims of the internal armed conflict to be recognised, and that year, the first attempt was made to pass a law in Congress to restore their rights (Jimeno 2010), though it was not until the 2011 Victims' Law that this was achieved. The newspapers described 2008 as "the year Colombia marched", as people took to the streets, principally in solidarity with victims of kidnapping, forced disappearance and forced displacement.

The previous year, individual protestors had already made public calls for recognition, and with the accompaniment of the media they attracted public attention, especially to the kidnap victims of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). The best known was a primary school teacher from Southern Colombia, Mr Moncayo, who walked 1158 kilometres from his home to the capital city, calling for his son to be freed. The son was a young policeman who had been held hostage by the FARC for ten years, after a guerrilla takeover of a communications station. He shared his captivity with hundreds of other soldiers and policemen. Moncayo begged the FARC to free him, or for the government to agree

to an exchange of prisoners with the guerrilla. He resorted to his long walk to draw attention, and others followed his example. He declared that these "invisible walkers" had to "become visible" (Moncayo 2009).

Visibility and solidarity were the goals of a multiplicity of different movements and organisations, from indigenous communities to women's groups, who set forth on protest marches. These mobilisations managed to position at the centre of the social stage the need for the active participation of those who identified themselves as victims of the armed conflict. This is why I have argued that the use of the category of 'victim' has been a form of affirming citizenship. The personal testimonies of the suffering of millions of people in the context of violence helped to construct a shared sense of injustice, created bonds of solidarity between very dissimilar sectors, and took to the cities what was seen as something which was happening to *others* in the Colombian countryside. The marches and the testimonials created what I call *emotional communities*, founded in an ethics of recognition, and capable of collective political action; and all this served as a foundation for the passage of the Victims' Law (Jimeno 2010).

From the mid-1980s to the present, the dynamic of the armed conflict was that of left-wing guerrillas fighting the Colombian army and the right-wing paramilitary armed groups. The inhabitants of the countryside, especially the most impoverished, were caught between multiple crossfires. They became objects of suspicion, first for one side then another; and they were utilised to establish territorial control, with each side punishing them for the actions of their opponents. Of the eight million victims registered in this period by the Victims' Unit (an entity administered by the Presidency of the Republic[2]), the vast majority are civilians, poor people from the countryside.

In those years of the mobilisation of the category of victims, around 2005, people relating their suffering clamoured in the public sphere with increasing volume, until real narratives of trauma began to take structure, in the sense described by Jeffrey Alexander (2012). They created stories which opened up new forms of identity and ways to position themselves in the social whole, and they began to reach wide audiences, who identified with their suffering and their demands for justice and reparations. By referring to themselves as 'victims', they evoked discursively their perpetrators, signalling a demand for them to be punished, and evoked their demands for truth, recognition, and compensation for their losses. They lost their fear of public exhibition, and unleashed their capacity for social action.

Within this process of the mounting clamour of the victims of the armed conflict, the case related by Gwen Burnyeat of the *campesino* community of San José de Apartadó stands out. This community is unusual within Colombian social movements for various reasons. They tend towards a distinctive identity trope, 'peace'. As Gwen would say, 'positive peace', the term she draws from Johan Galtung in peace studies, signalling not just the absence of violence, but the active construction of democracy and social justice. As well as calling themselves a *peace community*, they define themselves as 'neutral', which for them means rejecting all armed presence. This definition is an open challenge to the polarisation inherent in the conflict, and, of course, defies the legitimacy of Colombian state's monopoly of force and use of violence: "Our resistance is against the state, let us be clear, but an unarmed resistance; a civilian resistance", declared Luis Eduardo Guerra, shortly before being assassinated in the 2005 massacre (p. 127).

This narrative, however, seems to contain great ambiguity. While they reject the legitimacy of the state's monopoly of force and declare themselves against it, they also ask the state to respect the constitution and their rights, and to offer them public services. But rather than political rhetoric, this means, as Burnyeat's work shows, that a hostility is maintained between this group of *campesino* farmers and the state institutions, which sometimes turns bloody. The rejection of the army and the police is part of a cycle, fed by the actions of aggression that the armed forces commit, including the critical case of the 2005 massacre, carried out by the army and paramilitaries. The Peace Community affirms that this cycle led them to their position of 'rupture' with the state.

Their declaration of 'neutrality' in the face of the armed conflict in 1997 was unacceptable for state entities, because it signified to them putting the insurgency on a par with the state armed forces, and not recognising their sovereignty over specific zones of national territory.[3] But from 2005, the Community's narrative of 'rupture' with the state—what Gwen calls the 'radical narrative'—grows stronger. The reiterated experiences of persecution and attacks fuel a profound mutual distrust. One of the community leaders cited in this book says, "The Armed Forces say that they are here to protect the civilian population. But what we have seen is the opposite" (p. 140). Because of this 'rupture', unlike other contemporary victims' movements and organisations in Colombia, the Peace Community does not enter into the multiple sorts of dialogues, claims and transactions which have abounded over the past decade in the country. Instead, they

create a distinctive narrative of anti-state vindication, in which the politics and the community organisation are wrapped in the desire to have peace; and, as this book argues, they understand 'peace' as a construction in the present and in the quotidian.

Gwen's ethnography is based on a transition, from her role as an international human rights observer between 2011 and 2013 for *Peace Brigades International*, to situating herself as an anthropologist observer. She cultivates an already sown trust, but takes on the effort of an analytic re-seeing of the community's way of life and their historical accounts of conformation and development. In this way, she is able to transform her friendship with J.E., one of the leaders, into a source that seeks to respond to the question: what does it mean to this group of roughly a thousand people, refugees from the conflict in the Colombian north-west, to establish a 'resistance' community? Gwen works from the otherness that she embodies to approach the intimacy of what it means to them to call themselves a *Peace Community*. She explores the local narrative that proclaims the aim of creating "a new world where we will be respected and we can live in dignity" (p. 131), and describes the centrality of the production of cacao in their project of re-establishing themselves as they return stubbornly to their land after being violently displaced.

This goal of building a 'new world' contains the radical charge of those who have suffered persecution and aspire to obtain justice, but who do not tolerate the actors of the present. Gwen Burnyeat proposes her interpretation according to which this diffuse and idealistic political goal intertwines with the quotidian practice of farming cacao, and doing collective work. To describe this, she uses the category of 'organic narrative', because, she says, the production of organic cacao has political meaning. For the members of the Peace Community, the political ideal is symbolised in the way that they rescue the cacao trees from the weeds and abandonment in which they were left when the Community was forcibly displaced in the 1990s, restoring their productivity, and making them again the foundation of their economic sustenance. The cacao is also the basis of the bonds of solidarity between Community members, and the breath of a new, careful organisation, which begins in the cacao plantations, continues in the transformation from the bean into chocolate, and endures until the product and the organisation become inserted in new global markets, unfolding into political lobby. The category of 'organic narrative', and the parallels Burnyeat establishes between types of action on different scales—between the productive quotidian, the scale of ideals and the level of politics—make important contributions to the anthropology of social

movements. This theoretical framing enables us to overcome the rupture we too frequently make between the continuous flow which links the social micro with the social macro.

Peace is the symbolic cement of this community's narrative. It is problematic, for its aspiration to a superior ideal which spurns the commitments and the recognition of a state and its institutions, but also a source of inspiration which attracts global attention and broad solidarity among those who are critical of the social order. As is usually the case in constructions of radicalism, it frequently faces the contradiction between not accepting, and the social praxis this supposes. For this reason, though the Peace Community did send one of their leaders on one of the victims' delegations to the peace negotiating table in Havana between the government and FARC, they did so late, reluctantly, and did not continue to participate in follow-up spaces (Chap. 6 of the present book). But Gwen opts to value their capacity to overcome multiple violences, to create *community* and to absorb and make use of the radical narratives inspired by Marxism, which, as she explains, circulated with force among Latin American societies in the voice of Catholic priests, activists and left-wing organisations. And above all, she highlights the way in which this community is a living exercise in the ability to go beyond the radical rhetoric of denouncing atrocities, to the creation of forms of local democracy and dignity of life.

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Bogotá, Colombia

Notes

1. Law 1448 of 2011, "Which enacts measures of attention, assistance and comprehensive reparations for the victims of the armed conflict, as well as other dispositions".
2. The Unit for the Attention and Comprehensive Reparation to the Victims of Colombia is an institution created in January 2012 "with the purpose of complying with the Law of Victims and Land Restitution (Law 1448), with the purpose of creating measures of attention assistance and comprehensive reparations to the victims of the internal armed conflict", according to its title declaration.
3. This same conflict has occurred repeatedly within indigenous collective territories, especially in the south-west (in the department of Cauca), because these communities argue that the law gives them autonomy, and they can decide whether the armed forces can enter their reserves or not.

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Acknowledgements

Prologue: The Cacao Groves

I am sitting on the ground in a grove of cacao trees, on a steep mountain slope. The soil is moist, a multiplicity of wet leaves, twigs in different stages of decomposition, and thick black soil, home to a variety of insects that create all this decomposition and generate new life. Occasionally one of them goes up my muddy arms. Through the cacao trees, across a valley, I can see another peak of the Abibe mountain range. I'm sweating; the general sweat of the tropics, but also from the effort of going up and down the slopes. It's hot, but agreeably so. A drizzle of rain has just come and gone. Sweat, rain, and mud; my body feels different in the mountain, as if the earth were merged with my skin.

I can also smell wet dog: *Adivine*, 'Guess', J.E.'s dog, is keeping me company as I scoop the cacao beans out of their pods into a plastic bucket. His name is typical of J.E.'s dry humour. "What's your dog's name?" people ask. "Guess", he replies with a poker face. Guess is lying by my side among cacao leaves. Occasionally, he snaps at the flies and mosquitoes pestering him. I hear songs of various birds and the intermittent 'crack' of J.E.'s machete cutting the cacao from the branches, followed by the dry thud of a pod falling onto the ground.

Beside me is a pile of cacao pods which J.E has cut open. I prise them open into halves one by one, so they look just like the photograph on this front cover, and scoop the fruit into the bucket with my fingers. Inside are the beans, covered in white flesh, which has the texture and smell of *guanábana*, soursop. They are edible, but the *campesinos* say it is not healthy to eat too much fresh cacao. It tastes sweet, also like *guanábana*, but its flesh does not lend itself well to the bite; it is more like eating a

mamoncillo (Spanish lime), which you have to suck rather than chew. Some of the pods have the '*monilla*' disease, which turns the fruit brown and dry, tougher and more difficult to remove; I already have cuts under my fingernails. Another disease, '*escobabruja*', turns the fruit white and dusty.

The bucket is almost full. We have already filled two, and emptied them onto plantain leaves under a tree. At the end of the day, we will cover the fruit with more leaves and leave them a few days to heat up and ferment, then take them to a large wooden drying platform to expose them to the sun. Then the flesh, the '*mucílago*', will shrivel and dry leaving only the beans. My head aches, and I feel the diffuse tiredness of midday. My sense of reality is blurry, as if I were dreaming. I finish scooping out my pods, reach into the bucket and squeeze a handful of cacao. It is spongy, slippery and smooth. I wipe my hands on wet leaves, and look across the valley to the other side of the hill while I wait for J.E. to bring more pods.

The work of cacao production is always imperfect. Cacao trees are not sown in mechanical factory lines like the banana plantations down below in Apartadó. They are forest-like, richly full of life, dried leaves, ants, fungus, plantain crops and avocado trees here and there, even the odd pineapple. Each tree needs a tailored approach to get the pods down. Not all the beans end up in the bucket—a pod might fall into a deep ditch, or I might fail to scoop out all the fruit. But as you harvest, collect, scoop, ferment, dry, pack, and take them in bags to the storage facility, the beans and the kilos do add up. Periodically, the Community sends 25 tonne shipments of cacao to England, my own country, in Fair Trade labelled sacks, to 'ethical' multinational company, Lush Cosmetics.

It is my first field visit as an anthropologist. I have known the Community for two years, but only as part of their international protection. This is a conflict zone, and I was working for an NGO that accompanied the Community. Back then, I was always thinking, consciously or unconsciously, about my organisational mandate. It was a clearly defined role, I knew how I had to behave, and my role set the terms for how the Community members saw and related to me. But now I'm a researcher, I have the dizzying freedom to define my own 'mandate', and I am reflecting on what this transition means in terms of my relationship and positioning with the Community.

It was J.E. who opened the doors of the Community to me as an anthropologist. I look over to where he is, halfway up a tree, half hanging, half standing, stretching up to cut a cacao pod. He is dressed in jeans,

shirtless, wearing a *sombrero volteado*, the traditional hat of the Colombian countryside. He is 50-something, skinny, with non-symmetrical ears, one sticking out more than the other. He has a moustache and a contagious smile. Over the last two years, we have spent hours together, talking about capitalism, social mobilisation, multinationals, political strategies, the history of the Community and its internal dynamics, and ideologies. We have a shared language; we can talk to each other using abstract nouns but referring to specific things.

Since the Peace Community began to turn to international accompaniment as a strategy for protection and advocacy, they have been very clear that the international women who arrive there are not for romantic relationships. They know that such things could jeopardise their protection strategy. My position in the Community as international always prevailed over my being a woman. My friendship with J.E., which began with my previous role here, is based on a political closeness. With each of the Community members, I have a different relationship; a community, after all, is a multiplicity of people, and my interpretation of the Community as a whole has been formed by individual relationships. But it was my conversations with J.E. that made me realise that although many people have written about them over the years, something always got left out. The Peace Community is much more than neutrality, memory, victimisation and denouncements.

J.E. clambers down from his tree and comes towards me with his arms full of yellow pods. He slices them open, we scoop the beans out into the bucket and he helps me to carry it to our cacao deposit. We break for lunch. While we eat rice and beans prepared that morning, he tells me the history of the Balsamar Cooperative, and I begin to understand that to tell the Peace Community's story, I have to tell the story of their cacao production. Their cacao has a central role in their political history of declaring themselves neutral to the Colombian conflict and developing ethical principles of non-involvement in the midst of massacres, forced displacement and threats. More than that—the cacao production work *is* the Community. It is the primary means of interaction and cohesion between members, and sustains them physically, as their main cash crop; but also sustains their collective identity, reaffirmed by the practice of production. They produce cacao, while they produce the narratives of their lives, individually and as a collective.

Contents

Abbreviations

ACCU	*Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá*, *Campesino* Self-Defence Forces of Córdoba and Urabá
ATCC	*Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare*, Association of *Campesino* Workers of Carare
AUC	*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*, United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia
CAVIDA	*Comunidad de Autodeterminación, Vida y Dignidad*, Community of Self-determination, Life and Dignity
CD	*Centro Democrático*, Democratic Centre party
CIJP	*Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz*, Intercongregational Justice and Peace Commission; after 2002, *Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*, Interfaith Justice and Peace Commission
CINEP	*Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular*, Centre for Research and Popular Education
CJL	*Corporación Jurídica de Libertad*, Judicial Corporation for Freedom
Corpouraba	*Corporación de Desarrollo de Urabá*, Development Corporation of Urabá
CTI	*Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación*, Technical Investigation Agency of the Police
CUT	*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*, United Workers' Centre

DAS	*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad*, Administrative Department for Security
DPN	*Departamento de Planeación Nacional*, National Planning Department
ELN	*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, National Liberation Army
EPL	*Ejército Popular de Liberación*, Popular Liberation Army
FARC	*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
Fedecacao	*Federación Nacional de Cacaoteros de Colombia*, National Federation of Cacao-growers of Colombia
FOR	Fellowship of Reconciliation
IACHR	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
JAC	*Junta de Acción Comunal*, Junta of Communal Action
JUCO	*Juventud Comunista*, Communist Youth
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OIA	*Organización Indígena de Antioquia*, Indigenous Organisation of Antioquia
PBI	Peace Brigades International
PCC	*Partido Comunista Colombiano*, Colombian Communist Party
QC	Queen's Council
SIJIN	*Seccional de Policía Judicial e Investigación*, Legal and Investigation Section of the Police
SINTAGRO	*Sindicato de Trabajdores del Agro*, The Union of Agro Workers
SINTRABANANO	*Sindicato de Trabajadores del Banano*, The Union of Banana Workers
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UP	*Unión Patriótica*, Patriotic Union party

Introduction: The Chocolate-Politics Continuum

In the social world of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, chocolate does not exist without politics, or vice versa. The two things mutually reflect each other. Speaking of one necessarily means referring to the other, like gold and cocaine for Taussig (2004), who explores Colombian reality through these two substances, whose materialities, with quasi-mythological qualities, give him tangible centres to explore what orbits around them. This is not as straightforward as tracing the cultural biography (Kopytoff 1986) or the social life of things (Appadurai 1986). Taussig traces outwards from his double centre. This book spins a similar analytical web, centred on the relationship between chocolate and politics.

Like Taussig's gold and cocaine, one half of my pair, chocolate, is also a material substance, which possesses considerable symbolic capital. Its production process is complex, unknown to most city dwellers (like myself, before I was given a machete to hold and learn to use), even alchemical in its different stages of harvest, fermentation, drying, toasting, de-husking, grinding and refrigeration. It is not like, say, a potato, which might in other communities have the same function: a cash crop around which social life is woven. You cannot pull cacao out of the ground, dust it off and toss into a bag. Like gold and cocaine, the *idea* of chocolate commands multiple meanings and associations, reaching iconic or mythological heights, especially in the Americas where the cacao plant originated, and whose indigenous communities believe it to hold medicinal and spiritual properties. It was among the pre-Columbian Aztecs that the transformation of cacao beans into the beverage of hot chocolate first became popular, seen as magical, aphrodisiac,

quasi-divine and the drink of the gods (see Coe and Coe 2013). In today's world, chocolate is romance, sweetness, nature; and it embodies the organic.

Politics, its counterpart, is an abstract. It is human interaction, it is the nation-state model, it is a formal geopolitical scenario, and it is, at once, all the stages of human processes of deliberating on the social state of things in the world. The *polis*, as understood by Arendt (1998: 198) is a physical-metaphysical place where people live together, and where *politics* is born as a sharing of words, actions and purposes. In this sense, the chocolate and politics dualism recalls Mintz's classic study *Sweetness and Power* (1986), which traces the history of sugar production to reveal the composition and development of colonial power through commerce, and the emergence of imaginaries of consumerism and meanings of sugar in different societies. The product, its material environment, its production and labour, its economics, and the social matrix it fosters, open a window onto the human beings behind it.

Chocolate and politics are the double act at the core of this book, conceptual partners that emerge around my ethnographic work. I allow them to be slippery here, not imprisoning either within a rigid definition, but their interdependence comes to illuminate different aspects of the Peace Community's social reality.

Why Cacao?

The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó is one of the most emblematic groups of victims of the Colombian armed conflict. It was formed in 1997 by some 500 *campesino* farmers[1] living in the war-torn north-west region of Urabá. They found themselves trapped between the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*—Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), the Colombian army, and the right-wing paramilitary groups, all of whom involved the civilian population in their war. To protect themselves and resist forced displacement, they decided to declare themselves 'neutral' to the conflict.

This conception of neutrality was based on a creative interpretation of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) principle of distinction between combatants and civilians, which stipulates that conflict actors should not target civilians. These *campesinos* built demarcated settlements with signs requesting that neither the guerrilla, nor the paramilitaries, nor state armed actors enter these areas, to prevent their living spaces becoming military targets. Several rural communities in Colombia have made this demand for respect in the midst of conflict, championing non-violence and impartiality

as protection mechanisms (Sanford 2005; Alther 2006; Hernández Delgado 2011; Burnyeat 2013; Mouly et al. 2015), frequently accompanied by processes of self-organisation and agendas for autonomous living. The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó is internationally famous among them, partly because they have been subject to particularly brutal violence at the hands mostly of the state and of paramilitaries,[2] and their public repudiation of this in frequent communiqués[3] has exposed them to violent reprisals; and partly because of their radical stance of non-participation with the Colombian state, which they call 'rupture' (*ruptura*).

When they founded their organisation in 1997, the Community[4] held meetings with state institutions, but the relationship deteriorated, due to the Community's experience of direct state violence and indirect bureaucratic indifference or hypocrisy. In 2005, following a massacre by soldiers and paramilitaries of eight members, the Community publicly declared themselves to be in 'rupture' with the state. They posited four conditions for resuming dialogue: a retraction of stigmatising comments made by ex-President Álvaro Uribe; a 'Commission for Evaluating the Justice System'; the removal of a police station in San José de Apartadó; and the recognition of their 'humanitarian zones'.

The related positions of 'neutrality' and 'rupture' have provoked repudiation from parts of the Colombian state, notably the army and ex-President Uribe. Even some supposedly sympathetic actors such as diplomats have viewed the 'rupture' as *radical* and *closed*; a refusal to participate (Aparicio 2012: 264–5). On the other end of the political spectrum, the Community has captured the interest of human rights organisations and academics, who have usually focused on their 'neutrality' and related actions and discourses as case studies to illuminate broader concepts: the ideas of 'civil resistance' (Pardo 2007), 'rightful resistance' (Naucke and Halbmayer 2016), memory politics (Courtheyn 2016), strategies of non-violence (Masullo 2015), and the socio-legal implications of their 'rupture' (Osorio and Perdomo 2011; Anrup and Español 2011).

I believe the Community should be seen in its own terms, rather than what they represent for other people, in order to *understand* them, in the sense proposed by Bourdieu: "to take their point of view, that is, to understand that if they were in their shoes they would doubtless be and think just like them" (1999: 626). This book proposes a different gaze, looking at the Community from a framework of organic productivity, rather than from the human rights framework, and tells their story through the lens of their cacao production. In this story, via what Das (2008) calls

a 'descent to the quotidian', the political is intertwined with everyday cultural practice, and the production of narratives about events like massacres, which echo in the macro-political plane, intersects with the identity narratives of shared social life.

The *campesinos* of San José de Apartadó had been producing cacao since long before they declared themselves a 'Peace Community'. Today, they have a commercial relationship with British multinational Lush Cosmetics, which buys their organic cacao and raises awareness about the Community among its clients.[5] This commercial scenario connects global discourses of the 'ethical' and the 'alternative' with local narratives. It is an unusual commercial relationship; usually small-scale producers struggle to establish direct relationships with major buyers, and maintaining the organic and the Fair Trade certifications is bureaucratically complex and expensive. Lush is unusual too in that they also do campaigning, and so, from the Community's perspective, they behave more like one of the many international NGOs accompanying the Community than other multinationals they see doing business elsewhere in Colombia, which they perceive as 'bad' because they are complicit in human rights violations and environmental damage.

The question which orientated my research was, how can the Community's organic cacao production illuminate their collective identity construction, and help us to see them in their own terms, neither glorifying nor condemning them? Cacao is the matrix of a collective story which is at once political, and intensely intimate and personal. The quotidian is the frame within which the political occurs. The organic, a word with multiple meanings, encapsulates a web of associations between a community as a social 'organism' and the practices of organic farming, in which the social environment and the material environment, most prominently the cacao groves, elide.

This study follows the cacao, as material object and as a symbol, drawing on Marcus' (1995) proposal to "follow the thing" as one way of conducting a multi-sited ethnography. The cacao itself is a cultural text, which can be interpreted, following Geertz's (1973) view of culture as a text or as a fiction, in the sense of something constructed. This means that it can be read, in the sense of 'to construct a reading of', which likewise acknowledges that there are no correct and incorrect interpretations of cultural texts.

Methodology

I first arrived in the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in August 2011, on my first mission to the field with PBI. This NGO provides accompaniment and protection to human rights defenders and communities at

risk in areas of armed conflict, by sending teams of international unarmed observers to the field, whose presence deters potential perpetrators of human rights violations.[6] That field encounter was structured and mediated by specific parameters.[7] I worked for two years in the Urabá team, living in Apartadó and accompanying three threatened communities, one of which was the Peace Community.[8]

On finishing my contract, I decided to study a Master's degree in social anthropology at the National University of Colombia and research the Peace Community, in order to understand what I had spent two years living and thinking about within a national historical context. Back in England, I emailed the Peace Community with this proposal. I waited several weeks in anguish for their response, as everything has to be consulted within their Internal Council. Eventually I got an email saying that they agreed. They trusted me because of my prior institutional relationship with them as a member of PBI, but this began to grow into a personalised relationship with me as an individual, although they undoubtedly continued seeing me as part of their 'international solidarity'.

From the start of my association with the National University, I was repeatedly asked, by both British and Colombian colleagues, why I did not choose to study at a university in England with more 'prestige', and travel to Colombia for fieldwork. It was a conscious decision which sought to reverse the gaze and problematise the anthropological position, in which traditionally the 'European' anthropologist studies in academic institutions at the 'centre' and goes to study 'other' communities in the 'periphery'. I wanted to position myself from within the Colombian school of anthropology, especially from the National, which has participated in important events within Colombian history, and which has been home to many academics who believed in contributing to the public sphere, such as Orlando Fals Borda, one of the founders of Participatory Action Research. My own supervisor, Myriam Jimeno, has participated in debates on the rights of indigenous communities, and her ethnographic research has been used as expert evidence within trials against paramilitaries. But all the way through, I also recognised that I did not quite belong; I was consciously a foreigner.

Over the two years of the Master's, I was based in Bogotá, travelling constantly to the Community. The methodology involved a mix of classic and activist anthropological methods; I carried out 11 field visits of between 2 and 20 days each, moving between the 11 settlements of the Community and doing participant observation in the cacao groves, dozens of in-depth interviews and focus groups. I received Community members on their

visits to Bogotá and London and held events for them to share their project with other Colombians (all quotes from events are ones that I have organised or co-organised, and all took place in Bogotá except the one in London, drawn on extensively in Chap. 5). I also made a feature-length documentary called 'Chocolate of Peace' with co-director Pablo Mejía Trujillo,[9] and worked with British barrister Kirsty Brimelow QC in a process of mediation between the Community and the government.[10]

The formal fieldwork was therefore informed by a relationship which spanned five years, and my 'activism' contributed to the analysis as much as the fieldwork. The 'deep hanging out' and strong friendships I developed with Community members were complemented by interviews with people who have accompanied the Community, and an interview with two local FARC commanders whom I interviewed in FARC's 10th Conference in September 2016. Interviews were triangulated with research in the previously unstudied personal archives of Father Javier Giraldo, a Jesuit priest who accompanies the Community, who has compiled multiple folders of documents such as official minutes of meetings between the Community and state entities, correspondence between Community and state, legal documents, and press cuttings.[11]

The Colombian Internal Armed Conflict and Its Victims

Colombia became independent from Spain in 1810, and has since lived through successions of conflict. After four civil wars, in 1902 General Rafael Uribe Uribe said, "I firmly believe … that we have witnessed Colombia's last civil war. Our grandchildren … will find it hard to understand what kind of insanity led to such bloodshed among brothers" (cited in Palacios 2006: v). But he was sadly mistaken. Bipartisan clashes between the Conservative and Liberal parties continued in the bloody civil war known as *La Violencia*, begun in 1948 with the assassination of Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, which lasted until 1958, when a *coup d'etat* led to a short period of military rule under General Rojas Pinilla (1953–1957). Then followed a power-sharing agreement called 'The National Front', from 1958–1974, in which Liberals and Conservatives agreed to alternate mandates every four years. However, "residual violence" continued through to 1964, as "death squads sought to thrust themselves back into Colombian civic life on their own terms" (Palacios 2006: 135).

The FARC, a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla rooted in peasant organisations, arose in 1964 in the aftermath of *La Violencia*, initially as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party (PCC, *Partido Comunista Colombiano*); it was an insurgency against the political project which did not permit the democratic participation of parties other than the Conservative and Liberal, with the objective of taking power and carrying out a socialist revolution. Several other leftist guerrilla groups emerged in the same period aiming at revolutionary transformation of the state, influenced by global communist currents. Among others, the National Liberation Army (ELN, *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*) was formed in 1964 and, at the time of writing, is currently in peace negotiations with the government. The Popular Liberation Army (EPL—*Ejército Popular de Liberación*) formed in 1967; the M-19 (*Movimiento 19 de abril*) formed in 1970 and the Quintín Lame indigenous guerrilla formed in 1984; these all were officially demobilised between 1990 and 1991 (Palacios 2006).

In reaction to these left-wing insurgencies, the spread of paramilitarism began.[12] In the 1980s, drug cartels began to join forces with civilian counterinsurgency groups, and multiple paramilitary groups emerged in different ways, each with its own local history and dynamics, frequently associated with drug-traffickers, the army, and landowners. Initially, the paramilitary project supported counterinsurgency; by the 1990s, they became consolidated groups across the country complementing the army. But they evolved into regional-level power blocs linked to diverse public and private interests. Towards the end of the 1990s, groups from different regions merged into a national structure: the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC, *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia)* (Romero 2007).

The Cold War idea that communism was the enemy became the justification for violence carried out against anything with shades of the left. The paramilitaries began an extermination campaign against social movements, especially the Patriotic Union (UP, *Unión Patriótica*) party. The UP was formed in 1985 during peace talks (see below) as a political solution to the conflict, and was made up of FARC and civil society members. It evolved independently from FARC, and gained support across the country, promoting an alternative political project with a left-wing ideology. However, the original link with FARC and the left-wing discourse led to the UP being stigmatised, and discourses circulated in the political space justifying what many have denominated 'genocide'. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, around 5000 members of this party, including 2 presidential candidates (Jaime Pardo Leal and Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa), 8 congressmen,

13 members of parliament, 70 counsellors, and 11 mayors,[13] were systematically assassinated by a 'perpetrator bloc' of paramilitaries, drug-traffickers, landowners, the army and politicians. Gómez-Suárez (2015) argues that "scripts" were created: narratives which circulated in favour of or against the UP, leading to the clash between the "soft power" of the social movement and the military "hard power" of the perpetrator bloc.

Parallel to the conflict, the drug trade rose from the 1970s onwards. By the early 1980s, there was a complex mosaic of actors and various regional cartels, including the famous Medellín and Cali cartels, and an emergent, newly rich 'bourgeoisie'. Under the US war on drugs, an extradition policy was applied, so drug barons supported the paramilitary project to garner support from the military and the land-owning elite. In the early 1990s, drug lord Pablo Escobar launched an all-out war against the state, killing journalists, judges, witnesses and politicians, until his own death at the hands of the US and Colombian police in 1993 (Palacios 2006: 203–06). All of the conflict actors have been or are involved in the drug trade in one way or another: the guerrilla, the paramilitaries, the state, politicians and civil society. And, of course, it is a continental problem, not just a national one. Drug-trafficking has arguably contributed to the continuation of the Colombian conflict well past the end of other guerrilla uprisings in Latin America, and also to its degradation (Garay Salamanca et al. 2012).

Three previous attempts were made at negotiated solutions with the guerrilla organisations. The first began in 1982 under President Belisario Betancur (1982–1986), and led to the creation of the UP. An agreement was signed in 1984, known as the 'Uribe Accord' after the demilitarised area of La Uribe where talks were held. Under the next president, Virgilio Barco (1986–1990), talks deteriorated, influenced by the persecution of the UP, and the ceasefire broke. In 1991, under President César Gaviria (1990–1994), talks began with a coalition of guerrilla organisations—FARC, ELN and EPL—in Caracas and Tlaxcala, but broke down in 1992. Under President Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) talks began in 1999 with FARC, in the demilitarised area of San Vicente del Caguán. But tensions grew as the rhythm of the talks, held in the country and publicly televised, failed to meet expectations; and meanwhile, the war was expanding and degrading, under a new bilateral agreement with Clinton's US administration known as 'Plan Colombia'. This agreement, initially part of the war on drugs and later put at the service of Colombia's counterinsurgency strategy as part of the global war on terror, financed, trained, equipped and advised

the Colombian military (Tate 2015). The Caguán talks formally ended in 2002, and the war became bloodier (González Posso 2004).

Under President Álvaro Uribe (2002–2010), paramilitary violence spiked to its highest level, often in collaboration with the state. Civico offers the term 'intertwinement' to comprehend the relationship paramilitaries-state, and sees paramilitarism as often functioning as "an extension of the state's sovereignty" (2016: 23), while recognising the phenomenon's complexity, as paramilitaries are both in and outside of the state (2016: 143). This term 'intertwinement' reflects "a convergence and synergy of interests between organized crime and other economic and political patrons that engender […] support, sympathies and impunity" (2016: 144). Economic interests driving these perverse alliances are not limited to drug-trafficking, but include mining, agriculture, arms, and land appropriation.

Between 2003 and 2006, Uribe's government negotiated a demobilisation deal with the AUC. This deal was heavily criticised because many armed groups persisted in the same regions as those where AUC had been present, engaging in similar activities, including maintaining armed pressure on populations to continue social, territorial and political control, extortion, drug-trafficking, selective assassinations and threats, forcibly displacing people, and in some cases, employing an ambiguous counterinsurgency discourse to justify their activities. Within these groups are fighters who never demobilised, fighters who did demobilise but returned to their previous lives, and new members, many drawn from structures of organised crime (CNMH 2015: 39).

The official state discourse named these groups 'emergent criminal bands', '*bacrim*' for short, to the criticism of human rights collectives who claimed that this language masked the fact that the demobilisation process was a farce. Others have called these groups "neo-paramilitaries", "post-demobilisation armed groups", and "third generation paramilitaries", among other names. Certainly, many analysts conclude that the limited success of this demobilisation process hints at a lack of real political will, and many human rights reports proffer evidence of continued collaboration with the army in some regions. However, it would be too simplistic to say that in all areas of the country, all 'bacrim' are exactly the same as previous AUC structures, or that the connection with the army is as systematic as before. This is, however, a strong current of thought among the left in Colombia, and the word 'paramilitary' itself becomes a semantic battleground, often used to accuse the state of 'illegitimacy' (Chaps. 5 and 6).

During Uribe's administration (2002–2010), the official position was that there was no internal armed conflict, which would validate the application of IHL, but rather a 'terrorist threat'.[14] Uribe frequently stigmatised human rights defenders and left-wing social movements as guerrilla sympathisers, thus justifying violence carried out against them. His popularity hinged on a 'National Security' policy, a hard-line offensive promising to finish off FARC militarily, which, though it weakened them considerably, did not bring them anywhere close to defeat.

In 2010, Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, who had been Uribe's Minister of Defence during a period in which the army was accused of multiple human rights violations, replaced Uribe as president. He came from a family of right-wing, establishment statesmen, and was the candidate Uribe endorsed in the 2010 elections. However, when he took office, he began to distance himself from Uribe. He officially recognised the existence of an internal armed conflict, meaning that IHL was applicable, and that FARC were a legitimate political opponent, rather than a 'terrorist threat', meaning negotiations were possible. Official discourse about human rights defenders and victims began to change.

In 2011, Law 1448 was passed, the Law for Victims and Land Restitution, which sought to give reparations to victims of the conflict.[15] There are now over eight million people officially registered as victims of the conflict with the government's Unit for the Attention to and Reparation of Victims ('Victims' Unit')[16]; over seven million have suffered internal displacement.[17] Perpetrators include the guerrilla, the paramilitaries, and the state armed forces. For a country of around 45 million, 8 million is over 17% of the country's population.

The civilian population has borne the brunt of decades of conflict. The National Centre for Historical Memory's damning 2013 report about the impacts of war, 'Basta Ya!' (GMH 2013) documents over 220,000 conflict-related deaths between 1958 and 2002, 80% of which were civilians, as well as hundreds of thousands of victims of massacres, assassinations, forced disappearances, forced displacement, kidnappings, forced recruitment, torture, land mines and sexual violence. When Santos received this report in a formal ceremony in 2013, he officially recognised the debt Colombia had to its victims, and the importance of peace in order to prevent further victimisation.[18]

In 2012, Santos' government initiated the public phase of peace negotiations with FARC after secret talks. President Santos had begun putting together the pieces to establish a national peace policy from the beginning

of his presidency; he believed the geopolitical conditions were right to finally achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict. It became the core of his two-term mandate (2010–2018), and he took many of the important decisions personally (Gómez Giraldo 2016). Talks took place in Havana between 2012 and 2016, and learned from the failed experiences of the past by inviting advice and accompaniment from experts who had worked on conflict resolution and transitional justice in the Philippines, Northern Ireland, South Africa and elsewhere. It was hailed by the international community as paradigm-changing in the methodology of conflict resolution, because it included victims of the conflict in the talks, inviting delegations of victims to give testimony in Havana and present proposals to the negotiating teams.

The Havana Accord has six points: land reform, political participation, the ending of the armed conflict, illicit drugs, victims' rights, and implementation. It has been praised by experts in transitional justice as one of the fairest models to date, complying with Colombia's obligations to the International Criminal Court (ICC) as a signatory to the Rome Statute to investigate, sentence and sanction those most responsible for grave human rights crimes and crimes against humanity, treating equally the army, the guerrilla and third parties such as paramilitaries and businessmen, whilst giving amnesties for the rank-and-file guerrillas and maximising the possibilities for truth and guarantees of non-recurrence with an innovative formula offering the greatest legal benefits to those who participate in truth-telling, and also privileging the structural reforms necessary to prevent future spirals of violence.

International approval of Colombia's peace process included the awarding of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize to President Santos. The Queen of England invited him on a formal state visit to recognise his efforts for peace, and The Economist voted Colombia 'country of the year' in 2016[19]—a shining light in a world otherwise shadowed by the democratic chaos of Brexit and Trump.

However, Colombian society was not as enthusiastic as the international community. On 2 October 2016, 50.2% of voters said 'No' to the Havana Accord, and 63% of the electorate abstained from voting. After the 'No' won, Santos' government opened a 'National Dialogue' and spent three weeks meeting with the different 'No' promoter groups to hear their demands—most notoriously Uribe and his party, the *Centro Democrático*, which had spearheaded an aggressive 'No' campaign (Gómez-Suárez 2016), subsequently condemned by the State Council as being based on "generalised deceit" and therefore invalid.[20]

The government then reconvened with FARC in Havana and within two weeks, produced and signed a new agreement on 24 November 2016, which addressed over half of these demands. This agreement was ratified by Congress, and began to be implemented in December 2016, in the midst of increasing polarisation, and overshadowed by the general elections set for 2018. The success of implementation will remain to be seen; and similarly, the success of negotiations with the ELN, the last existing guerrilla group in Colombia, which began formally in 2017. This book is not about the peace process, but it was the backdrop against which the research took place, and, as a context, makes the Community's story particularly resonant.

Most of the conflict has taken place in rural areas. The rural/urban divide, common in all countries and more so in the global South, has been exacerbated by decades of violence. Many urban Colombians have never experienced the conflict directly, though they have lived with it discursively all their lives, and there have been some bomb attacks in cities, as well as the violent knock-on effects of narco-trafficking. Most of those who have suffered the worst of the conflict are rural civilians.

The *campesinos* of San José de Apartadó have experienced all the human rights violations possible within the patterns of victimisation in Colombia: massacres, selective assassinations, multiple forced displacement, threats, torture, forced disappearance and sexual violence. Many scholars and activists who sympathise with those who have suffered effects of the conflict criticise the use of the term 'victim' because they consider, like Gómez Correal, that "the hegemonic use of the category supposes the existence of passive and apolitical humans" (2015: 2n). Gómez Correal opts for "victimized subjects"; some Colombians propose the term "survivor", arguing that it foregrounds subjects' agency. In some cases, this may be justified. But the Peace Community themselves mobilise the category of 'victim' in order to pursue their demands for justice. I am not suggesting the Peace Community are *only* victims. They are not passive sufferers of history, but active creators of it. By using the term 'victim', I am recognising that they self-identify as such, and in doing so make profound moral and normative claims. As with many other examples of positive appropriation of this term and subjects' appeals to its associations in legal and political spheres (e.g. Castillo et al. 2015), I believe it is important to use emic terms.

As elsewhere in Colombia, the 'victims' in San José de Apartadó have resisted violence, declaring themselves neutral, refusing to accept their victimisation and stay silent, and refusing to give up their lands and their

moral beliefs. As Jimeno (2010) has argued, the cultural construction of the category of 'victim' in Colombia forms 'emotional communities' which develop shared languages about the experiences of suffering, especially through testimony, and this can contribute to the recomposition of the community, as well being a start point for launching claims for reparations and recognition. These inter-subjectivities are traced through with emotional bonds which support subjects' reconstruction. The 'emotional' language appeals to moral principles that repudiate the violence they have suffered. The Peace Community is a referent among these 'emotional communities' who share the common experience of being 'victims of the state', because of their unwavering ethical stance.

Narratives as Practice

The Peace Community's narratives can be understood as interpretative and productive practices, which are culturally constituted and distributed between individuals in permanent interaction, with long and complex historical genealogies, and which are linked to the constant (re-)production of their collective identity. The sense of the *Community*, the narratives that constitute their collective identity, only exists when enunciated between members, or silently in members' minds, and shifts and evolves over time. Latour argues that the "social" only exists at the moments when actors within a group share and (re-)produce meaning between each other: "no group, only group formation" (2005: 27). He sees actors as "intermediaries" who "transport meaning" without transforming it, or "mediators" who modify and distort meaning, leading to new associations (Latour 2005: 64). In this light, the Community is "a social world understood as an entanglement of interactions" (Latour 2005: 65).

The Community's two core narratives, the radical and the organic, are practices that are produced over time and alongside other practices of their daily life, especially cacao farming. Bourdieu's (1990) framework of the logic of practice seeks to take into account both structure and agency in understanding human behaviour. Agency cannot be defined synonymously with free will, because such a view would negate the role culture plays in influencing the options that individuals have. But culture cannot be taken as a prison that pre-determines every action of an individual. Ahearn (2001) argues that practice theory is the best way of enabling a view that recognises both structure and agency, as mutually constituting each other.

Bourdieu proposed seeing social life as a matrix of dispositions, emphasising the social embeddedness of individuals, who develop specific *habitus* in the multiple fields of their social world. Habitus is "embodied history, internalized as a second nature" (Bourdieu 1990: 56), with "infinite capacity for generating products-thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions" but also strictly limited "by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production" (1990: 55).

Bourdieu rejects what he sees as the "epistemological privilege of the observer" which is the premise of structuralism, and calls for apprehending the specific logic of 'understanding' that comes from lived, embodied experience (1990: 14). He argues that scholars should focus on human beings' practical relations to the world, and proposes the concept of 'practical sense'—a "quasi-bodily involvement in the world" (1990: 66). He draws an analogy with the phrase "a feel for the game", which he argues, "gives a fairly accurate idea of the almost miraculous encounter between the *habitus* and a field, between incorporated history and an objectified history" and is produced by "experience of the game" (1990: 66). The embodied experience creates practical sense, which is felt in and through the body, as "body-schemes" which are transferred trans-subjectively. These body-schemes embed knowledge of the rules by which the game is played, but within which the individual has agency to innovate:

> Practical sense, social necessity turned into nature, converted into motor schemes and body automatisms, is what causes practices, in and through what makes them obscure to the eyes of their producers, to be sensible, that is, informed by a common sense. It is because agents never know completely what they are doing that what they do has more sense than they know. (Bourdieu 1990: 69)

Practices exist and are transmitted trans-subjectively. Practical sense is the perception that a practice is sensible, formed by existing and acting within different social fields. We can appreciate that practices become naturalised in their contexts, while recognising their social constructedness.

Bourdieu describes the ways that Kabyle men and women eat, sit, walk and gaze according to gender differences within their culture. He draws on the division of labour in olive gathering to argue that these oppositions between male and female are not value systems, though informants subjectively construe them as such, but result from practical action which socially qualifies the movements of the body, naturalising fundamental social options and determinations. The men stretch up to pick from above,

the women bend down to collect what men have let fall, and a man-woman dichotomy is produced which is perceived as natural, inevitable and sensible (Bourdieu 1990: 71).

Practice, such as olive gathering, produces what Bourdieu calls 'bodily hexis'—a "permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (1990: 70), a "pattern of postures […] charged with a host of special meanings and values" (1990: 74). Bodily hexis is learned by imitating and doing, but even though they are acquired without necessarily passing through discourse and consciousness, Bourdieu holds that the acquisition of habitus is not only a mechanical learning, but charged with multiple meanings and values (1990: 74).

The practice of cacao production in San José de Apartadó is a core everyday activity for the formation of the Community members' habitus. For this reason, one of my main methods in trying to apprehend their world was to go and work with them in the cacao groves, and feel in my own body the unfamiliar actions, to them, naturalised and sensible. This is an easy parallel with Bourdieu's Kabyle olive pickers. It is less usual to see narratives as practice—but I believe the production of identity narratives is also embodied, in the action of sharing words and ideas, or enunciating discourse internally as a thought. Narratives exist in action, in interaction, and in constant flux, evolution and reaffirmation. The practical sense, in the case of the Peace Community's narratives, is the sense of a coherent internal logic to their narratives—whether observers agree with them or not about its coherence. The practice of cacao production and the practice of narrative production coexist interdependently, mutually influencing each other.

Emotions also play a role in the production of narratives. Ahmed's (2004) model of the sociability of emotions echoes Bourdieu's framework of practice theory in seeking to balance the structure/agency dichotomy. She sees as overly simplistic the psychoanalytic idea that emotions travel from the 'inside out', and likewise the idea of cultural determinism which suggests that the structure imposes the production of emotions from the 'outside in'. "Both assume the objectivity of the very distinction between inside and outside, the individual and the social, and the 'me' and the 'we'" (2004: 9). She proposes instead that "it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces or boundaries are made: the 'I' and the 'we' are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others" (2004: 10). In this way, "subjects become *invested* in particular structures" (2004: 12), just as members of the Peace Community become invested in the structure of identity maintained by its central narratives.

The Radical Narrative

The 'radical narrative' is a culturally and historically constituted script which forms an interpretative framework according to which the Community perceives all the actions of the Colombian state. Its centre is the Community's idea of an antagonist with a unilateral plan to exterminate them, according to three motivations: (i) the state wants to eliminate all social organisations; (ii) the Community denounces human rights violations which are largely direct or indirect responsibility of the state, and the Santos government wants to clean up its image; (iii) the state, in alliance with multinational companies and paramilitaries, has economic interests in the Community's land. This vision presents a homogenous and demonised state, converging simplistically with the paramilitary project and multinational companies; a view flattening the complexity of histories of perpetration.

The state, which is of course *not* a homogenous entity, has conveyed different narratives about the Peace Community at different moments and from different institutions. Though this book is a one-sided account, focussing on the social experience of the Community in its relationship with the state, it does take into account state narratives about the Community, insofar as these affect the Community's perception of the state. There is an important distinction in recent history between the narrative transmitted by ex-President Uribe during his mandate, which promoted public discourses stigmatising the Community, thereby justifying violence against them; and the more recent narrative transmitted by President Santos, who offered to reconstruct dialogue and even made a public apology to the Community in 2013 (see Chap. 6). The Community perceived Santos as the same as Uribe, but with a "prettier" human rights discourse—a conception common among the left at the time—and believed that he continued to be part of the paramilitary machinery operating in Urabá. This more recent narrative, that 'the state has not changed and does not want to', was influential in their collective identity at the time of research.

In focussing on the Community's interpretation of the state, and linking it to their collective identity, I am not suggesting the persecution they have suffered is imaginary. Plenty of scholarship documents the convergence of political, military and economic interests which have specifically targeted the Community (Uribe 2004; Aparicio 2012; Cuartas 2014), and extensive grey literature documents violations.[21] I am underlining the cultural construction of the narrative, and dissecting its elements, to argue for the importance of taking seriously a community's perception of the state. Such

perceptions are constructed out of the very real horrors of massacres and displacement, but also subjectively forged. My solidarity is with the Community, but I am also critical of their 'radical narrative' insofar as it simplifies the state and converges it simplistically with the 'paramilitary project' and 'economic interests'.

In state-centric theories, 'the state' is often seen as a clearly bounded institution distinct from society, a unitary actor which anthropologists can 'disaggregate', problematising this common imagination (exemplified by the Community's 'radical narrative') of a reified totality (Sharma and Gupta 2006: 8). Anthropological approaches see the state as culturally constituted, both materially—how the state manifests itself in people's lives—and imaginatively—how their understandings of it are shaped through embodied encounters with state officials and processes (Sharma and Gupta 2006: 11). The imaginary of the unified institution is not to be discarded, but engaged as a social reality in itself. Abrams (1988) distinguishes between the 'state-system', as the system of institutional practice, and the 'state-idea', the reification of this system. Mitchell (2006: 169) criticises Abrams' separation of the two, because you cannot analyse the way in which power operates without taking both into account, arguing that the imagination of the state—the 'state-idea'—and its material reality—the 'state-system'—should be taken as "two aspects of the same process" (2006: 170).

The 'state-idea' assumes a clear boundary between the state and its 'other', society, but Mitchell writes that it is important to "examine the political processes through which the uncertain yet powerful distinction between state and society is produced" (2006: 170). He asks how this dualism is produced as a social reality, and what its practical effects are (2006: 176). Anthropology has frequently engaged with this by observing everyday encounters between state officials and society. The state-society encounters in the Community's social experience include state violence, threats from soldiers on the ground, public stigmatisation by government officials, and meetings with bureaucrats in San José and in Bogotá who make and then break promises, leading the Community to feel that 'the state' is hypocritical. The radical narrative is (re-)produced in state-society encounters with inextricable material and imaginative dimensions.

The historical genealogy by which this narrative has developed has at its heart the idea of being 'victims' of the state. I characterise the Community's radical narrative as a 'victim-drama' narrative, building on Alexander's (2012) concept of the 'trauma-drama', the narratives which develop in the aftermath of trauma in inter-subjective interaction with both sympathetic

and antipathetic audiences. The conviction of audiences that they are witnessing a trauma depends on the performative power of the narrative. This in turn hinges on the qualification of the narrative as a tragedy in the Aristotelian sense, producing catharsis and a sense of universality of the suffering represented. According to Aristotle (1996 [c.335 BC]), for a drama to be truly tragic, the audience must see themselves in the protagonist. This makes the audience identify with the suffering, which generates a sense of social and moral responsibility and leads to politico-social actions to prevent repetition.

Since their founding in 1997, the Community has successfully transmitted their narrative about the abuses they have suffered to the international human rights community, who have championed their cause and lobbied the Colombian state to protect them and sanction perpetrators. The category of 'victim' has been a key category in Colombia's interaction with the international community, used to lobby the state to redress the rights of those who have suffered the effects of war (Hartog 2012). It is inserted in a geopolitical context in which there are a series of pressures on the Colombian government to improve its image in terms of human rights, and make reparations to the victims of the conflict in order to transition to post-conflict. The performative success of the victim-drama is based on leitmotifs of *injustice,* the *fight against impunity*, and *neutrality*. This is a discourse founded on the legal institutionalism which emerged following the Second World War in order to normativise values considered to be universal such as IHL and human rights, and the victim-drama works by holding the Colombian State to account for breaking these universal values.

'Victim' is also a category which has polarised identity narratives in Colombia, especially in the case of victims of the state. Before the change in policy under Santos, a previous 'Victims' Law' was drafted and debated between 2007 and 2009 which sought to make reparations via administrative processes for all victims, but this was repealed by Uribe's government because they did not want to equate the rights of those who had been victimised by state agents with those who had been victimised by illegal armed groups. This debate revealed a self-perpetuating polarisation between victims and state which I have elsewhere called a "barrier to peace" (Burnyeat 2010). The emotions evoked by the narratives which circulate around national polarisations such as this, contribute to the specific polarisation between the Peace Community and the state.

The radical narrative contains a them/us dichotomy, in which the 'other' is the Colombian state. Ahmed argues that "emotions work as a

form of capital", and are produced as an effect of the circulation of signs, accumulating in affective value over time: "Signs increase in affective value as an effect of the movement between signs: the more signs circulate, the more affective they become" (2004: 45). Feelings, such as hate, are economic, and the feeling subject is "simply one nodal point in the economy" (2004: 46). This is not to claim that the Community 'hates' the state, but it is the external object of fear and *othering* against which the radical narrative is formed. Ahmed proposes the idea of 'sticky' signs: hate 'sticks' discrete actors and groups together, eliding them discursively via this economic exchange model, creating over time a common, homogenised and dehumanised threat, against which a defensive narrative is produced, just as the Community homogenises the multiplicity of the state. This involves an *investment* in the other: Ahmed says that "the subject becomes attached to the other through hatred, an attachment that returns the subject to itself" (2004: 50). The other—in this case the Colombian state—is needed for the continuation of the self's collective identity.

The Organic Narrative

The 'organic narrative' is the historically and culturally constituted interpretative framework according to which the Community perceives their relationships with their natural and social environments. It contains an analogy between a physical body with organs and an organised social group, and between the Community as an organ-isational process, and the process of cacao production.

The Oxford English Dictionary offers various definitions of 'organic': 'part of the body'; 'of, relating to, or of the nature of an organ or organs'; 'having organs, or an organised physical structure; of, related with, or derived from a living organism or organisms; having the characteristics of a living organism'. It can also indicate functionality, 'serving as an instrument or means to an end'; it denotes structures with a general coherence, something 'belonging to the constitution of an organised whole; structural', and meaning 'of or related to an organised structure compared to a living being', in the same way that the evolutionist anthropologists saw societies as organisms composed of related parts which evolved from simple to complex, following natural laws which they sought to discover. In sum, 'organic' means natural, inherent, connected and self-producing, *like an organ*.

When we talk of organic cacao, there is another group of more recent meanings, both ideological and commercial: 'of, related with or derived

from live matter'; 'produced with natural substances, generally without the addition of chemical products'. From this follow the uses employed in the agreement between the Community and Lush: 'of a method of agriculture: not using chemical fertilisers, pesticides or other artificial chemicals'.[22]

The word 'organisation' has the same root as the word 'organic'. The founding statutes of the Community (Chap. 4) stipulate in an elaborated way a series of "organs of the Community", including the general assembly, the Internal Council, the treasurer and the coordinators of committees, and the functions and duties of each.[23] A community with organs? According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'to organise' comes from thirteenth-century English, 'to give something bodily organs or physical structure', and fourteenth-century French, 'to give an organic structure to'.[24] The word 'organisation' can refer both to the process of coordinating parts (of a body, of a system), with the aim of carrying out vital functions, and to the way in which a thing is organised.[25]

The Community members insist that it was during their experience of displacement that "the organisation began". This phrase refers to two things: the Peace Community began to be an organisation, and the process of organising themselves began, that is, of creating organic structure. The Community members think about their coexistence with each other in a similar way to which they think about their coexistence with nature. There is a correspondence between their view of the natural world and their view of the social world. J.E. emphasised both elements: their role defending the rights of "each Community member and even the surrounding population", and also of the natural environment: "To have that relationship internally, in the human community, but in harmony with nature, protecting the environment, protecting the forests, […] the good practices of crop management, of protecting biodiversity".[26]

The organic embodies the idea of mutualisms: chocolate and politics, nature and society, cultural organisation and political identity. The organic narrative is founded on this representation of connected functions and solidarity. The Community perceives itself as an organised collective with 'organs', which has an internal coherence based on the solidarity between its members, and integrated into the surrounding environment. They see themselves as protecting the environment and promoting a 'clean' product, in contrast to 'unclean' ways of life, such as using chemical fertilisers, drinking alcohol and growing illicit crops, banned by their internal principles. It is also an object of love, which contrasts with their perception of the 'inorganic', which contains an analogy with violence and with the tripartite

imagined antagonist of the state-paramilitaries-multinationals. This aspect is influenced by the radical narrative and its them/us construct; at the same time, the organic narrative, as a practice of collective identity, influences the radical narrative, in a reciprocal circularity.

In this way, the notion of 'the organic' offers a powerful metaphor for the recent academic debates on relational ontologies, a concept which has arisen from research with indigenous, afro-descendent and other communally-orientated and non-Western communities, whose world views problematise "the commonly accepted modern ontology-based binaries such as nature (the domain of objects) and culture (the domain of subjects)" (Escobar 2010: 100). This metaphor is structured through a material object, cacao, around which the production of the radical and organic narratives as cultural practices linked to the creation of a collective identity occurs. Cacao is a living being, a non-human object which is a protagonist in the social world of the Community. As Latour emphasises, "objects too have agency" (2005: 63) and cacao is a "participant in the course of action" (2005: 71).

The affective orientation towards the cacao and the interaction with this non-human (but living) object is an essential component of the social life of the Community. The everyday practice of physical work with cacao produces a bodily hexis, influenced by the affective material environment of the organic cacao groves, complex ecosystems full of leaves, moss on the branches, wild tropical flowers, insects, birds, other crops, water, wind, sun, and mud. The narrative about the importance of organic farming, not using fertiliser or weed-killers, connects with the everyday experience of working in this richly biodiverse environment. The material environment of cacao farming includes working together in organised groups with a community work ethic; and also material reminders that this is still a conflict zone and that there are imminent threats—soldiers, guerrilla or paramilitaries passing through, or a helicopter passing overhead. Landmines left by FARC are rare among crops; they are usually placed away from the paths used by *campesinos* to target the army, but there have been occasional accidents and it is an implicit danger.

The cacao groves are also spaces that are inscribed historically with the Community's experience of their past. Different layers of history build up in affective material palimpsests (Navaro-Yashin 2012)—past experiences of their cacao cooperative, Balsamar, prior to their foundation as a Peace Community in 1997 (Chap. 2); their experiences of forced displacement and having to abandon their crops; and returning to work in their cacao groves after displacement in order to 'bring them back' from wildness

(Chap. 4). The physical work in the cacao groves, with all these elements, feeds in seamlessly to the Community's world view, and to the production of both the radical and the organic narratives.

An 'Alternative Community'?

In following the cacao and constructing this metaphor of 'the organic', this book reveals a collective identity based on communal life and economics, and on the inextricable intersection of the radical and the organic narratives. Taken together, the two narratives form a window into the Community's collective identity, which I tentatively refer to as an 'alternative community'. This could be a case study analysing the Community as a relational ontology (Escobar 2010), or within the framework of epistemologies of the global South (de Sousa Santos 2014), or other similar ongoing academic debates that draw on indigenous knowledge as 'alternatives' to Western, capitalist ways of living. However, I again argue for the importance of approaching the Community in their own terms, focussing on what they do and what they say. In this sense, I offer the term 'alternative community' as a conceptualisation of what they believe themselves to be. They see themselves as 'alternative': to the state, to other communities, to capitalism, and, crucially, to violence.

Father of peace studies Galtung (1969) proposed the terms *negative* and *positive peace*, the first understood as the absence of violence, and the second as the construction of society based on values of participative democracy, economic equality and social justice. These are conceptual terms which signal two different approaches within conflict resolution: the ending of an armed confrontation, versus working across all sectors of society to build cultural values that prevent the occurrence of all types of violence, including, but not limited to, armed confrontation. This is not to say that societies *have* either one or the other. As conceptual terms, they signal a continuum, and the shift from one logic to another: from politics to chocolate; or, rather, from politics alone, to the vital connection between the two. The human rights discourse, from which the Community has normally been seen, represents its members as defenders, and focuses on their public demands for negative peace: that the violations cease, that there be an end to impunity, and that the civilian population in the midst of conflict is respected. But what I call the organic narrative, represents them as producers and creators—of cacao, but also of community—which is closer to the logic of positive peace.

It is in this sense that their experience holds relevance for thinking about peace-building. Throughout Colombia and globally, it is often in the darkest corners of the world, where people have suffered the kinds of atrocities most of us could not even imagine, where the greatest expressions of humanity and love can be found. In order to comprehend social movements as political actors, we must understand the cultural contexts which engender their political actions.[27] But rather than a case study of grassroots peace-building, the Peace Community are first and foremost themselves, no more and yet no less. This book aims to offer the reader a description of how they came to be what they are, in the context of the Colombian conflict, and what they say and do.

Urabá: The Ethnographic Scenario

All countries have regional dynamics and identities, but in Colombia, the 'country of regions' trope is "a narrative central to its nation-hood" (Serje 2005, cited in Ramírez 2015: 36), a key part of the 'imagined community' of the nation (Anderson 2006). Its theoretical underpinning is the Eurocentric expectation of an idealised Weberian state to have the monopoly of force over the national territory, and to be able to act bureaucratically in the margins furthest from the administrative centre. The idea of Colombia as an unfinished state-building project, as having failed to bridge infrastructurally and culturally its huge topographic and demographic divides, is dominant in the discourses of such wide-ranging sectors as academics, politicians, paramilitaries, guerrillas and 'ordinary' people, all of whom construe the 'periphery' as characterised by the absence of the state (Ramírez 2015). This discourse blames Colombia's succession of civil wars and culture of violence on the state's inability to penetrate the 'regions' from the 'centre'. The fragmentation of the state in Colombia has also contributed to the highly regional dynamics of the armed conflict, which in turn have consolidated the frustrations of the nation-building project, and this disjuncture is also reproduced by cycles of violence (Safford and Palacios 2002; Gonzalez et al. 2003).

Demographically, in Colombia there is a small but significant indigenous population (3.4%) of 87 different ethnicities, which have autonomous territories (*resguardos*) occupying nearly 30% of national territory, and an afro-descendent population (10.6%), to which the 1991 Constitution granted the right to have collective land titles (around 4.3% of national territory).[28] The rest of the population is mixed (*mestizo*), of Spanish heritage, and the majority of elites are whiter, descendants of Spaniards, while darker *mestizos*

are construed as lower in the social hierarchy. The rural population of Colombia includes indigenous, afro-descendent and *campesino* communities, and these together make up 31.6% of the population spread over 94.4% of national territory.[29]

The *campesino* culture, such as that of the Peace Community, is based on subsistence agriculture, trading excess crops or cash crops to buy the necessities which the earth does not produce. The domestic economics of the *campesino* house are based on exchange models which include labour, money, sustenance and produce, and management of what kinds of capital go in and out of the house is aimed not at making money like a business, but ensuring the family's survival and wellbeing (see Gudeman and Rivera 1990).

The remoter, less-developed regions of Colombia have historically been socially constructed in a way that imagined a nation of segregated and hierarchical component parts. Nineteenth-century colonial elites exploring the 'wild regions' of the country in geographic and scientific missions to document their human and natural composition depicted the 'natives' of these 'backward' places as 'barbaric' and 'uncivilized' (Ochoa 2014; Appelbaum 2016), a racialising discourse which continues to influence imaginaries of the nation today.

Urabá, in the north-west, is one of these regions which have always been seen as underdeveloped and lacking in state presence. This is not strictly true—'the state' has been present in many ways, especially through violence, but not in terms of providing the fundamental infrastructure of roads, housing, education and healthcare pertaining to a modern state. It is a wild, remote, tropical region, close to the border with Panama. It takes its name from the Gulf of Urabá, which opens onto the Caribbean Sea, and comprises bits of three different 'departments' (the administrative division of regions in Colombia)—Antioquia, Chocó and Córdoba. 'Departments' (*departamentos*) contain 'municipalities' (*municipalidades*), large towns or small cities and their surrounding 'townships' (*corregimientos*), and the smallest rural unit is the 'hamlet' (*vereda*). Urabá is populated by some afro-descendent communities, mostly in Chocó, some indigenous communities, and a majority *mestizo* population.

Its land is incredibly fertile, and most inhabitants earn their living either by subsistence agriculture, like the Peace Community, or by working as day labourers on single-crop farms, especially banana, plantain, pineapple and African palm, as well as extensive cattle-farming. Because of the richness of its soils, its geostrategic location and the potential for capitalist development, it has been called "The Best Corner of the Americas" (Aparicio 2012).

But it has also been one of the epicentres of the Colombian conflict, a key drug-trafficking corridor, and a laboratory of paramilitary expansion and control over the civilian population, often for land-grabbing purposes. At the same time, it has been a centre of community resistance to the conflict and of initiatives that try to break the cycle of violence with peaceful alternatives, such as the Peace Community.

It is easier to think of the Community as a club of members rather than a delimited territorial area with a group of people connected to each other by a 'natural' bond, such as ethnicity, kinship or physical proximity. At the time of research, members inhabited 11 different settlements, scattered over the Abibe mountain range to the east of the Urabá Gulf, 7 in the department of Antioquia, municipality of Apartadó, township of San José de Apartadó (San Josecito, Arenas Altas, La Unión, La Esperanza, La Cristalina, Mulatos and La Resbalosa); and 4 over the departmental border in Córdoba, municipality of Tierralta (Las Claras, Alto Joaquín, Naín and Puerto Nuevo, all in the surroundings of the Urrá I Dam, built between 1993 and 2000). With some exceptions, these are mostly not the 'original' pre-1997 settlements, but new ones established after several returns from displacements. Ten kilometres of unpaved road connects the city of Apartadó with the town of San José de Apartadó, and from there on into the hamlets of the township, travel is by mountain paths only. The Community's settlements are between two hours' to two days' walk or mule-ride from one to another, over steep mountains, often thigh-deep in mud. Transporting cacao from the settlements often means loading sacks onto mules and walking for a whole day under burning sun or in tropical storms to the storage facility in the settlement of San Josecito.

San José de Apartadó is a township with 32 hamlets which occupies almost half of the municipality of Apartadó, 29,886 hectares of a total of 60,000.[30] In some of the Community's settlements there are very few members—in La Esperanza and La Cristalina there is only one family in each; in Naín and in Las Claras there were no members at the time of research but the Community continued to refer to their 11 settlements in the hope of 'recuperating' the processes with those families. Other settlements are larger and more active, such as San Josecito (a settlement with some 45 families), La Unión and Mulatos.

Many other *campesinos* live in the neighbouring hamlets who are not Community members. Of these, some support the Community: they say it is thanks to its presence and human rights advocacy that they also were able to return to their lands after being displaced. Others say "there cannot be

two organisations"; and sometimes collaborate with illegal actors against the Community.

The 500 members at the time of foundation grew to around 1500 at the highest point of their membership, but today are probably far less than 500, the reduction in numbers being due partly to assassinations (over 300 *campesinos*, members and non-members, have been killed since 1997), and partly due to the feeling that the security situation is *somewhat* safer since the high point of the violence in the late 1990s and early 2000s; so only those who really feel committed to the broader project of being an 'alternative community' have remained members, with others preferring not to have to live by the strict principles the Community maintains.

Structure of the Book

The book is structured in three parts, roughly corresponding to history, politics and culture. Part I describes the history of the Peace Community, and the different influences that came together in its emergence and evolution. Chapter 2 characterises the region of Urabá as an area rich in natural resources affected by different waves of settler immigration and violence. It describes the *campesino* development project associated with the UP between 1985 and 1996, and the Balsamar cacao cooperative, the economic and cultural centre of San José de Apartadó. The UP and Balsamar are presented as politico-cultural antecedents to the Peace Community.

Chapter 3 describes the founding of the Peace Community initially as a group that denominated themselves 'neutral' to the armed conflict, and the various actors involved in the emergence of this conception of neutrality as a strategy of protection in the midst of a war zone—the Catholic Church, NGOs and indigenous communities. It charts the specific relationship of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó with the Colombian NGO, the Interfaith Justice and Peace Commission (CIJP— *Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz*) and explains that out of four 'peace communities' formed in Urabá during the same period, San José de Apartadó is the only one to continue using this name.

Chapter 4 explores the origins of the process of organisation which led them to undergo a cultural change, from *campesinos* living in family farmsteads and working together only for specific projects (such as Balsamar), using the concept of neutrality as a temporary protection option, to a community that lives and works together with a life philosophy based on being 'alternative', and argues that this cultural change is the reason why

the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó continues to exist. The historical positioning 'retells' the history of the Community with a cultural focus, following the thread of the production of cacao and its role in forming their cultural configuration.

Part II presents the radical narrative: the victim-drama which constitutes an interpretative framework according to which the Community perceives the state. Chapter 5 outlines the genealogy of the Community's relationship with the state from their foundation in 1997 to the final 'rupture' in 2005, and the emergence of the four demands they make of the state in order to resume dialogue.

Chapter 6 presents the most recent evolution of the radical narrative, hinging on the differentiation between the Uribe and Santos administrations. It describes the way the Community perceives the Santos' government discourse on victims and reparations, and emphasises the Community's uniqueness in refusing to accept the reparations offered by the government via the Victims' Unit. It outlines the process by which the Colombian Constitutional Court ordered the state to address the Community's four points, and the grandiose gesture of a presidential apology made publicly by President Santos, which failed to convince the Community of the state's will to change its behaviour, and describes conversations with Community members about the peace process, which was ongoing at the time of research, that illuminate their current perceptions of the state.

Part III presents the organic narrative, and the symbiosis between the Community's conception of how they relate to nature, and how they organise themselves and relate to each other. Chapter 7 is about cacao as a product. It describes the different stages of cacao production, and the history of the commercial relationship with Lush, and the way the Community perceives it. I describe my personal experiences doing participant observation with the Community members in the cacao groves learning about cacao production and about the Community members' perception of space and of nature. This is a first-person description which seeks to approximate the reader to the embodied experience of the Community's everyday practice.

Chapter 8 identifies the constitutive elements of the narrative, namely food sovereignty and autonomy, the contrast with the inorganic, the perceptions of development and capitalism, and narratives about internal organisation into work groups, committees and councils. All these intersect inextricably with the them/us dichotomy of the radical narrative. The Community's conception of 'the organic' is a narrative which at the time of research was in a process of being strengthened, partly due to the

relationship with Lush, and the global narrative about organic and fair trade connecting with pre-existing local narratives about autonomy, non-violence and preservation of the environment which date back to the Balsamar Cooperative. I also suggest that the process of ethnographic research itself could have contributed to its growth.

Chapter 9 stands on its own, offering a conclusion that the fluid inter-section between the radical and the organic narratives, produced over time, creates an overall collective identity narrative which I tentatively character-ise as an 'alternative community'. I suggest that this way of seeing the Community, in their own terms, neither glorifying nor condemning them, could offer hope and inspiration to all Colombians at a time when they are deeply engaged in a long-term national debate about what 'peace' might mean, both in terms of looking back to the past of their internal conflict, and understanding the atrocities lived by rural victims and therefore the need to put an end to the cycles of violence, but also understanding that they are not just 'victims', but human beings with knowledge, producers of chocolate, the national breakfast drink, and creators of their own concep-tion of 'peace' which goes beyond the absence of violence, and speaks to principles of solidarity, community work and economics, relationship with nature, and historical memory—principles which could also contribute to imagining peace-building in a future-oriented sense.

Ultimately, this conception of grassroots peace-building is not just rel-evant for Colombia—these are principles we can all value, it is not neces-sary for us all to become rural communities to embrace them. It might also help us to recognise the human stories of war, suffering, courage and resilience behind the products we buy in Europe and the USA, like a bar of chocolate, and realise that we are deeply and vitally connected to small-scale farmers like the Peace Community all over the world, when we put into our bodies, what they have made with theirs.

NOTES

1. I have written elsewhere: "Campesinos may be workers on the farms of others, or may own their land […] The term campesino can be translated as peasant or rural farmer, but the author dislikes these options, firstly because they sound potentially derogatory, and secondly because campesino is a whole cultural category in Colombia and other parts of Latin America that is not accurately conveyed by these translations" (Burnyeat 2013: 437n). I therefore maintain the original Spanish. All citations originally in Spanish are my translations.

2. The guerrilla also violated the Community's human rights, and these acts were also denounced. However, in the Community's perspective, as well as analysts such as Javier Giraldo, Centre for Research and Popular Education (CINEP) and the documentation of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as Peace Brigades International (PBI) and Amnesty International, the large majority of abuses, over 80%, have been at the hands of paramilitaries and/or state forces.

3. See http://cdpsanjose.org

4. The idea of 'community' is at the core of their collective identity (see Chap. 9). For this reason, I use the term 'Community' with a capital C, rather than an acronym such as PCSJA, because it is how they refer to themselves.

5. https://www.lush.com/

6. For analysis on international accompaniment as a strategy for the protection of human rights defenders, see Eguren and Mahoney (1997).

7. The objective of international presence is, first and foremost, the protection of the accompanied persons. Therefore, the conduct of the field volunteers is based on being visible—via the PBI logo on their uniforms—in places which the accompanied persons see as prioritised, during delimited temporalities, at their request. The interaction includes walking alongside threatened defenders when they undertake risky journeys and compiling field information about the conflict dynamics; but there is also an emotional component in the framework of international solidarity, because spending long periods of time with human beings means creating human relationships.

8. For an article I published after this field experience about community peace initiatives and protection strategies, see Burnyeat (2013).

9. http://chocolatedepaz.com

10. The mediation scenario falls outside the scope of this book; I stopped working with Brimelow after September 2015 and some of the information I gathered is delicate, because it could compromise the Community's security. But the negotiations, discourses and positions I heard over that time period contributed to the strengthening of my analysis, especially Part II, because I observed the polarised narratives in action, and saw how difficult they were to overcome.

11. These date from 1994 to 2013. Footnotes to these clarify sources and appear as JGA (Javier Giraldo Archive), folder year/page(s).

12. Some Anglophone scholars eschew the term 'paramilitarism', translated from the Colombian *paramilitarismo*, as Spanglish, and prefer to replace it where possible with existing English nouns such as 'paramilitary groups'. Throughout my work, however, I have decided to use 'paramilitarism', firstly because it is an accepted coinage used widely by NGOs, and sec-

ondly because it retains semantically the idea of a *phenomenon* which goes beyond individual actors and groups.

13. *El Tiempo*, 11 July 2013, 'Editorial: Renace la Unión Patriótica'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-12924130 [accessed 9 September 2016].

14. For example *El Tiempo*, 9 March 2005, http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1626851 [accessed 31 July 2015].

15. Law No.1448 of 2011, 'Por la cual se dictan medidas de atención, asistencia y reparación integral a las víctimas del conflicto armado interno y se dictan otras disposiciones'. http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Normativa/Leyes/Documents/ley144810062011.pdf [Accessed 9 August 2015]. The need for this law and a previous attempt at passing it developed between 2007 and 2009 but was repealed by Uribe's government, due partly to the official discourse which did not recognise the existence of the armed conflict and the cognate argument that those who had suffered at the hands of the state should not be recognised as victims unless the perpetrator was found guilty by a court (Burnyeat 2010).

16. http://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/

17. UNHCR figures as of December 2016: http://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/scripts/doc.php?file=fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2017/10938 [accessed 18 March 2017].

18. 'Palabras del Presidente Juan Manuel Santos en la entrega del Informe del Centro de Memoria Histórica', 24 July 2013. At: http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Prensa/2013/Julio/Paginas/20130724_03-Palabras-del-Presidente-Juan-Manuel-Santos-en-la-entrega-del-Informe-del-Centro-de-Memoria-Historica.aspx [accessed 17 March 2017].

19. http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21712136-which-country-improved-most-2016-our-country-year [accessed 31 January 2017].

20. http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/consejo-de-estado-reconoce-que-hubo-engano-generalizado-en-campana-del-no-al-plebiscito/510010 [accessed 31 January 2017].

21. Giraldo (2010); *Derechos de petición* by Javier Giraldo (http://www.javiergiraldo.org/); communiqués by the Peace Community; communiqués by international NGOs such as PBI, Amnesty International, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Operazzione Colomba.

22. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/132431?redirectedFrom=organic [accessed 11 September 2014].

23. Community, 'Estatutos de la Comunidad', JGA 1995–1997/172–199.

24. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/132456?redirectedFrom=organize#eid [accessed 17 July 2015].

25. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/132452?redirectedFrom=organization#eid [accessed 17 July 2015].

26. Interview transcripts for 'Solidarity Economy' (2014 PBI UK non-public report, author's personal archive).
27. Recent literature on new social movements has increasingly turned towards ethnographic methods to understand social movements as complex cultural compositions engaged in meaning-making operations, for example Casas-Cortés et al. 2008; Holland et al. 2008; Kurzman 2008.
28. DANE (National Administrative Department of Statistics). May 2007. *Colombia una nación multicultural: Su diversidad étnica*. Results and analysis of 2005 National Population Census. https://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/etnia/sys/colombia_nacion.pdf [accessed 20 May 2017].
29. UNDP Colombia. *Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano 2011*. http://www.co.undp.org/content/colombia/es/home/library/human_development/informe-nacional-de-desarrollo-humano-2011.html [accessed 11 July 2017]
30. CIJP 'Informe sobre el proceso'. JGA 1995–1997/126–130.

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Origins

The Roots: Of Cooperatives and Conflict

Urabá: 'The Best Corner of the Americas'

To trace the thread of cacao through the Community's history, we must go back to the eighteenth century. The first cacao growers in the region were a community of French Calvinists, who fled their country escaping Catholic persecution. They arrived in Urabá and cultivated cacao from 1740, and it became one of the most important cash crops in the region. Ten years later, they had grown into a population of 200 cacao farmers, who sold their produce to the English pirates who arrived at the Urabá Gulf in the Caribbean Sea (Parsons 1963 and Langebaek 2006, cited in Aparicio 2012: 157). This cacao was probably sent to Europe, since chocolate as a hot drink became a desirable product in the seventeenth century (Coe and Coe 2013). The Calvinists were expelled violently in 1758 by the local indigenous population, for whom they were economic competition. When they left, they submitted a document to the Spanish authorities describing their 73 properties, with 105,800 cacao trees. These properties were occupied and cultivated by indigenous communities. In the 1960s, the Cuna indigenous people in Urabá continued to obtain most of their income from cacao, though the continuity of that cacao today is unknown (Parsons 1967: 22).

From the first moment that the roots of the cacao tree penetrated the soil of Urabá, then, they have been accompanied by turbulence, land disputes, violence, economic competition, migration, displacement and occupation. Chocolate, a substance that is naturally bitter but which we transform into something sweet, has always been politics—at least in Urabá.

It is symbolic of a point of friction between two opposing logics to do with the conception of territory: of what land is for, and for whom; and of our relationship with nature.

When the French Calvinists arrived in Urabá, the region had already been subject to waves of settler immigration, violence and attempts at domination—of the native indigenous population, and also of the land and its resources. Steiner and Martín characterise Urabá as a "zone of borders and settler immigration", factors which have influenced and continue to influence the configuration of the armed conflict in the region (CINEP 1995: 50). Gloria Cuartas, mayor of Apartadó during the founding years of the Peace Community and later a critical geographer, argues that an imaginary of Urabá was created with the arrival in 1510 of the Spanish conquistador Vásquez Núñez de Balboa, who tried to dominate the indigenous people, and founded the first Spanish settlement in the whole continent, Santa María la Antigua del Darién. According to Cuartas (2014), this milestone represents the beginning of a genealogy of land delimitation in Urabá, based on a convergence of economic, political and military interests, across centuries.

According to Aparicio (2012: 155), the Spanish had tried several times to found towns in Urabá, but they found the indigenous population too fierce, and only the third contingent of Spanish troops who arrived in 1507 managed to settle. Santa María was a 'laboratory' in which the Spanish, according to Aparicio, learned lessons for their subsequent invasion of other places in America. They abandoned Urabá after the foundation of Cartagena and Santa Marta in the 1520s and 1530s, as they went in search of the gold of El Dorado, and from 1550, Urabá became one of the main entrances for pirates and smugglers. Ever since, Urabá has been in dispute for its strategic geographical position (Aparicio 2012: 156).

The history of the Spanish colonisation in Urabá is complex and is not the focus of this study (see Parsons 1967; CINEP 1995; Roldán 2002; Uribe 2004). What is important, however, is Cuartas' view that from conquest, a process began which continues to develop today: the exploitation of natural resources in the region, in the framework of an imaginary which sees the territory as a source of economic riches (interview, March 2015).

Jumping forward centuries and leaving behind the French cacao farmers, towards the end of the nineteenth century there was another milestone in the history of settler colonisation. With the arrival of the American logging company Emery Boston in 1906, the exploitation of wood, ivory palm (*tagua*) and rubber began (Aparicio 2012: 158–9). Settlers came

from the neighbouring departments of Córdoba, Bolívar and Chocó to work for the company (CINEP 1995: 14), and their arrival caused frictions with local indigenous communities (Pardo 2007: 105). The resources were used up by the 1950s and the company left (CINEP 1995: 14), but the workers had settled there, and new waves of settlers were coming: for the banana boom.

In the 1940s, an imaginary was promoted of Urabá as a wild and dangerous land, mainly by the *antioqueños*, the people of Antioquia (Roldán 2002: 217). Urabá officially became part of Antioquia in 1905, which was beneficial for the department due to the access to the Caribbean Sea and commerce with Panamá, Central America, and the United States, as well as for its rich natural resources, and its fertile lands, which were largely untitled and ripe for settler immigration.

In 1926, Conservative president Pedro Nel Ospina (1922–26) signed a contract to begin construction of the Road to the Sea, to join Urabá with Medellín, the departmental capital (Roldán 2002: 219). The Road was inaugurated in 1955, and promised to integrate Urabá with the centre of the state, but the real motivation was Antioquia's appropriation of the region's natural resources, and its access to the sea (Díez Gómez 2009). The 'antioqueñisation' of Urabá began. Antioquia wanted to colonise, 'civilise', and displace the racial and cultural groups which did not fulfil the ideal promoted by the Medellín businessmen: the white, catholic, male entrepreneur, aligned with the Conservative party (Aparicio 2012: 160). The presence of *campesino* settlers of other profiles threatened the desire of the *antioqueño* elites to possess and dominate the territory (2012: 164). To 'antioqueñise' meant to whiten (Aparicio 2012: 164) and to put things in order (Díez Gómez 2009: 48). The Road, built by the army, was a 'magnet' which attracted many capitalists, workers, and people displaced by *La Violencia* (Aparicio 2012: 170).

During *La Violencia*, Urabá was a mostly Liberal region whose Conservative minority was *antioqueño* (Roldán 2002: 222–30). In 1948, Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated in Bogotá, an event commonly cited as the beginning of the civil war. Tension was rife across the country, and guerrilla groups arose with the objective of defeating the Conservative government. In Urabá, these groups gained ample support, and attacked members of the Conservative party and state officials.

The state's response was to militarise the region. A year later, the businessmen who had installed themselves in the region considered abandoning it, due to the threat posed by the Liberal guerrilla. Concerned about

losing their investment, the Agrarian Bank paid for their protection, indicating the priority given to the project of capitalist expansion (Roldán 2002: 241). Roldán argues that the Liberal-Conservative opposition does not explain fully the logic of the conflict in Urabá, but rather, "the violence increasingly obeyed economic motivations and not purely partisan factors" (2002: 244), and the personal interest of members of both parties (2002: 246). The state put military mayors in the region, and increased army presence.

In 1952, the *antioqueño* departmental government distributed arms to civilian volunteers who supported the Conservative party. Without adequate supervision, most of these weapons ended up in the hands of local elites or public officials with their own economic and political interests. These Conservative groups soon acquired their own momentum and began operating to accumulate personal wealth (Roldán 2002: 263–4). Roldán's conclusion about those first years of *La Violencia* in Urabá is that "what began as partisan violence evolved until it became about opportunities of personal gain", and the actors involved, including state officials, needed the violence to go on, to continue reaping its rewards (2002: 282). In this context of factions and frictions, in the post-*Violencia* years, the banana expansion began.

When the Road to the Sea was inaugurated in 1955, extensive banana farming started to replace the wood and rubber industries. It was a good region for bananas, due to the tropical climate and quick access to the sea for exportation. The American company, United Fruit, after its alleged involvement in the massacre of their banana workers in 1929 in the department of Magdalena (described by Gabriel García Márquez in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*), had to find a new place to do business, and arrived in Urabá at the end of the 1950s. Instead of buying properties and contracting workers directly, as they had done in Magdalena, the company introduced a system of producer associations in collaboration with large-scale *antioqueño* land-owners who were already in the region. In this way, they sought to have fewer direct relationships and labour obligations with the workers (Aparicio 2012: 173). In 1962, company Vice-President Jack Fox explained this position was based on their experience of land confiscation by Fidel Castro's government in Cuba, and said, "Converting many people into capitalists imposes a barrier to communism" (García 1996, cited by Díez Gómez 2009: 49), revealing the power of the global anti-communist discourse in the region.

The farm owners installed banana infrastructure according to the company's regulations. The company simply had to carry out technical

management of the farms (Díez Gómez 2009: 50). The work opportunities, coinciding with the Road to the Sea, increased the wave of migration towards the region. The boom of the banana industry in the 1960s led to an exponential population increase; between 1951 and 1964, Urabá went from 49,160 to 149,850 inhabitants, a 204% growth (CINEP 1995: 52).

Banana as a crop is particularly subject to risk and uncertainty. It is vulnerable to climatological conditions and pests, as well as to labour conflicts, because it requires daily harvest. Also, competition on the international market means price instability. Due to this combination of factors, the population boom of the arriving workers was not accompanied by adequate planning (CINEP 1995: 54–55). Basic infrastructure and public services were lacking, and more people kept on arriving displaced by *La Violencia*, seeking in Urabá both refuge and opportunity. The dynamic of settler immigration for exploitation of the land began to overlap with the logic and the consequences of war.

The banana workers had no idea of their right to unionise. The PCC came to Urabá in the 1960s, and gave Marxist training to the settlers, the young people and the workers (Díez Gómez 2009). The PCC taught the workers their labour rights and they organised themselves into unions: the Union of Banana Workers (SINTRABANANO, *Sindicato de Trabajadores del Banano*, formed in 1964) and the Union of Agro Workers (SINTAGRO, *Sindicato de Trabajdores del Agro*, formed in 1972). Due to the perception of communism as the 'enemy', the farm owners began to persecute the unions and militarise the farms. The trade union struggle became installed in a population which already had several frictions: partisan tensions left after the Liberal-Conservative conflict; conflicts over personal economic interests; cultural differences and hierarchies; disputes associated with land ownership; and disagreements around access to the scarce public services. These different conflicts, which initially were separate, began to merge into this one, more dominant conflict: the workers-bosses tension (Díez Gómez 2009: 50–1).

In this context, many small-scale settlers were forced to leave the lowlands of Urabá to give way to the expansion of banana and cattle farming (the other dominant industry). In the 1960s, settlers moved eastwards up into the slopes of the Abibe Mountain Range, the northernmost tip of the western chain of the Andes. Others had arrived slightly earlier, displaced by *La Violencia* from municipalities further south along the Abibe, such as Dabeiba, Frontino, Urama and Peque. There, they began to reproduce a form of subsistence mountain agriculture typical of the regions they had abandoned, growing mixtures of crops for consumption and small-scale

sales, such as beans, rice, corn, plantain, avocado and cassava (Aparicio 2012: 6). They built a small urban settlement in 1964 (Aparicio 2012: 714), some ten kilometres from the banana city of Apartadó, and they called it San José de Apartadó, because Saint Joseph was the patron saint of farmers (Pardo 2007: 159). The inhabitants formed a Junta of Communal Action (JAC, *Junta de Acción Comunal*) and requested basic services from the local state, and a road from Apartadó.

They brought with them cultural practices of collective work. The *campesino* culture across Colombia traditionally includes customs of working together to achieve mutual goals, though living separately, non-communally, in nuclear family farmsteads. These collaborative practices are called *convites, mingas* or *exchanged hands*, and these intrepid settler families, who brought their *campesino* culture with them from Antioquia and Córdoba, started to work together to cut paths into the mountain, tame nature, sow crops and meet their basic survival needs (Aparicio 2012: 174).

B.G.[1] told me her family arrived in Urabá in 1967 from Santa Fe de Antioquia, "seeking horizons", because Urabá was "a promised land"—typical of the settlers who came to Urabá seeking adventure and happiness. The family went up into the mountains, above the municipality of Currulao, a town on the Road to the Sea:

> It was pure mountain. Thick forest, there were few openings. It was scary because there were snakes and wildcats that approached the house. But we started to adapt, and we made the forest move back. There were problems, because paramilitarism wasn't born yesterday. It has always existed in Urabá, since the sixties. In the banana plantations, they were already forcibly disappearing people. In those years they were called 'the black hand'. And the 'death squads'. People were killed, anyone who thought differently they killed. […] So the situation became complex, but in the *bananeras*. In the countryside, there wasn't so much persecution yet. […] It was wonderful, very peaceful. There were many animals you could eat. There were loads of fish, you went to the stream and you practically stepped on the fish. We were happy eating fish, and huge cassavas. […] If Urabá hadn't been so damaged by the violence, we would be living in a paradise. (Interview, January 2015)

The subsistence agriculture of the *campesinos*, based on growing diverse crops and living among complex ecosystems of animals, water, and thick forest, is seen as 'peaceful', despite a respect for nature and wildness—the scary 'snakes and wildcats'—as a 'paradise'. This organic world contrasts

with the banana plantations—monocrop, rows and rows in straight lines, with dry, cracked earth where nothing grows because it has all been killed with chemical weed-killer—which were becoming the heartland of growing violence.

The Arrival of Cacao to San José de Apartadó

The settlers of San José de Apartadó began ordering and demarcating the territory according to their needs. M., who arrived in 1964, said that in the beginning, the primary effort was to grow the basics—corn and beans. The other crops, cassava, plantain and avocado, came later (focus group, La Unión, April 2014). G.T. said that when the settlers arrived,

> they found a very fertile land and began to sow coffee. Until 85, coffee was the most important crop, the baseline of the people's economy. Then cacao appeared […] and it became the region's most interesting crop. The coffee was not that good quality; the region is very humid, and there is good sun to dry the coffee but then it became damp, so the people cut the coffee down to make way for the cacao. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014)

Those who came from western Antioquia in the 1960s brought cacao seeds with them, a variety they called 'little bird', *pajarito*, and planted them in their new home.[2] F. arrived in the sixties; "there was not much cacao yet, there were some little trees, but only a few that the people sowed to drink [hot chocolate]" (interview, January 2015). According to J.E., these were "some little trees here and there, belonging to people who were experimenting to see if it would grow" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014).

In the 1970s, the National Federation of Cacao-growers of Colombia (Fedecacao, *Federación Nacional de Cacaoteros de Colombia*) and the Agrarian Bank gave credits to expand cacao farming, and it became the principal cash-crop of the township of San José. The institutions gave loans against the value of the farms, and legalised the settlers' land titles. Officials from the Agrarian Bank and Fedecacao visited the hamlets, organised meetings, and gave seeds to those who wanted to participate in the project. To do so, the *campesinos* had to bring a sample of soil taken from the depth of one metre. J.S. said that in order to participate, one had to own a piece of land, and that the project took place in stages: there was 'Plan A', in which people sowed five hectares of cacao each, and 'Plan B', in which those who

had already sown the five hectares sowed an additional five or ten some years later. He said:

> They gave the loan, but they also offered consultancy, because it was all very technical. The land, the compost and chemical fertilisers. The advantage was that the cacao didn't get the *monilla* and the *escobabruja* which are two things that attack the cacao today.[3] In that moment there were no diseases, not on the trees nor on the fruit. We sold to the Luker, there was a big buying house in Apartadó. Each producer had a lot of cacao, the minimum anyone had was five hectares and some had up to fifteen, for one person, and they employed workers. The farm owners sometimes had ten workers every day, during harvest time. A lot of production. I remember the queues in Apartadó with those mountains of cacao. In that moment the price was good. The cacao farmers went around loaded, with stacks of bank-notes. The price started to fall when the diseases started to arrive, the *escobabruja* and the *monilla*, I don't know what year that was in. But then one had to invest more money in order to kill [the diseases]. (Focus group, La Unión, April 2014)

The buyers in the 1970s were two Medellín-based chocolate companies: the *Nacional de Chocolates* and *Casa Luker*. Both produce chocolate in a bar, sometimes sweetened, sometimes not, used for preparing traditional Colombian hot chocolate. In the initial years, said J.E., "the people were excited seeing the first crops, because the region is so productive, so all the *campesinos* ended up sowing cacao" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). Some years later, the cacao began to be affected by the above-mentioned diseases.

O. also underlined this change, saying, "in the beginning it was organic", and then the agronomists contracted by Fedecacao and the Agrarian Bank began to teach the cacao farmers how to apply the chemicals they provided to control these diseases (focus group, San Josecito, April 2014). As J.S. signalled, prices were high at the beginning, but began to fall. The price was regulated by the chocolate companies' intermediaries in Aparatadó, who paid low prices. J.E. said, "they had to collect the cacao up here, and the road [from Apartadó] was really bad, so they took advantage and decreased the price" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). Also, the *campesinos* had to pay off their initial loans with interest, and according to J.E., some had their farms confiscated. While the cacao crops grew into tall, fruit-bearing trees, their initial excitement at the crop began to be overshadowed by the capitalist system in which they seemed to be trapped.

The Balsamar Cooperative

Feeling that things were not going well with that system, the *campesinos* of San José created the Balsamar Cooperative in 1985 with the political support of the UP and with funds from Dutch aid money. The Cooperative was founded by 25 members, but by 1987 it had more than 110 (Aparicio 2012: 222), mostly also members of the UP. According to J.E., the people decided that they were "not going to depend on the government for the cacao; we're going to make our own organisation" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014) and that "the idea was raise the prices a bit, and demand technical assistance [from the state] for growing cacao" (interview, January 2015).

The *campesinos* worked together, with funds from Dutch aid, to build a large house in the town as the main storage facility, on the ruined remains of an old cacao business which had existed in 1967, coordinated by Fedecacao and the Agrarian Bank, as a store which gave credits, and processed corn and cacao with machinery, but had gone bust due to deficient management, low prices and debt (Aparicio 2012: 222). The Balsamar house was grafted onto its ruins, creating the beginnings of a palimpsest which would continue to grow over the coming years, creating in the town of San José an affective material geography (Navaro-Yashin 2012) around the cacao.

The Balsamar storage facility, in the middle of the town, was also a shop where people could sell their other produce—beans, rice, corn, plantain, avocado—and buy their basic needs—soap, oil, *panela* (sugar cane). B.G. said that shopping there "felt good, because you were also supporting the organisation" (interview, January 2015). The Cooperative bought all the cacao produced in the township of San José, so people began to plant more. They sold directly to Luker, cutting out the Apartadó intermediaries, who had to start competing with Balsamar, without much success. According to J.E., "it wasn't just the buying of the cacao, but it had a whole social sense" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). Balsamar also bought its own trucks, so they did not have to pay for contracted transport. According to Gloria Cuartas, Balsamar put an end to the *antioqueño* intermediaries' monopoly, and "created a political and economic order" in the region, with "a profound political and economic leadership". Cuartas explained that the intermediaries paid less if the producer required immediate pay, or else they paid some time later; Balsamar, on the other hand, paid immediately (interview, March 2015). Also, the members could take out loans with a low interest rate.

From its foundation in 1985, until the violence of 1996, Balsamar was an economic, political and social centre for the whole region, known far beyond the township in the further reaches of Urabá, described by various Community members as a "touristic centre", alluding to the dynamic of constant social interaction. The maximum authority of the Cooperative was the general assembly, constituted by all the members. This had an Administrative Council of ten associates elected by the Assembly, as well as some committees. They organised *convites* and distributed work (Aparicio 2012: 223).

The Cooperative's principal capital was a 34-hectare plot of land, today the main settlement of the Peace Community, San Josecito, also known as La Holandita. In addition to the main house in San José de Apartadó, the Cooperative had three other storage rooms and even bought machinery for transforming cacao into chocolate (Aparicio 2012: 224). According to G.T., the plan was to process and export chocolate, but because of the conflict they never had a chance to properly start using the machinery (interview, January 2015).

This *campesino* culture, with its practices of subsistence agriculture and the development of cacao as cash crop, together with the self-organisation of the Balsamar cooperative, and its political and social sense, are strong cultural, economic and political antecedents to the Peace Community. Narrative elements important at this point included the notions of organisation, of autonomy, of seeking 'fair' prices, of cutting out intermediaries, and the fact that this was all being done for and by the people, to counter the injustices of the capitalist economic chain in which they were previously trapped. The everyday practice of working the cacao and building up the cooperative, its organisational structure, and the production of narratives about the importance of their own community economics are continuous with the narratives of the Peace Community today.

Today, the Community's storage facility in San Josecito functions in a similar way. Whoever spends a morning there can observe *campesinos* arriving from different hamlets, with sacks of cacao to sell on the backs of mules. They unload the sacks from the mules and the coordinators of the storage facility help to lift them onto the weighing scales. Then, they examine the quality of the cacao and test the humidity level with a machine to ensure it is dry enough not to rot during the journey to Europe. They manage two prices: one for "conventional" cacao and a higher one if it comes from a cacao grove with organic certification. Meanwhile, they tell jokes, exchange news from the hamlets, and drink cold fizzy drinks, around the economic

interaction. In the facility there is also storage for corn, and a shop selling a few snacks. One can imagine Balsamar with a similar dynamic, though more developed. According to J.E., "it was better than the storage facility now, because they were better times" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). This references the perceived continuity and discontinuity—the before and after. It is like Balsamar, but it is not. The sense of loss is palpable.

THE PATRIOTIC UNION'S *CAMPESINO* DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

How did Holland end up financing the beginnings of Balsamar? Aparicio has traced the diagnostics carried out between the 1960s and 1980s by various development projects written by Corpouraba (*Corporación de Desarrollo de Urabá*, Development Corporation of Urabá), the departmental government of Antioquia, the University of Antioquia, the National Department of Planning, the Organisation of American States (OEA), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). These development initiatives sought to redress the poverty in the Colombian countryside, and their discourse privileged the '*campesinado*' and 'comprehensive rural development' (Aparicio 2012: 201–4).

In 1980, officials from the Dutch Foreign Affairs Office visited the Colombian National Planning Department (DPN, *Departamento de Planeación Nacional*), saying they wanted to invest in projects to "help the poor" (Aparicio 2012: 211). The DPN directed them to Urabá. The project's focus in the region was to empower local communities and strengthen existing cooperatives (Aparicio 2012: 211–215). In San José specifically, the objective was "to strengthen the informal organisational practices which already existed among the population of *campesino* settlers", referring "to the fact that the *campesinos* were already organised in informal ways" and had "practices of 'mutual support' and a feeling of 'solidarity'" (2012: 218). Multiple evaluations done by the above development agencies agree that Balsamar was the most successful of the projects in Urabá (Aparicio 2012: 223).

But there might have been another reason for the arrival of Dutch aid in San José. J.E. believed it was thanks to the UP's international network (field diary, March 2015). The UP gained great force in Urabá, and in San José, support was almost unanimous (Aparicio 2012: 183). B.G. said this was because the UP addressed "the inconformity of the people and the abandonment of the state" (interview, January 2015). But then the

systematic persecution against UP began across Colombia. The violence against UP members or sympathisers in Urabá obeyed national logics, but also had specific local dimensions, just as with all the dynamics of the conflict. In Urabá, one of these local dimensions was economics.

One of the UP's main activities in Urabá was promoting a model of *campesino* development, which is another strand of the political and cultural antecedents of the Peace Community. However, the Community is not, as Gómez-Suárez (2015: 84) suggests, simply a continuation of UP members who "resigned their political identity". In fact, most of the Community members are not ex-UP members but ex-UP voters, or *campesinos* who simply took part in the collaborative development—because most local leaders were killed or fled. However, the stigmatisation of the UP for their original links with FARC—what Gómez-Suárez calls the 'FARC-UP script'—extended later to the Peace Community due to its initial links with the UP, and contributes to explain the later persecution of the Peace Community itself.

The UP's development project in Urabá was based, according to Cuartas, on three elements: economy, education and healthcare. The cooperatives were the economic driver, so several were formed, with different names and organisational structures, in municipalities such as Mutatá, Belén de Bajirá, Carepa, Apartadó, Chigorodó and Turbo. They received technical assistance from the party. Cuartas described the cooperatives as "a life project of happiness", with which people believed "that it was possible to build a viable, human, left-wing project". Balsamar was the pilot cooperative for the whole of Urabá. In that moment, said Cuartas, the UP planned to build relationships between Urabá and Central America, which also had left-wing resistance processes, to form a "territorial political unit", by building links with countries that sympathised with the communist project (interview, March 2015). O., who learnt to farm cacao among Balsamar members, said that in those days they talked about how "Costa Rica was the country that produced the best cacao" (focus group, San Josecito, April 2014). This was not a coincidence. The long-term political vision was embedded in the everyday narratives around the practice of production. Again, we see that chocolate has always been linked to politics in Urabá.

The UP paid the day's labour for the *campesinos* to cut paths connecting the hamlets to San José de Apartadó and to Apartadó (interview with G.T., January 2015), and to build schools and health centres. Today, in several hamlets of the township, cement houses built by the UP still stand, whilst the rest, the standard dwellings of the *campesinos*, are made of wood. In Mulatos,

for example, there is a building used as a stable, with a base constructed of cement breeze-blocks. It was going to be a school, but was never finished because the violence came and the inhabitants fled. When the Community returned to Mulatos, they built up the rest of the walls with wooden columns and placed a zinc sheet roof over the top. It is a palimpsest symbolic of the UP's unfinished *campesino* development project; a process truncated by the persecution. The history of San José de Apartadó is inscribed, ghostlike, into these material palimpsests, like the Balsamar house in the town.

According to J.E.:

> The political project was geared towards development for the *campesinos*. The building of schools, of health centres, we also had all the design of elec-trification planned out, roads to connect the hamlets, improvement of the *campesinos'* housing, and the creation of loans with very low interests. […] **It was us, the *campesinos*, planning the development that we wanted**. (Interview, January 2015; author's emphasis)

This political, social and economic development project is a narrative of optimistic self-organisation and belief in empowering autonomy. The cacao was the crop with the best economic yield, so it became the core source of finance for this project. J.E. said they first worked on education, because "if there was no education in the area, there were no possibilities of staying". Next followed health; "many health centres [were built] in the hamlets […] With the Aerial Health Service of Antioquia, helicopters would come to tend to the sick". They planned aqueducts, so that all the hamlets could have drinkable water, and electrification, but this got only as far as the hamlet of La Unión, two hours' walk from San José, because "the project was abandoned there" when the violence arrived. J.E. described the mission as:

> a development project to enable the *campesino* to stay in the area, because it is a region of great richness, very productive. Here, the cacao, coffee, corn, beans, all the excess was left to rot it was so plentiful, there was an enormous production, plantain, cassava, there was everything in huge quantity. So the idea was to support the *campesinos* so they didn't seek the city, but could have a life project here and not have to emigrate to the city. (Interview, January 2015)

Completely the opposite to the current idea of development, J.E. said emphatically: "a development which seeks to displace the *campesino*".

Across Latin America, *campesinos* often migrate to cities, due to the poor socio-economic living standards in underdeveloped rural areas, and in areas where resource extraction for capitalist accumulation of wealth is accompanied by lack of social investment and poor labour rights, such as the dynamics of the Urabá banana sector. Such people frequently end up in poverty due to lack of opportunities and difficulties adapting to urban life. In Colombia, the phenomenon of mass and repeated internal displacement has hugely magnified this: people flee from the violence in the countryside, often with few possessions and robbed of their land, their only capital, and end up in misery belts, working in the informal sector, and frequently subjected to urban types of violence. J.E.'s idea that the UP's development project was to avoid the displacement of *campesinos* to the cities shows elements of protection, prevention, respect for the dignity of life, and the them/us narrative we will see in Part II.

The social dynamic in San José was one of optimism and productivity. G.T. spoke of a yearly party for the avocado harvest, every 19th of March: "there was a party that lasted a week, there was a prize for the biggest avocado, there were horseback parades, everyone went to bathe in the river. It was a great atmosphere" (interview, January 2015). B.G. said that there were prizes for "who could eat the most avocado or who could eat the biggest avocado" (interview, January 2015).

The cultural elements present here included the autonomous work and commerce, the *campesino* empowerment and their own development linked to a left-wing political project. But the violence arrived in the late 1990s and put an end to this panorama of hope.

The Violence in Urabá

Historian María Teresa Uribe explains the conformation of the Community by the convergence of two elements: the history of social organisation and the geostrategic location. The presence of FARC and UP in the territory of San José, as well as the social organisation (and rebellion), situated the township, in the perception of the other actors of the conflict, firmly on the side of FARC. This situation explains, in part, the arrival of the violence to the region (2004: 89–93). The strategic position of San José compounded this, because in military terms, "whoever controls the territory of San José de Apartadó has a comparative military advantage in terms of dominating the whole region and a good part of the Colombian north-west" (2004: 92).

Thus far, this chapter has emphasised the view of Gloria Cuartas and the Community that this violence was directed explicitly against this model of *campesino* development, as part of a spatialising practice of war that sought to control the region's economic riches. Of course, a little cooperative is not really a serious threat to major capitalist expansion, even with the fact that the local cacao intermediaries had to put up their prices slightly to compete with Balsamar. But given the association with the left-wing UP, and therefore with FARC and with the spectre of communism, Balsamar and the bottom-up development project represented a symbolic threat. So although Cuartas and the Community's conception might be seen as over-stretching the importance of this local development in explaining why the inhabitants of the zone were targeted, in comparison to the military and political dynamics of the violence, the economic dimension to the conflict in Urabá is a factor which has been overlooked, and leaves a legacy which is continuous with the present collective identity of the Peace Community.

But let us zoom out to the political and military dynamics of the conflict at a regional level, before returning to San José de Apartadó. The guerrilla groups arrived in Urabá towards the end of the 1960s. The ELN had some presence in Urabá but was not an important actor there. The EPL, founded in Alto Sinú in Córdoba in 1965, expanded its military and political power towards Urabá (CINEP 1995: 21). FARC's 5th Front was one of their earliest and strongest fronts. According to A. and D., two commanders of the Front, the Front probably began as early as 1965. In 1971, it had five men, but grew to become a properly constituted front in 1977. In 1978, the Front started expanding and grew to 40 units, working shoulder to shoulder with the PCC, creating the Communist Youth (JUCO—*Juventud Comunista*) and working with the banana workers (interview, September 2016).

Both EPL and FARC permeated the banana sector, exercising state-like power:

> The FARC forced the businessmen to negotiate the workers contracts […] they distributed lands, resolved disputes about property rights, regulated prices and the exploitation of forest resources and the use of water, they imposed minimum wages and labour conditions on businessmen and participated in small public works together with the social organisations. The guerrillas created order and security, and frequently exercised judicial functions. (Valenzuela 2009: 12–13)

As elsewhere in Colombia, FARC became the de facto sovereignty (Blom Hansen and Stepputat 2006) over areas of Urabá daily life, imposing rules and regulations and using violence to enforce them.

In San José, FARC were the law. When G.T.'s parents separated, he and his six brothers and sisters stayed with their mother, and the couple had to divide their goods; the house, farm animals, the land. His father did not want to give anything to his mother. She first went and asked the JAC to mediate, but to no effect. Then, "she went up a level" and spoke with the UP, but that did not work either. Finally, she went to the FARC, and at their orders, his father obeyed and left her the house, in which G.T. grew up (personal communication, July 2015). This anecdote is a tiny fragment exemplifying the everyday dynamic of this de facto sovereignty.

In reaction to the guerrilla presence, and to the threat the trade unionism represented to the capitalist expansion in Urabá, the state launched a counter-insurgency offensive, also persecuting unionists seen as 'subversive' (Valenzuela 2009: 13). Meanwhile, tensions grew between the EPL and FARC, and a feud developed, leading to a violent war between the two guerrillas for control of the territory, between 1978 and 1980 (Valenzuela 2009: 13).

By the 1980s, the region's businessmen were worried. Their economic project was threatened by the communist influence, the trade union movement and the growing violence between the two guerrillas, both of which maintained strong relationships with their workers. The economic project for exploiting the resources of Urabá was motivated by the deeply rooted imaginary dating back to colonisation discussed by Cuartas. According to her, during the presidency of Liberal Virgilio Barco (1986–1990), the image of Urabá as a region with resources to exploit and connect with international commerce consolidated. Ideas circulated, such as the connection of Bahía Cupica on the Pacific coast with Turbo, the port town on the Gulf of Urabá, to connect the Pacific with the Atlantic via a railway or inter-oceanic canal.[4] The government proposed widening the Road to the Sea, and extending it through the Darién. Today, however, the Darién continues to be the only piece of the Pan-American Highway that is not joined up. If it were not for the famous Darién Gap, a trajectory of some 160 km of dense jungle between the south of Panama and the north of the Chocó department in Colombia, one could drive from Alaska down to the southern tip of Chile. Unblocking the Gap would open the region to international markets. Cuartas emphasised the tension between the economic models: "In the imagination of the state, the territories of Urabá

are already pre-envisaged and organised; there is a delimitation of territory which must be organised in order to develop the mega-projects which would be carried out in the future" (interview, March 2015).

Cuartas' argument contains, of course, a political interpretation, with which we can agree or disagree. But the involvement of the business sector is undeniable. Kalyvas shows that "references to the disjunction between center and periphery are present in almost every descriptive account" of internal armed conflicts (2003: 479). Local politics is never simply a reflection of national politics. The relationship between the two should be seen, according to Kalyvas, as a series of "alliances" that perform "transactions" between "centre and periphery", which allows us to recognise agency at both ends (2003: 480). In scholarship on the history of the conflict in Urabá, the economic dimension is clear. FARC commanders A. and D. felt that the violence, rather than straightforward counter-insurgency, was due to the fact that the businessmen and the traditional political parties felt they were losing the political control of the territory, which was attractive economically, and the PCC and the UP had too much support in the region (interview, September 2016).

A first anti-subversive war was launched between 1986 and 1989 by the alliance between banana businessmen, cattle farmers, drug cartels and the armed forces (Pardo 2007: 113–4). Valenzuela explains that this alliance was "an effort to protect private property, expand the rural property of drug traffickers and neutralise social movements and the advance of the left" (2009: 14). It was called '*Plan Retorno*' (Plan Return), for the business sector to regain control of the region and prevent the spread of communism. The violence was aimed not only at FARC fighters, but at the community leaders, organisations and alliances which represented an alternative to their economic monopoly (interview with A. and D., September 2016).

In 1988, a banana workers' strike led to the cancelation of the legal status of SINTAGRO and SINTRABANANO. The United Workers' Centre (CUT, *Central Unitaria de Trabajadores*) was created, and in that space, the two unions were joined in the National Union of Agricultural Industry Workers (*Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria Agropecuaria,* SINTRAINAGRO), which grouped together some 14,000 workers. In 1989, an agreement was reached with the guild AUGURA (*Asociación de Bananeros de Colombia,* Banana Workers' Association) about the principles of collective negotiation of the banana sector (CINEP 1995: 17). However, connected to the boss-worker conflict, the web of guerrilla groups and their urban branches was growing and becoming more complex.

In 1991, the EPL demobilised, following negotiations with César Gaviria's government. Some demobilised fighters formed the political party Hope, Peace and Freedom (*Esperanza, Paz y Libertad*, keeping the same acronym of EPL, but known as 'Esperanza'), which entered into political competition with the UP. The same year, FARC and EPL agreed to tolerate each other's political projects, but this agreement broke down because a dissident faction of EPL, called 'Francisco Caraballo' after its leader, refused to demobilise, and instead joined forces with FARC in order to attack Esperanza for betraying their ideals (CINEP 1995: 63). Other EPL dissidents formed a new front called 'Bernardo Franco'. This front announced in a public communiqué the reactivation of military operations, declared war on their old colleagues for betraying the cause, and started killing members of Esperanza (CINEP 1995: 27), and got involved in drug-trafficking (CINEP 1995: 28). Other EPL ex-combatants went into the Administrative Department of Security of Apartadó (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad*—DAS), the state's intelligence service, as part of their demobilisation agreement. They worked as bodyguards to members of Esperanza, and were also persecuted by the EPL dissidence (CINEP 1995: 26).

The FARC, in turn, created the Bolivarian Militias, also urban armed groups, at the beginning of the 1990s. These attacked members of Esperanza and of the Apartadó DAS, due to the FARC-EPL feud. The militias were relatively independent of the commanders of the rural guerrilla, and became increasingly criminal and autonomous, until not even the FARC could control them (CINEP 1995: 26–7).

Esperanza then created the 'Popular Alternative Commands' or *Comandos Populares* (Popular Commands). These were urban armed groups which operated in the banana plantations defending the EPL dissidence, members of the FARC and the Bolivarian Militias. The *Comandos* began to assassinate members of the PCC and the UP, sometimes in alliance with members of DAS (CINEP 1995: 34) and of SIJIN (*Seccional de Policía Judicial e Investigación*, Legal and Investigation Section of the Police). They also allied with the administrators of the banana farms to protect them from FARC (Madariaga 2006: 25).

Between 1991 and 1994, the FARC killed 146 members of Esperanza (CINEP 1995: 25). In January 1994, the FARC stormed the Apartadó neighbourhood of 'La Chinita', largely inhabited by demobilised EPL fighters, and massacred 35 people, wounding 12 more. The violence between the FARC and EPL/Esperanza, each with their own urban branches, extended to violence against members of the UP, the PCC, the JAC and the

trade unions (Valenzuela 2009: 14). According to Cuartas, following the massacre of 'La Chinita', Esperanza claimed that FARC had been motivated by the UP's fear of losing the 1994 elections, and said that the massacre was planned in the Balsamar Cooperative (interview, March 2015), indicating the way that stigmatisation by association (FARC-UP-Balsamar) travelled, and the way that discourses circulated justifying violence.

These spirals of violence took place amid growing social problems in the region, due to the bad planning which had accompanied the banana expansion and population boom. Housing and public services were scarce, and common delinquency increased, especially of youth gangs. Youth crime increased in the 1980s and 1990s because the new urban generation, children of banana workers, who had received some primary and secondary education, had no work expectations, so were easily absorbed into criminal groups, leading to a proliferation of gangs (CINEP 1995: 64–5). The *antioqueño* businessmen preferred to contract other *antioqueños* for the mid-level jobs in the industry, because they were accustomed to this type of capitalist economy and the corresponding labour relationships. The earlier inhabitants of the region, therefore, were relegated to the lowest strata of the regional economy (CINEP 1995: 68). This recalls Colombia's racialising social hierarchies, dating back to colonialism and the scientific-geographic missions which characterised the country as made up of barbaric 'wild regions' and civilised white elites; and similarly, the 'antioqueñisation' of the 1950s and the creation of the banana industry in Urabá.

The 1990s were one of the bloodiest decades in Colombia's history. The government signed international conventions on human rights and IHL, and engaged in negotiations and signed demobilisation deals with the EPL, the M-19 and the Quintín Lame guerrilla groups, part of a national policy for peace. In the same period, social movements focussed on peace and human rights expanded, creating a "culture of rights" which aimed to stop the spirals of violence (Aparicio 2012: 14–5). Tate (2007) describes two moments of the human rights discourse in Colombia. First, a vocation of left-wing 'militancy' emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, influenced by the Southern Cone social movements of people who had largely been victims of state violence. This sector used human rights discourse to delegitimate the actions of the Colombian state. Then, a second moment entered into tension with the continued existence of the first: the 'professionalisation' of human rights work in the 1990s, whose actors began to interact with state institutions and with the international system to try pragmatically to achieve improvements in security, justice and democracy.

In Urabá, the proliferation of social organisations demanding their human rights represented a threat to the business sector and to their dominion over the territory, together with the violent threat represented by the guerrillas and the chaotic web of armed groups. The idea of communism as the enemy, which had extended across the world in the wake of the Cold War, formed a 'script' (Gómez-Suárez 2015) which justified the violence carried out against anything with shades of the left.

In the 1990s, the Urabá businessmen began to establish a new order to retake control of the region. The spread of paramilitarism began. One of the early paramilitary groups, prior to the consolidation of the national AUC structure, was the *Campesino* Self-Defence Forces of Córdoba and Urabá (ACCU, *Autodefensass Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá*), led by Carlos Castaño, which expanded across Urabá in 1993 and 1994 with the aim of dismantling the political and social structures of the UP in the region (Gómez-Suárez 2015). The ACCU acted on the basis of three interests: (1) defence of private property (the cattle and banana farms); (2) an anti-subversive fight (they even criticised the army for being inefficient); and (3) the control of local political power, manifested by "banishing all organisational forms, be they left-wing or independent", particularly the political and social structures of the UP (Romero 2003: 193–222). This group had no national-level political manifesto, but their discourse was based on anti-communism (CINEP 1995: 30–3).

By 1994, Esperanza was functioning under the interests of the banana businessmen, who wanted to regain control, and opted for methods of terror to do so. Esperanza's *Comandos Populares* were functioning as death squads, and were absorbed into the ACCU.

Let us pause to emphasise this: an originally left-wing guerrilla switches sides, in the midst of this spread of violence. In G.T.'s words:

> EPL had problems with the FARC and with the government, they felt attacked by different sides, so they decided to demobilise, and in that moment there was the paramilitary spread. They became a civilian organisation, Esperanza, Paz y Libertad, but they re-armed and turned into paramilitaries. Those people knew the hamlets really well, they knew who the leaders were, so together with the paramilitaries they began to kill. (Interview, January 2015)

In 1994, Law Decree 356 was passed, creating the Special Services of Surveillance and Private Security (*Servicios Especiales de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada*), known as the Security Cooperatives (*Cooperativas de Seguridad*)

or the *Convivir*, structures that were supported by elites and the army (Aparicio 2012: 187). Their function was:

> to inform authorities of irregularities which occur in their area of action, in order to facilitate the capture of criminals and help in their legal processing. They are made up of a group of citizens, a coordinating committee and a private communications centre. They work in close collaboration with the Police, the Army, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Attorney General's Office. Their role is intelligence and communication, and at the moment, they are only supplied with short firearms. In recent days, however, [Álvaro] Uribe Vélez created a big scandal in proposing to supply the *Convivir* with long-reach arms, in order to convert them into immediate reaction groups to support the Armed Forces.[5]

On consolidating their control in Urabá in alliance with the ACCU and the army, the business sector felt at peace. The 1980s paramilitary counter-insurgency project had evolved into a "private project to restore public order" and "an alternative for regional-level power linked to diverse public and private interests" (Valenzuela 2009: 14). Towards the end of the 1990s, the ACCU merged with groups from other regions into the AUC.

General Rito Alejo del Río was commander of the Seventeenth Brigade of the Colombian army, which has jurisdiction over Urabá, between 1995 and 1997. He was popularly known as the "pacifier" of Urabá, for the hard-line offensives he commanded, ostensibly against the FARC; but a chain of illegal actions began to unfold in which paramilitaries and army worked together using methods of terror. Álvaro Uribe, then governor of Antioquia (1995–1998), declared Urabá a 'Special Zone of Public Order' in 1996, and worked closely with del Río to prioritise 'cleansing' the region of guerrilla. But the violence against those who were considered to be 'opposition' or 'subversive' was public, dramatic and brutal, and the collaboration with paramilitaries was well known. Even then, Second Commander (*Jefe del Estado Mayor y Segundo Comandante*) of the Seventeenth Brigade, Colonel Carlos Alfonso Velásquez, wrote a letter to the Commander of the National Army in May 1996 expressing his concern about this collaboration and about General del Río's actions.[6]

In 2012, del Río was sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment for his responsibility in the murder of Marino López,[7] an afro-descendent *campesino* from the Cacarica River basin, during Operation Genesis, an action coordinated between military and paramilitaries in the dense jungle of the Lower Atrato River, on the opposite side of the Urabá gulf from San José, in the Chocó

department. The operation, ostensibly to combat FARC, instigated the displacement of around 10,000 *campesinos*, from indiscriminate bombings and acts of extreme brutality, including the emblematic case of López's assassination. The paramilitaries cut off his head and played football with it in front of his community, terrorising them into leaving (Burnyeat 2013).

I agree with Díez Gómez that this brutality sought to establish hegemony via the biopolitical creation of what Taussig (1987) calls a "culture of terror":

> Via the "spectacle" of death, more than over the victim's body, they act on the consciousness of the spectators. A sort of social control is exercised via the exemplification of what could happen to each of them if they violated the parameters established by the group which has or seeks to obtain the power over the population in question. (Díez Gómez 2009: 61)

The Balsamar Massacre

In this context, San José de Apartadó was vulnerable to counter-insurgency attacks, due to their association with the UP. Balsamar especially symbolised the party's presence in the town. The Cooperative became stigmatised, like so many other experiences in the country, with the anti-communist discourse of the Cold War, and because of FARC's ongoing presence in the region's daily life. On top of the counter-insurgency justification, there was Balsamar's 'alternative' economy. Cuartas emphasised that "the image of the UP's political power created tension with the political model that had already been imagined […] around Urabá". In her view, the UP was producing a "spatiality" which clashed with the use of territory imagined by the capitalist project (interview, March 2015). Thus, the brutality exercised against the UP can be explained by the combination of the political threat they represented, and the economic conception of territory.

The Peace Community members' historical interpretation of their persecution privileges the economic dimension, which helps to explain the way they perceive 'development' today (Chap. 8). J.E. said:

> The generation of so much violence is due to all the economic riches in the region of Urabá. When the UP was born, the violence against it came because they felt that the UP was harming the economic interests of the state and the multinationals. Because we're talking about a political party with a social sense […] So that harms the interests of the banana businessmen

and cattle ranchers, of the mining interests in the region. They saw that we were opponents of that imposed economic model. And that we were creating our own development project. They saw that as a danger for the economic model which had been imposed in the region. So the companies and cattle-ranchers joined with the paramilitaries and with the drug cartels, with the Castaños in Córdoba, and the whole paramilitary project gets transferred to Urabá to assassinate all the leaders of the UP and all the social organisations, like the trade unions, the JACs, women's associations, and others. (Interview, January 2015)

Though this interpretation downplays the national insurgency/counter-insurgency dynamic, the link between the economic and the political has perhaps been underestimated in the writing of Urabá's history. The project titled 'The Best Corner of America', a document published after a conference in Medellín on 23 May 1997 about development in the Colombian north-west, signed by various state actors and *antioqueño* businessmen, including the then governor Álvaro Uribe, stipulates the agreement to develop the region. The general objectives include "the country's internationalisation and intensification of the economic and commercial relations" around the riches in Urabá.[8] In this context, J.E.'s insistence that their project of autonomous, bottom-up development was directly targeted is understandable. J.E. thought that the violence against UP voters and sympathisers "proves that there were no interests in peace, just strategies of war" (interview, January 2015), recalling Roldán's (2002) conclusion that in *La Violencia*, it was more profitable for businessmen to continue the violence than to end it.

We arrive, then, at the night of 19 September 1996, the Balsamar massacre, symbolic of the convergence of motives for persecuting the *campesinos* of San José. N. was a little girl at the time, and lived in a house opposite the Balsamar Cooperative. She woke to noise in the street, and looked out to see what was happening. She saw soldiers leaving the Cooperative, but went back to bed before they could see her. When the town awoke next day, six bodies were laid out in the central plaza, including that of Samuel Arias, the manager of Balsamar, and others, all Cooperative directors. One of the men was overweight, and they had tried to hang him from a butcher's hook, but the body could not sustain the weight and it ripped apart. The soldiers were saying: "the guerrilla, sons of bitches, did this". N., just a child then, said, "You killed them". A soldier said to her, "Little girl, you saw nothing," and she replied, "Yes, I did, I saw you" (field diary, March 2015).

Over the four months leading up to the massacre, the army had been permanently present in San José, and the soldiers went from house to house, "very polite, asking for coffee, talking to people, but it was a strategy to discover who the leaders were", according to G.T. (interview, January 2015). He showed me inside the Balsamar house, which still stands, empty and mostly abandoned, today. "All this was cacao, cacao up to the roof," he said, gesticulating. He showed me the hooks hanging from a metal bar, which sometimes are used to hang bunches of banana, and said, "this is where they hung the Balsamar directors" (field diary, March 2015).

That year, 1996, all the local community leaders of San José de Apartadó, from the UP, the JACs, the Cooperative and all other social organisations, were either killed or fled for their lives. Local leaders play a crucial role in *campesino* organisation and productivity, and one of the most damaging impacts of the Colombian conflict has been the targeting of such figures. Bartolomé Cataño, founder and first settler of San José de Apartadó, was a prominent *campesino* leader, UP counsellor in Apartadó and one of the directors of Balsamar (Aparicio 2012: 179). According to B.G., Cataño was charismatic, "a mover of masses". According to J.E., Cataño "motivated that [autonomous] development"; he had never been to school but he was an "autodidact" and would go to Bogotá "almost always barefoot with his little hat, to sit down and talk to the politicians and explain the needs of the *campesinos*". Cuartas said that Cataño "knew everything that went on in the region but he was respected by everyone", and "if someone could explain the territoriality of power it was Bartolomé" (interview, March 2015).

He was killed in Apartadó in August 1996, and his portrait is painted onto the side of the Balsamar house, with the date of his assassination. The palimpsest of the Balsamar house grows in layers—the sadness and loss of the happiness of the days of the cooperative and the "cacao up to the roof" and the violence against their leaders, exemplified by the hanging hooks.

A brief, sad phrase from the old man F. encapsulates the destruction of the Balsamar Cooperative: "They killed all the members. What happened was that they catalogued them as UP and that was the motive. But they were just people working" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). This little comment—catalogued as UP, but 'just people working'—encapsulates the complex world of the Community's collective identity, and their sense of the injustice of the persecution against them.

Notes

1. For security reasons, the names of the Peace Community members are anonymised, except in quotes from public events.
2. This common name, '*pajarito*', meaning little bird, goes back at least to the 1880s. It is a cacao of the *forastero* variety of *Theobroma cacao L.*, introduced in Antioquia by a Carlos Patín. It was speculated then that the name might derive from the small size of the grains, or because it was desired and pursued by birds because of its exquisite juice. This variety of cacao abounds in oily substances and stands out for the many colours and shapes of its pods. Various Community members still speak of the '*pajarito*' with great affection. See Patiño (2002: 382) and 'Cuál variedad de Cacao debemos sembrar?', letter from Edo. Chavarriaga Misas, Head of the Genetics section of the National Faculty of Agronomy, Medellín, 30 August 1941, http://www.bdigital.unal.edu.co/34417/1/34567-135985-1-PB.pdf [retrieved 7 August 2015].
3. The *escobabruja*, or 'witches' broom', is a common local name for *Crinipellis perniciosa*, and *monilla* is the name for Moniliasis, *Moniliophthora roreri*. Both diseases affect the crop, reducing the harvests of small and medium-size producers, leading to low yields and reduced income. See Brand Trujillo (2014).
4. The majority of these proposals were never carried out, but the image lives on in official discourse, e.g. the Strategic Plan for Urabá-Darién: 2011–2020, 'Resumen ejecutivo del plan regional de desarrollo' (2011), http://www.comisiontripartita.gov.co/Documents/CartillaPlanEstrategicodeUrabaDarien.pdf [retrieved 24 September 2015].
5. *Semana*, 11 November 1996, 'Mano Dura'. http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/mano-dura/30719-3 [retrieved 5 July 2015].
6. Letter dated 31 May 1996, JGA 1995–7/37–44.
7. *El Espectador*, 24 August 2012, 'Rito Alejo del Río, el "Pacificador" Condenado'. http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/temadeldia/rito-alejo-del-rio-el-pacificador-condenado-articulo-370028 [accessed 9 July 2017].
8. JGA 1997/147–55.

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The Founding of the Peace Community

Neutrality: "How Are We Going to Live in the Midst of the Conflict Without Being Part of It?"

According to G.T., after the Balsamar massacre in September 1996 and the assassinations of leaders, San José "began to fall apart", the town "looked sad" and became "more and more empty". The killings continued, and widespread threats came from paramilitaries and the army, telling people they had two days to leave their land. G.T. said:

> All the leaders were displaced or assassinated. Just us *campesinos* were left, we had no leadership, we knew nothing. All this happened because of the guerrilla's dominion here, everyone was stigmatised as being guerrilla fighters. We were not guerrilla fighters, many of us were *campesinos* who weren't involved with anyone. We were in the territory, but we were not part of anything. (Interview, January 2015)

"We were not part of anything", "just people working"; but they were marked out and stigmatised. San José became a ghost town, as almost all its inhabitants left. The cacao economy collapsed, and the Balsamar house was left empty. In 1996, the township had a population of over seven thousand.[1] According to G.T., only 500 remained after the Balsamar massacre. These people lived in the hamlets, and now had nowhere to buy supplies from, and nowhere to sell their produce. They lost their connection with the city of

Apartadó, because the paramilitaries and the army controlled the road, and installed checkpoints, where they stopped people who went to Apartadó to buy food supplies and medicine, and confiscated them. "They suspected that some of the supplies were destined for the guerrilla, so they would order people down from the jeeps and kill them", said G.T. (interview, January 2015). The 500 *campesinos* who remained were concentrated in four hamlets: La Unión, Arenas, Buenos Aires and Bella Vista. They decided to declare themselves a Peace Community, the first in the country and the only one, of four that existed in the 1990s, which maintains that name today.

The Peace Community was not the first community to use the conception of 'neutrality' as a strategy of protection from the conflict. The idea has multiple origins, and different communities appropriated it differently. Before addressing the concept's origin, let us consider what it meant to the *campesinos* of San José. According to B.G., "It all began with people talking and murmuring that the paramilitaries were killing a lot of people, and asking ourselves, what we should do? Several friends had already left" (interview, January 2015). G.T. said, "the people who were left started to think about how to stay in the region, what strategy might work, to avoid being displaced" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). If they wanted to stay in their land, the question they had to solve was, "how to live in the midst of the conflict without being part of it?" (interview with B.G., January 2015).

They were part of the conflict dynamics, because, as we saw in G.T.'s tale about his parents' separation, the guerrilla infiltrated everyday social life. G.T. explained:

> Before the Peace Community, we felt tranquil, we didn't think it was going to be a problem, so we sold food to the guerrilla. They operated in the area but they let us alone. They asked for a chicken or two to eat, so we sold it to them. If they needed to borrow a mule, fine. So even if you weren't part of it, in some way they involved you, and you couldn't say no. (Interview, January 2015)

G.G. explained that finding a way of not participating in the activities of the armed actors was difficult:

> If the guerrilla comes here, the army comes and attacks them. And if the guerrilla is here, then the army also says, 'you here are guerrilla collaborators'. And they said, 'you can't be here, because the guerrilla is here, so if you're here it's because you're collaborators.' (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014)

B.G. said:

> A guerrilla fighter passes by and asks you for water, and you give him water. A soldier passes by and asks for water and you give him water. We would always give water or food; and those roles had to change. Even though we knew that they were the sons of *campesinos*, we had to change our custom, and say no to all the armed actors. (Interview, January 2015)

On the ground, neutrality was not an abstract idea: it involved analysing a deeply rooted logic of quotidian life—the *campesino* hospitality of giving food and water to whoever needs it—and changing it to survive.

Three main sources influenced the idea of neutrality as a civilian protection strategy: the Catholic Church, indigenous communities, and Colombian NGOs CIJP and CINEP. There was no single root. Multiple processes overlapped and influenced each other, producing something unique, whose origins lay in a fluctuating network of actors and actions.

According to Valenzuela (2007), the first neutral community in Colombia was the Association of *Campesino* Workers of Carare (ATCC—*Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Carare*) in the municipality of La India, department of Santander, who declared themselves neutral to the conflict on 17 May 1987. Their declaration said: "We manifest our repudiation of all forms of violence", and "we have opted for the path of ACTIVE NON-VIOLENCE", which included the refusal of "any kind of support to any form of violence" (Valenzuela 2007: 6). The ATCC's neutrality led to the massacre of its leaders in 1990, together with journalist Silvia Margarita Duzán who was making a documentary about them.[2]

In Urabá, it was the indigenous communities who first talked about neutrality. On 8 October 1994, the Indigenous Councillors of Urabá (*Gobernadores Indígenas de Urabá*) published a declaration saying that all the indigenous communities of Urabá "declare[d] ourselves NEUTRAL to the armed conflict". The Indigenous Organisation of Antioquia (*Organización Indígena de Antioquia*—OIA) made a similar proclamation on 10 May 1996, saying "WE THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF ANTIOQUIA ARE NEUTRAL TO THE ARMED CONFLICT, BUT NOT INDIFFERENT TO DEATH". A small community, the indigenous reserve (*resguardo*) of Pollnes in the municipality of Chigorodó, declared "our purpose of NEUTRALITY". The town of Mutatá, made up of indigenous, afro-descendent and *campesino* inhabitants, pronounced, "we have decided, in a last and desperate intent to survive, TO DECLARE OURSELVES NEUTRAL TO THE WAR" (all capitals in originals).[3]

J.E. signalled the influence of these communities in their decision to declare themselves neutral: "We based ourselves in the struggle of the indigenous communities, who united to demand their rights. We began to draft our own proposal, which wasn't going to be the same as theirs because we were only just beginning, but something along the same lines" (interview, January 2015).

Given the escalating violence between FARC and EPL and the assassinations of members of the UP, the PCC and *Esperanza*, all the parties agreed to withdraw their candidates for the 1994 local elections, and named one candidate as mayor, Gloria Cuartas, who was not a member of any party, as part of the Political Consensus of Apartadó. This aimed to prevent more violence towards all party members in the dispute for power, and work together for peace in the region. (In the same elections, Álvaro Uribe was elected governor of Antioquia.)

In March 1995, in light of the assassinations of UP members, trade unionists and community leaders, the Political Consensus of Apartadó created the Commission for the Verification of the Violent Actors in Urabá, which aimed to verify the responsibility of the different conflict actors, and it began its task a month later (CINEP 1995: 16). It was made up of various local state and religious authorities, and CINEP.[4] The Commission's report highlighted the infraction of IHL by all the conflict actors, both legal and illegal, and recommended creating "zones that are neutral to the conflict, where inhabitants who are not part of the armed conflict and who are affected by combat can be protected" (CINEP 1995: 45).

The role of the Catholic Church in this Commission was the key. Almost all the Community members emphasised the influence of the then Bishop of Apartadó, Monsignor Isaías Duarte Cancino (later assassinated), in forming the idea of neutral communities. According to G.T., Duarte said that "to be a territory in peace, you must become neutral. And that meant not collaborating with any of them, not being part, not carrying munitions, not giving information, nor bearing arms. And that idea was welcomed, because it was the last alternative" (interview, January 2015). Here we see a seed of the idea that 'alternativity' has to do with having no other option.

Over the course of 1996, while all the assassinations were happening, the *campesinos* of San José, as well as other communities in Urabá suffering similar patterns of violence, assassinations and forced displacement, began to seek support from different Colombian and international NGOs, and from the Church, and discuss this idea of neutrality. According to Cuartas, the Colombian NGO CIJP, which arrived in Urabá in 1996 in

response to the waves of violence, brought their own idea about neutrality, and were influential in these meetings with communities. CIJP, at the time, was called the Intercongregational Justice and Peace Commission (*Comisión Intercongregacional de Justicia y Paz*); at the beginning of 2000, they would reconfigure themselves as the Interfaith Justice and Peace Commission (*Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*), to include laity committed to the same values of social justice as the religious members.

This combination of actors—Monsignor Duarte and the Apartadó Diocese, CINEP and CIJP—held meetings over six months with the *campesinos* of the San José de Apartadó township, analysing the situation and exploring the possibility of becoming neutral, and how to go about it (Pardo 2007: 163). Duarte's initial proposal was to make neutral zones, which was a creative interpretation of IHL's principle of distinction between combatants and civilians, which seeks to protect civilians living in areas of armed conflict from being casualties of war (Burnyeat 2013: 439).

The Fourth Geneva Convention's measures for the protection of civilians in the context of war stipulate, in its Article 14, the possibility of creating "hospital and safety zones and localities" in order to protect vulnerable persons from the effects of war, such as the wounded, sick, elderly, children, pregnant women and mothers of small children. Article 15 stipulates that any conflict party may propose the creation of "neutralized zones" intended to shelter the wounded, sick and civilian population that takes no part in hostilities from the effects of war, so long as those civilians "while they reside in the zones, perform no work of a military character".[5]

In the creation of such areas:

> None of the occupants may take sides with any of the parties in the conflict, nor develop, inside or outside of the neutral zone, any type of proselytising or activity in support of any of the parties. Similarly, [the Fourth Geneva Convention] signals the obligation of the beneficiaries of the neutral zones to keep their distance from the war. (Pardo 2007: 151)

The beneficiaries of neutral zones must not even carry out actions of peace-building; these areas are strictly for protection and for facilitating the application of IHL. However, in the meetings between the San José *campesinos*, the church and the NGOs, inspired by the neutrality of the indigenous organisations—whose neutrality was not just about protecting civilian protections, but a public, ethical repudiation of violence—this limited concept of neutrality was broadened. It was decided that it could

become an active strategy for peace. Neutrality took on a double meaning: "As a mechanism of protection, and criterion for relating to armed actors; and also as a valuable instrument for peace-building" (Pardo 2007: 151).

However, another person was talking about neutrality and looking towards Urabá: Álvaro Uribe. According to a document written by the Community in 1998 about their foundation:

> We started to have workshops with the CIJP […] about the possibility of declaring San José a neutral zone, to win respect for the civilian population. We all agreed with the proposal, but the Governor of Antioquia had taken up neutrality as a policy of his own, to involve the civilian population in the conflict, so we had to re-evaluate the idea. […] Uribe's policy consisted in declaring, by decree, neutral zones in territories where the paramilitaries or the army were present. This meant danger for us, and lacked credibility in the population. Neutrality meant something different for us. We decided, therefore, to change our name, but keep the same objective; to be neutral to all the armed actors.[6]

Uribe proposed making neutral municipalities by decree, using "a conception of neutrality which promoted non-cooperation with illegal armed actors, and cooperation with the armed forces of the state" (Valenzuela 2009: 15). Uribe attended a meeting in Apartadó in 1996 among various communities considering becoming 'neutral communities', including San José, and made his proposal. Apparently, the "forceful reaction of all the participants made the Governor leave the meeting with a concentrated hatred" (Giraldo 2007: 53). Given this contamination of the concept of neutrality, the name was changed to 'Peace Community'.

According to J.E., the Community asked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to mediate with the guerrilla, the army and the paramilitaries, to ask them to respect the Community's neutrality, but the ICRC replied that they could not mediate between armed actors and civilian population; only between armed actors. Instead they asked the Catholic Church, who accepted (event in The English School, March 2015). FARC commander D. who had been in the 5th Front at the time, told me they did receive the message from the church, and they understood that it was the only alternative left for the *campesinos* in order to stay in the territory, and agreed to respect the spaces of neutrality (interview, September 2016). The message presumably also got to the other armed actors—though we can only speculate as to how it was received.

The public declaration officially founding the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó was made on 23 March 1997. A solidarity caravan drove up from Apartadó in buses and cars to the ghost town of San José (only ten families had remained after the violence of 1996; 90 families had fled to other parts of the country). The caravan included 100 indigenous people from the OIA, catechists, religious figures, a musical group, a delegate from the Bishop, Father Leonidas Moreno from the Apartadó Diocese,[7] delegates from Dutch NGO Paz Christi, a Dutch parliamentarian, a member of CINEP, Gloria Cuartas, members of CIJP and some international journalists; indicating the variety of people and ideas that came together. Paramilitary groups on the road allowed the caravan to pass. The *campesinos* came down to the town from the hamlets. It was Palm Sunday. Father Leonidas gave a speech comparing the coronation of Jesus with the beginning of the process of San José. A member of the local church said that what the Peace Community was trying to achieve was:

> An experience for the autonomy and alternative development of the community, on the basis of International Human Rights Law, confronting the dynamics of war that are present in the region. We cannot allow the war to destroy the social fabrics which remain in the region.[8]

The Community wrote a declaration, a document they would change towards the end of the year under new circumstances. At that moment, it said that they had carried out an internal consultation among the *campesinos*, and decided to declare themselves a Peace Community, "while the internal conflict persists and the war continues". This indicates that their priority was protection in the midst of war, and the intention was temporary. In fact, a previous draft from the same year which I found in Giraldo's archives proposed that this declaration stipulate a period of three years, but someone, perhaps Giraldo, had put that into parentheses with a pencil, as if to suggest that it should be left open-ended.

This declaration contained their demands to the armed actors to respect the civilian population, and also the commitments of their members not to participate directly or indirectly in the conflict. These were: not to carry arms or store munitions; not to give logistical or any other type of support to the parties in the conflict; not to go to the parties to solve their problems; and to stand against injustice and impunity. The document explained that the living spaces of the Community would be clearly demarcated with wire fencing and signs, and the members would carry an ID card

(a practice later abandoned because it was considered dangerous to identify themselves).

The declaration also stipulated the conformation of an Internal Council, composed, then, of seven Community delegates chosen by the general assembly, and a treasurer. If the Internal Council requested it, they could also call on the support and advice of a member of a national NGO (which was clearly going to be CIJP), and a delegate from the Apartadó Diocese. It established that the Internal Council would take decisions based on an absolute majority (four plus one), that they would design their own regulations, and that they would carry out administrative duties and disciplinary measures to ensure that all members complied with their obligations. The creation of the Internal Council was the only aspect of internal organisation that was officially regulated in this way, at the time of the Community's foundation. It did not contain, as the later version would, the other fundamental principle of the Community: the obligation of all its members to participate in community work.[9]

María Teresa Uribe calls this declaration a "new foundational pact", signifying an "accelerated process of politico-collective learning" (2004: 104). It meant a cultural change: learning to "say no" to all the armed actors.

G.T. explained they hoped this declaration of neutrality would enable them to stay in their lands in the hamlets:

> It meant saying to all the armed actors: 'We don't want to collaborate with you', 'We don't want you to enter the spaces of the Community', and it was also saying to the armed forces, 'You have had responsibility in all this displacement, you have also killed people', so it was telling all of them. […] it was difficult, because both sides stigmatised us. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014)

However, this practice of neutrality was difficult. G.T. said:

> If I sold some article to the guerrilla, then the paras [paramilitaries] or the army could kill me. And vice versa. Because we were in the middle of the armed actors. So we signed that decision. But the problem didn't end there, because if we said no to the guerrilla, the guerrilla said we were on the side of the paramilitaries. If we say no to the paras, they said we were on the side of the guerrilla. (Interview, January 2015)

It became an ethical struggle to demand their right, as civilians, not to be involved. B.G. said:

> We began to say no, so all the armed actors began to be against us. Because if you're not with us, you're against us. So the guerrilla accused us of being with the *Convivir*. The army accused us of being *guerrilleros*. They had us in an alley, with no way out. But those were our principles, and even if we had to give our lives for it, we were going to keep going. (Interview, January 2015)

The Community had to be firm in keeping their principles, in order to maintain their legitimacy, even with simple things. As B.G. said, they had to say to all the armed actors, "If you want water, go to the tank outside. If you want another favour, seek it somewhere else" (interview, January 2015). The persecution, which until then had been carried out against the *campesinos* of the area due to their associations, real or otherwise, with the different social and political movements of the region, began to be directed specifically against the Peace Community itself, for not collaborating, and for speaking out about human rights violations, especially by the state and its proxy forces.

However, despite the fact that human rights violations continued, the protection strategy, according to Valenzuela, was effective to some degree.[10] He explains that the classic sense of neutrality in IHL takes as its context a war between two countries, and considers that due to the nature of internal armed conflicts, "the hope that combatants respect the territory of communities has a minimal possibility of materialising" (2009: 6). Valenzuela's study seeks to determine a way of measuring the success of strategies of neutrality, and argues that a neutral community process can be considered successful:

> If it manages to generate or consolidate democratic processes at the local level, repair the social fabric of communities affected by war, produce a culture of peace and coexistence and strengthen the community's capacity to manage internal conflicts or affect the broader context of the conflict. (2009: 7)

This was exactly what the Peace Community began to do. However, things would get worse before they would get better. Despite the Church carrying the message to the different armed actors about the Community's neutrality, and despite the relative 'success' in the medium to long term, a new displacement occurred only days after this declaration was made.

On 27 March 1997, Holy Thursday, the army came to La Unión telling the *campesinos* to leave, because, behind them, the paramilitaries were coming. Between Thursday and Saturday, hundreds of people left the hamlets and fled to the town of San José, occupying the abandoned

houses.[11] Para/military operations continued for almost a week in all the hamlets. All inhabitants of the township were ordered to leave. There were clashes between the army and the guerrilla, assassinations of civilians, and houses and schools were destroyed (Pardo 2007: 164). G.T. said:

> The military announced that we had to abandon the territory because the 'head-choppers' were coming behind them, and if they found us they would finish us off. And it really was like that. […] The army made the announcement, and behind them, the paramilitaries came, chopping people's heads off and killing people. Everyone they found, they killed. So hope was lost in that moment. The people left. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014)

G.T. himself lived through this displacement:

> [It] was something I had never experienced. I didn't know what a displacement was like. When I was on the way to San José, I didn't know where I was going. I had no money. I had a baby girl who was only one week old. In San José, it was a very difficult situation. We had to share houses between five or six families. (Interview, January 2015)

When they arrived in San José, the *campesinos* went around "opening doors", because the 120 houses of the town had been left abandoned from the 1996 displacement. The Balsamar Cooperative, built collectively on the ruins of the previous cacao store, and abandoned after the public slaughter of its directors, became a refugee camp (Aparicio 2012: 225), adding more layers to its palimpsest.

The government did not recognise them officially as forcibly displaced. According to G.T., this was because they had not left the township: "In order to be displaced we had to go to Apartadó. They wanted to see us totally displaced, for us to leave the territory!" (interview, January 2015). According to Aparicio, the population did not register themselves as displaced because "they did not trust the governmental initiative about displacement, and neither did they know it in much depth" (2012: 248). It was probably a bit of both; the result was that they did not have access to the state humanitarian aid resources,[12] and in the first months of displacement, only the Church brought them food supplies (Pardo 2007: 165).

When the *campesinos* arrived in San José fleeing from the violence in the hamlets, Gloria Cuartas, the then mayor of Apartadó, sent buses to take them to safer places. However, many decided to stay, despite knowing they could be massacred. This was criticised by national and international

NGOs and other external commentators (Aparicio 2012: 239). Aparicio sees this decision as part of a set of practices: "Together with the 'politics of repudiation' we must speak of a multitude of economic, social and political practices, with which the [Community] projects not only their desire to remain isolated, but also to construct an alternative vision" (2012: 240). The Community continues taking similar decisions today, and not only are their decisions part of their economic, social and political practices, but part of the practice of (re-)production of narratives over time in which they interpret reality and reaffirm their collective identity, which shapes the options they see as viable.

Living in the town of San José de Apartadó in a makeshift refugee camp, the newly founded Peace Community began a new phase of organisation, leading to a cultural change which would become crucial in the establishment of their collective identity. Before examining that process, however, we will turn to CIJP and to the other peace communities in Urabá, to understand how the March 1997 forced displacement led to the unfolding of a process which distanced the San José community from the other community peace initiatives propelled by CIJP.

CIJP, Transnational Networks and the Other Peace Communities in Urabá

The Intercongregational (today Interfaith) Justice and Peace Commission (*Comisión Intercongregacional/Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz*—CIJP) is a Colombian NGO founded in 1988 that provides comprehensive accompaniment to victims of the armed conflict. It is one of few organisations in the country combining top-level legal accompaniment and a sophisticated international advocacy network, with a permanent field presence. Their field teams work with communities in conflict-affected areas giving orientation and training to local organisational processes, and providing on-the-ground reports of human rights abuses which circulate in international networks. They have won several emblematic cases representing victims of grave human rights violations, including the sentence against General Rito Alejo del Río for Operation Genesis in the Colombian Supreme Court, and the same case against the Colombian state in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR).

Social movements and organisations in Colombia began, from the 1980s, to connect with the international human rights community, and to appeal to international laws and standards, perceived as superior to the

Colombian state, which was acting against human rights (Tate 2007). One of Tate's interviewees explained that in the 80s, they felt they had two options: taking up arms like the guerrilla, or taking "the road of appealing to institutions outside the state, that were superior to the state and that somehow would force them from outside, that had authority and power" (Tate 2007: 83). This is key to understanding the progressive internationalisation of NGOs in Colombia, among them CIJP, whose grassroots solidarity combines with legal appeals to international tribunals—and global moral standards—in cases of state violence.

As well as the human rights culture in Colombia, CIJP and Father Javier Giraldo are influenced by the ideology of Liberation Theology. Liberation Theology was formally born at the Latin American Episcopal Conference, held in Medellín in 1968 responding to changes initiated by the Second Vatican Council (1961–1963) (Lehmann 1990: xii). The Latin American church has been especially prominent in this movement, which shifts the focus of clerical action from a "charitable concern for the poor to a concern for their rights and their organization" (Lehmann 1990: 96). One of the most enduring early influences was Brazilian educator Pablo Freire, and his school of thought on pedagogy of the oppressed, which sought to liberate the poor by promoting class consciousness (Lehmann 1990: 100).

In the Medellín conference, the Bishops produced a document in which they "committed themselves to a leading role in changing the structures of oppression and injustice prevailing in the region" (Lehmann 1990: 117), and recommended creating Christian base communities (*comunidades de base*), "as the first and fundamental nucleus of the Church which should become a focus of evangelization, and the prime mover in development" (Lehmann 1990: 109). Peruvian priest Gustavo Gutiérrez, who took part in the Medellín conference, wrote a book titled 'Liberation Theology' which Lehmann considers to be the ideology's founding text (1990: 121).

In Colombia, Liberation Theology's most influential figure was priest-turned-guerrilla-fighter Camilo Torres. The Medellín conference proposed the church actively taking a role in the struggle for social change, but different leaders interpreted this as closer or further away from the Marxist class struggle. In Torres' view, Christians not only *could* participate in the revolution that was beginning in Colombia and other parts of Latin America, but *must* work alongside Marxism to "divest the rich and the exploitative of their power" and liberate the masses (Acevedo 2012). A religious and political platform made up of religious figures and intellectuals was formed in Colombia prior to the Medellín conference to

formulate recommendations, called the 'Golconda group', committed to revolutionary action against imperialism and the neo-colonial bourgeoisie, and to the search for a socialist society (Acevedo 2012). In Colombia, Liberation Theology and the revolutionary struggle were perhaps even closer than in other countries in Latin America.

Within the emergence of Liberation Theology, a movement arose which Lehmann calls '*basismo*', from *base*, base or grassroots, characterised by two "somewhat contradictory attitudes": on one hand, "the disenchantment with, or despair in, the capacity of the state to deliver real resources", and on the other "the demand for a bundle of rights encompassed by that relatively new term in Latin American political discourse – citizenship" (1990: 185). This contradiction—the lack of belief in the state's capacity and will, but the demand nevertheless for it to deliver on discursive promises of human rights and citizenship—echoes with the genealogy of the rupture in Chap. 5. The Community's demand to the state to evaluate why their attempts to access justice have failed is a demand for the state to recognise its structural failure, rather than a demand for action, because they do not really believe that any such action would actually be made.

CIJP and Father Javier Giraldo can be seen in this context, as elements of the radical (but non-violent) wing of the Colombian church, taking inspiration from a revolutionary struggle and forming 'base communities'. Giraldo is also a Jesuit, a sector of the church which in Latin America has been close to Liberation Theology and has frequently been involved in the search for social justice (Chaouch 2007). In Colombia, the Jesuits established the CINEP which Giraldo belongs to, which works on poverty, human rights and conflict analysis.

According to Giraldo (field diary, December 2014), at the beginning of the 1990s, CIJP had a refuge in Barrancabermeja (department of Santander) offering shelter to displaced people. In 1996, they sent an exploratory mission to Turbo (department of Antioquia), initially to analyse the situation in Urabá, when in February 1997, Operation Genesis happened. A large part of the population displaced by Operation Genesis from the river basins of Cacarica, Truandó and Salaquí, all tributaries of the Lower Atrato, fled to Turbo, where they took refuge in the community sports centre (the *coliseo*) and other makeshift shelters. CIJP began accompanying these communities, and seeking options for them to return to their lands. Other communities were displaced from further south along the Lower Atrato River in the municipality of Río Sucio (department of Chocó), due to similar waves of violence.

In 1996, over 5000 inhabitants of the river basins of Curvaradó, Salaquí, Truandó, Quiparadó, Chitadó, Domingodó and Jiguamiandó (tributaries of the Lower Atrato) marched towards Mutatá, a town on the Road to the Sea, with the objective of blocking the road to protest about the situation of increased militarisation and the threats they were receiving (UNDP 2003: 20–1). Reliable sources[13] have told me that this protest was, in part, organised by FARC. However, they never made it to Mutatá: the armed forces stopped them at Pavarandó, a small town a few kilometres from the Road to the Sea, and prevented them going further. Unable to return to their lands due to threats, they set up a refugee camp and approached the Diocese for help. According to Giraldo, the situation in Pavarandó was urgent: sheets of black plastic served as makeshift tents; there was unbearable heat, mosquitos, malaria, sickness, desperation, a military security belt around the town and a paramilitary belt around that.

The protesters were desperate to return home to their lands. At that moment, the idea of neutral or peace communities was beginning to develop in Urabá. As an emergency measure to permit their return, it was decided that the refugees camped in Pavarandó would adopt the figure of peace communities, as a strategy to allow them to return home with the support of the state. Given the desperate humanitarian situation, the concept of 'peace communities' employed in this case was a temporary strategy for relief and protection.

Learning lessons from the rather rushed organisational process they had supported in Pavarandó, CIJP decided to be more rigorous with the refugees displaced in Turbo. It took four years' negotiation with the state about the conditions of returning to Cacarica. In 2001, the communities in Turbo returned to their lands with an organisation they created, the Community of Self-determination, Life and Dignity (*Comunidad de Autodeterminación, Vida y Dignidad*—CAVIDA), and they formed two humanitarian zones (Burnyeat 2013), using principles of neutrality and non-involvement similar to the peace communities.

Three peace communities were created by the refugees in Pavarandó— and these were the only other community initiatives in the country, apart from San José, which took that exact name. On this point there has been academic confusion: some scholars cite 59 peace communities along the Atrato River in Urabá (e.g. Sanford 2005: 258). However, triangulating multiple sources reveals three—San Francisco de Asís, Natividad de María and Nuestra Señora del Carmen, in which 57 distinct settlements were grouped into three umbrella organisations, clarifying this semantic point.[14]

Several NGOs and academics have also spoken about 'peace communities' regardless of whether these self-identify as 'peace communities' or use another comparable, but different, term. Others, such as Alther, recognise that "some officially declare themselves peace communities, others do not" (2006: 282). Despite such minor inaccuracies, Sanford's argument holds true about these declarations representing a form of subaltern agency in the face of armed groups, in changing their quotidian practices to demand their right to non-involvement in the conflict. Also, Sanford affirms that via the international visibility which these community peace initiatives obtained (in large part thanks to CIJP), "each Peace Community transcends its locality as a mere village on a river in Colombia and becomes a site for the reconstitution of state sovereignty", from where "the international community can judge the Colombian state and put pressure on it regarding the way the state exercises power" (2005: 268–9).

At some point in the late-1990s, the three 'peace communities' in the Lower Atrato stopped using that name, though community peace initiatives continue under different forms such as the 'humanitarian zones' of Curvaradó and Jiguamiandó (Burnyeat 2013). Of all the peace communities founded in Urabá in the 1990s, I believe San José de Apartadó was the only one which continued with that identity because, although it began as just a protection option, the concept evolved into a collective 'alternative community' project and identity.

CIJP and Father Giraldo have been influential in the formation of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó's collective identity. But it is important not to essentialise such influences. Aparicio writes:

> Such complex ensembles are constructed through the combination of horizontal and vertical networks, and also through their dynamism, their internal history and the daily negotiations where they constantly establish relations which are subjected to permanent examination. The argument of co-option or even of neo-colonialism, used by external observers, is too impudent, and does not recognise the complex nature of these ensembles. (2012: 267)

It is dangerous to fetishise the idea of the autonomous community, as if it existed in a cultural bubble. The Community's agency is evident in their selective appropriation of elements from their context. But without a doubt, the orientation they received from CIJP represents a key vector in the conformation of the Community, an influence that continued to work on them after the NGO stopped accompanying them.

A fundamental contribution by CIJP was to connect the communities that they accompanied with their vast national and international human rights networks. The Peace Community's capacity which Sanford signals, of transcending the local and connecting with the global, is due to CIJP's work in building these connections. In 1997, when the Peace Community was founded, CIJP organised meetings with many international agencies, NGOs, diplomatic missions and government institutions for the Community to visit and present their project, their declaration of neutrality, and discuss their pressing human rights situation and request that such agencies lobby the state and support them with international visibility.[15]

It was CIJP that first brought international accompaniment to the field, with PBI. When CIJP and the Community parted ways, CIJP helped them to establish direct relationships with the different international agencies, and today, the Community must be one of the most internationally-connected and well-known grassroots organisations in the world.[16] One of the Community's political strategies is going on frequent speaking tours to communicate their project and their situation, and ask the international community to lobby their and the Colombian governments on their behalf. It would be impossible to map completely the social and human rights organisations in Europe and US that have engaged in different kinds of interventions for the Community, from fundraising for projects, political advocacy, communication and awareness-raising projects, litigation and acts of solidarity. There have been broad demonstrations of support from foreign governments: in their international speaking tours, Community members meet with parliamentarians, and various diplomatic missions in Colombia have visited the Community in the field.[17] They also have three international accompaniment organisations which work with them *in situ*: PBI, Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and Operazzione Colomba.

Interaction with international human rights organisations by victims of grave human rights violations in Colombia is a common strategy. Gómez-Suárez (2015) shows how the UP, in response to persecution, circulated narratives that attracted sympathy for their struggle amongst cross-border economic, political and social networks; and antipathy and condemnation towards the perpetrators. He characterises such transnational connections as a strategy of resistance; a "struggle for memory" that challenges the narratives circulated in the geopolitical space by the state; what Routledge calls 'anti-geopolitics': "an ethical, political, and cultural force within civil society that challenges the notion that the interests of the state's political class are identical to the community's interests" (2003 cited Gómez-Suárez

2015: 160). The Peace Community's transmission of narratives into the international sphere connected with an existing transnational network that was sympathetic to other victims of state violence in Colombia, who were also projecting their plight into international space, from the UP to social movements and even state actors, such as Gloria Cuartas, who were supportive to the struggle of these victims. International organisations such as the IACHR and Amnesty International became central actors in documenting and denouncing the alliances between the army and paramilitaries in Colombia, and the influence of US foreign policy (Tate 2015). The shifting transformations of international solidarity with Colombia were "an acephalous network producing multiple forms of resistance, from awareness campaigns, political debates, and national strikes to scholarship efforts" (Gómez-Suárez 2015: 160).

In making international connections, the Community was influenced by and appropriated many elements of international human rights discourse, and this is one of their defining features (Aparicio 2012). Another implication of these connections is the fact that the Community began to place more trust in international actors than national ones, following a similar logic to that outlined by Tate's interviewee above.

The CIJP-Peace Community Relationship

Before arriving in San José, CIJP had spent several years accompanying communities in other parts of the country and had developed an institutionalised narrative of mistrust in the state, resulting from their negative experiences across Colombia. The *campesinos* of San José, of course, identified strongly with this mistrust, given what they had already lived through, and the CIJP-Peace Community relationship began to grow based on mutually-resonating identity narratives to do with the perpetrator state, each influencing and consolidating the other.

Cuartas felt that under CIJP's influence, the Community began to cultivate "a whole opinion about the state being responsible for the crimes, and that therefore the community could not have a relationship with the state". In her view, this represented the beginning of a process of "radicalism of state responsibility" (interview, March 2015). This was an important characteristic of human rights organisations in Colombia. Tate explains that "the vast majority of early human rights groups shared a view of the state as the enemy and the primary source of political violence", and one of the activists interviewed said, "We were organizations against the state, we

were never nongovernmental organizations. Everything that had to do with the state was bad: repression, inequality, lies, and corruption" (Tate 2007: 104). This view casts CIJP as highly influential in the radicalisation of the Community's perception of the state. I do not pretend to evaluate the extent to which this is true, but it is clear that CIJP, as an NGO that belonged to a particular human rights culture, played a major role in the formulation of the Community's state-idea, and laid the foundations for the narrative elements that would progress into the radical narrative.

Cuartas was in an uncomfortable situation. She felt that CIJP influenced the Community to distance themselves from her, when she wanted to help them. She was a representative of the state at a moment in which the Community members perceived the atrocities against the civilian population as resulting from a collaboration between the state and paramilitarism. She felt "an extraordinary moral dilemma" about her role there, and about how the inhabitants of San José saw her. "It was understandable that […] they said to you: 'You let them kill my mum', 'You let them kill my dad', […]. 'You are the mayor, you are the state'" (interview, March 2015). This is the 'aggregation' of the state-idea at work: if the army is the state, and the mayor is the state, then the mayor is seen to be complicit, because she belongs to the same structure, in the perception of the Community.

Cuartas had to choose between ethically rejecting the structure she was part of by quitting her post, or staying there and doing what she could, by denouncing and helping. In her perception, by deciding to stay, she was representing "a criminal state, a state which was assassinating its population, you have no control over the army, you have no control over the police"—she also took part in the imagination of the 'aggregated' homogenous state, despite being part of the structure herself. She said it was a situation of "ungovernability", but despite criticising her for "being the state", many victims in Urabá also begged her not to leave. She asked herself if she was "being a facilitator" of the paramilitary structure in the region, but her only other option was leaving and therefore not acting, "nor collecting the dead". She decided to stay, taking food and local teachers up to San José when paramilitaries blocked the road, and denouncing the violations to national authorities, and told me, "I stand by my choice of having stayed to accompany the victims" (interview, March 2015).

Cuartas was threatened because of her denouncements, and had to leave the region; however, some people questioned her, "Why didn't they kill you?", alleging that "if you're alive it's because you were part of […] the territorial recuperation of the region by paramilitary power" (interview,

March 2015). The reprimands she received from the Community about 'being the state' is symptomatic of their simplified conception of an evil and homogenous state, which remains alive in their radical narrative, deep-rooted and difficult to deconstruct. State officials from all over the country have indeed been found guilty of collaboration with paramilitary structures and human rights violations. But there must also be many stories of people like Cuartas who faced this same moral dilemma of doing what you can from within, but being thereby contaminated: they are instantly seen as belonging to a structure involved in doing the complete opposite of what a state is supposed to do; safeguard the life and integrity of its citizens. But this rarely makes the headlines—Cuartas was special in this regard, as she was outspoken and fierce. I am sure that many stories of deep ethical questioning from within lower-level state officials have gone unsung, in Colombia and elsewhere, and this would be a useful line for future research into the anthropology of the state.

An article by CIJP directors Danilo Rueda and Mauricio Llantén shortly after the Community's foundation, illustrates the NGO's conception of the peace communities they were mobilising in Urabá: these "Communities of Life or of Peace" are "a re-signification of resistance" to "experience human rights and IHL"; they are "an ethical experience in the midst of the conflict", a "possibility of resistance and of autonomy, and a way of dignifying life and renovating the meaning of rebellion". This reveals CIJP's tendency to controversy, signalled by Cuartas. The article describes an "initial movement" which is the "initiative of survival", but also says that it is a "proposal which tries to break with the dynamic of war". Hence, "they are not communities for pacification – pacifism – and neutralisation", but rather "a possibility of resistance experiences which foster the exercise of fundamental rights and the rights of people to autonomy, self-determination and sovereignty".[18] The influences in CIJP of Liberation Theology and Marxism are clear here.

Another CIJP article on the Community's history suggests themes that the Community's existence reflects:

(a) Development of capitalism as dehumanisation vs. Peace Community a humanising alternative;
(b) History of politics vs. popular politics of the Peace Community;
(c) Set of oppressions vs. the Peace Community, a set of resistances;
(d) The old man vs. the new man;
(e) The Peace Community [as] a new way of resolving conflicts, a new kind of hope.[19]

The communist language (the idea of 'the new man') and the idea that the roots of social injustice and war lie in the capitalist economic model indicate CIJP's ideological position, which contributed to the Community's perception of the state.

The central objective that CIJP proposed the Community adopt was the protection of civilians in the midst of the conflict, but suggested that this engendered other objectives, including "the quest of resistance and the struggle to create a process with autonomy," using strategies to strengthen community work, the social fabric, the organisational process and solidarity economics.[20]

CIJP's discourse represents the Community as an exercise of 'resistance' and 'humanisation' in the face of capitalism; an ideal of communal social life, and a 'humanising alternative' that subverts capitalist society. Two schools of thought meet in this discourse: the socialist, revolutionary ideal, and Liberation Theology, which privileges the autonomy of grassroots communities as the protagonists of social change, but CIJP's influence doubtless connected with the Community's pre-existing narratives from the days of the UP and Balsamar.

The Community's narratives continue to have echoes with CIJP's ideology, but have developed independently, following the NGO's separation from the Community. From 2000, the CIJP-Community relationship began to change, in parallel to internal changes within the NGO. Two years later, CIJP stopped accompanying the Community. The separation is documented in letters exchanged between them from 2002. The first letter, from the Community's Internal Council to CIJP, was titled "An autonomous process", and said "we want to thank CIJP for your contributions and the support you have given us", but added:

> We learned about the search for autonomy in the path we walked with you, but we were also already walking that path; we keep in our memory the process of the Patriotic Union, a whole political and alternative work that we experienced […]. Also the process of solidarity economics of the Balsamar Cooperative.

The emphasis is clear: they felt they already had a strong organisational process with political, economic and social dimensions, and though they were grateful to CIJP for their support, they felt that their autonomy was being encroached on. They explained in the letter that they would prefer CIJP to continue only with their legal accompaniment, representing the

Community in court cases, and discontinue their permanent field presence. They added that they would like a direct agreement with PBI to maintain the international protection in the field, and for Father Javier Giraldo to continue as advisor.[21]

CIJP responded, saying they were unable to carry out any form of accompaniment without a permanent field presence, because they had a responsibility to write public communiqués and maintain dialogue with judicial and institutional entities:

> It is not possible to carry out any judicial action without the minimums of information and of trust, without our presence […] articulating actions with international groups and in fluid dialogue with the whole of the community.

CIJP proposed instead that another organisation dedicated solely to legal accompaniment take over the cases, the Judicial Corporation for Freedom (*Corporación Jurídica de Libertad*—CJL), an NGO based in Medellín.[22] The Community responded saying they understood CIJP's position, and formally concluded the accompaniment, saying, "As we separate, we want to thank you deeply for your solidarity and your accompaniment, and we hope to meet again as people in new spaces, united by the same ideals".[23] From that moment on, CJL's involvement in communiqués and correspondence with state entities on behalf of the Community increased.

Though CJL is also a human rights organisation which acts in solidarity with victims' groups, and members of the NGO travelled often to the Community as part of their legal and political accompaniment, especially in the first few years following the separation of CIJP and the Community, their role has been far less prominent than CIJP's and has decreased over time. Today, their accompaniment is not particularly visible, in large part due to the fact that the Community's 'rupture' with the justice system in 2003 (see Chap. 5) means they refuse to be represented by lawyers or appear in trial, which limits the work CJL can do for them.

Following the separation, Eduar Lancheros, a member of the CIJP San José field team, quit the NGO to continue accompanying the Community in a personal capacity. Father Javier also left CIJP a short while afterwards, remaining as advisor to the Community from his position at CINEP and as a prominent human rights figure in his own right. Giraldo has been spokesperson for the Community on various occasions. He has represented them in hearings in the Constitutional and Inter-American Courts

and has lodged a series of *derechos de petición*[24] in the Community's name. He has also written extensively about the Community, including a book compiling human rights violations carried out between 1997 and 2010 (Giraldo 2010).

Lancheros, who died of cancer in 2012, continues to be a key character in the Community's imaginary and identity narratives. According to an obituary by Giraldo (2012: 53–73), Lancheros was born in Bogotá in 1969 to a modest family with strong Christian traditions and found his calling working for social justice through the church. In 1990, he began a novitiate in a Salesian community in Antioquia, and remained connected to a congregation of followers of St John Bosco while studying philosophy in the Santo Tomás University in Bogotá, where he first began to work with the poor and marginalised. "I feel called to continue on the Salesian religious path, which invites me to a radical, educational commitment with the poor", he said in 1993 when renewing his first religious vows (cited by Giraldo 2012: 53). He later disassociated himself from the Salesians, but kept his ideals of helping the marginalised, and he joined CIJP when the organisation was just starting, in 1989, urgently seeking a way to contribute to the victims of the armed conflict. According to Giraldo, Lancheros desired "to transform pain into hope", a phrase that would become his signature slogan and a lasting legacy within the Community.

I never met Eduar; I first arrived at the Community after his last visit, and all I heard was that he was ill, and would come as soon as his health permitted, but the next time he came was in a coffin, in July 2012, to be buried in San Josecito. But his presence is still very much alive in the Community. His tomb occupies a central place in the settlement, garlanded with flowers and posters of him; all the Community settlements have photos of him on the walls of houses and community buildings. In the Community's 18th anniversary commemoration there was a poster of Eduar captioned "philosopher and visionary of the Peace Community".

After being displaced in 1997 from the hamlets into the town, the Community said to CIJP that they would only stay in San José if they had permanent accompaniment, and it was Eduar who immediately jumped at the chance. Over the next 14 years, he accompanied the Community through thick and thin, putting his own life at risk. Giraldo tells of his bravery accompanying threatened Community members:

Eduar often accompanied community members who risked going down to the town, and when soldiers or paramilitaries wanted to detain someone, he would not let them get down from the car, and replied energetically to the victimisers that if they left that person behind, they would have to leave all of them, and if they killed them, they would have to kill all of them, as they would all surround the victim. In that way he managed to save many lives. (2012: 55)

Lancheros' two books refer to the Community (2000, 2002) and speak of the "barbarities" of the Colombian "para-state", and develop the concept of civil resistance as a strategy to generate political change, by assuming "a critical and argumentative position against the state which breaks with the scheme of coercion" (2000: 18). In his work, Lancheros suggested that the objective of "resistance projects" like the Community should be to "leave truth on record" (2000: 71, 2002: 46). His language positions itself firmly against the "terrorist" state, and on the side of resistance projects with "the courage and the incredible strength of a community conviction so, so battered" (2002: 49). He questions the "legitimacy" of the Colombian state (and that of the model of nation-states in general) and its "logic of exclusion" (2000: 7), and he sees resistance projects as "ethical-political alternatives" (2000: 9). He also proposes the idea of 'civil disobedience' as an ethical necessity because "a citizen that interacts with said [illegitimate] state contributes to its corruption" (Gandhi cited in Lancheros 2000: 51). His influence, stronger and longer-lasting than the institutional relationship between CIJP and the Community, left a crucial legacy in the radical narrative.

The Community's narratives have been formed by selective appropriation of elements, and by inter-subjectivities which meshed together in a complex process of interaction and transference and transformation of logics. One cannot differentiate between the influence of the Community on others and that of others on the Community. Mutually receptive audiences are created, charged with emotions—Jimeno's 'emotional communities' (2010)—and the circulation of narratives does not occur only in the rational plane. Relationships of trust are built through time. The Community's trust in Giraldo, for example, has to do partly with his religious authority, and the institutional relationship at the beginning evolved over shared experience. A 'natural' closeness of ideas and political analysis became closer with the political, legal and solidary actions he has performed for the Community, in which the Community perceives his loyalty to them, and he

becomes more invested in them and their plight. Giraldo's perception of the state has also been affected by his experiences in accompanying the Community. The reciprocal affective relationship is the basis for the political bond, and this inter-subjectivity produces identity narratives.

NOTES

1. CIJP, 'Informe sobre el proceso'. JGA 1995–1997/126–130.
2. Comisión Colombiana de Juristas, 23 February 2010. 'Masacre de La India: Veinte años de Impunidad'. http://www.coljuristas.org/documentos/comunicados_de_prensa/com_2010-02-23.pdf [accessed 4 October 2015].
3. Compilation of communities' declarations of neutrality. JGA 1995–1997/78–84.
4. The Commission for the Verification of Violent Actors in Urabá was made up of the Comisión para la Vida, la Justicia y la Paz of the Diocese of Apartadó (at that moment led by the priest Leonidas Moreno), the Ombudsman's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the National Public Prosecutor's Office, the Departmental Government of Antioquia, and CINEP, a national NGO of Jesuit ideology (of the Company of Jesus in Colombia).
5. Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/385ec082b509e76c41256739003e636d/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5 [accessed 9 July 2017].
6. Community, 'Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó: Historia'. JGA 1995–1997/65–69.
7. Father Leonidas Moreno was a complex figure. According to rumours from Community members and other personal contacts, he was a priest who had a close personal relationship with the paramilitaries, especially Carlos Castaño, whose wedding he allegedly performed. Though he was supportive at the time of the foundation of the Community, he soon became critical given their outspokenness about state and paramilitary collaborative violence, and contributed to the stigmatisation of the Community (field diaries, July 2014 and December–January 2015).
8. CIJP, 'Relato sobre el acta de declaratoria'. *CIJP Magazine Noche y Niebla*. JGA 1997/19–21.
9. 'Declaración relativa a la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó' with additions made on 23 December 1997, and 'Borrador de declaratoria Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó' (undated, prior to 23 March 1997), JGA 1995–1997/142–144 and 88–91 respectively.
10. Valenzuela (2009) compares five indicators before and after the Community's declaration of neutrality: civilian victims, military actions in community

territory, territorial incursions, forced displacement, and economic block-ades or confinement. Based on a database of his own creation (in which he used as a principal source the information compiled in CINEP's magazine *Noche y Niebla* and CIJP, and as secondary sources the Vice-Presidency's Human Rights Observatory database, reports by the Peace Community and by accompaniment organisations, the Catholic Church and the Ombudsman's Office), Valenzuela analyses multiple statistics to determine that the ten-dency, after the declaration, was a decrease in the number of homicides, massacres and other types of violations. He concludes, however, that "a notorious fact is the change in the patterns of aggression. With time, the forms of 'psychological softening' have acquired greater importance and strategies that produce victims have acquired less" (2009: 25).

11. CIJP, 'Relato sobre el acta de declaratoria'. *CIJP Magazine Noche y Niebla*. JGA 1997/19–21.

12. In fact, contrary to the Community's generalising discourse, the state's humanitarian response was not non-existent. According to a Community report, in 1997 the Office of the Presidential Advisor on Forced Displacement pledged 82 million pesos to their situation, but the money never arrived. At one moment, they received 25 million for an electricity bill, after repeated lobbying from different actors. Two years later, in February 1999, they received 9 million pesos for food supplies, but in repeated public meetings, spokespeople from the fiduciary *La Previsora*, in charge of administering that money, affirmed that they had given 180 mil-lion. That number was repeated by delegates of the Vice-Presidency in a meeting on 22 March 2001, and according to the Community, they asked sarcastically "if we needed more help or if the 180 million they had given us would be sufficient". The Community affirms having showed written proof of the fact that this sum was never received. Gestures like these were minimalist one-offs; there was no concerted support plan, and therefore I consider fair the generalised affirmation of the Community of having con-solidated their process in San José without the support of the state in their situation of displacement. Community, 'Informe de la Comunidad de Paz sobre la gestión del Estado en la comunidad', undated, JGA 2001A/147–151.

13. Their identities are anonymised for security reasons.

14. A multi-institutional meeting in 2003 among at-risk communities com-piled documents and minutes of the workshop, and accounts for 57 *settle-ments* in the Lower Atrato that formed *three* peace communities. The Peace Community of San Francisco de Asís was formed in 1997 by the communities displaced in Pavarandó, who after 19 months were able to resettle in territories close to their original lands. The Peace Community of Natividad de María was formed in 1998 by communities in Bocas de

Curvaradó, and that of Nuestra Señora del Carmen in 1999 by communities in the Salaquí river basin (UNDP 2003: 20–1). The other two accounted for by Sanford probably include San José de Apartadó and/or other community peace initiatives like CAVIDA (Community of Self-determination, Life and Dignity) on the Atrato, which has never called itself a peace community (confirmed to me by one of their leaders), though there are similarities, or possibly the Community of Life and Work of La Balsita in the municipality of Dabeiba, also accompanied by CIJP.

15. Various letters from CIJP to diplomatic missions and government entities soliciting meetings for the Community to present themselves; written agenda for such meetings, JGA 1997/52–57.

16. For example, in the international arena the Community interacts with PBI, Amnesty International, ABColombia, the Colombian Caravana of Jurists, the Colombia Solidarity Campaign, Rodeemos el Diálogo (United Kingdom), XXI Solidario, the Comisión Valenciana de Verificación de los Derechos Humanos, la Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (Spain), la Rete Italiana di Solidarietà Colombia Vive (Italy), Kolko (Germany), la Red Internacional de Derechos Humanos (Switzerland), and many others. My mapping contains a natural bias towards those of the United Kingdom; this is due to the fact that my professional experience has allowed me to get to know more in depth (and partly to construct) the networks that surround the Community in that country. However, it can be taken as an example of the extension and complexity of networks that exist, and the reader can make the imaginative effort to extend that multiplicity to other countries in Europe and the USA, and thereby comprehend how the networks multiply.

17. The Ambassador of Norway and delegates from the embassies of Germany and France visited in May 2014. German Embassy in Bogotá, 13 May 2014, 'Embajadas de Alemania y Francia de visita en el Urabá antioqueño y chocoano'. http://www.bogota.diplo.de/Vertretung/bogota/es/__pr/apartado-curvarado.html [accessed 3 June 2014]; also in March 2015, the ambassadors of France and Germany participated in the Community's 18th anniversary and they even slept the night in San Josecito, something that for the Community was highly significant (field diary, 21–29 March 2015).

18. Rueda, Danilo and Mauricio Llantén, *CIJP Magazine Noche y Niebla*, undated, 'Comunidades de vida: Comunidades de paz, comunidades neutrales', JGA 1995–1997/217–225.

19. CIJP, 'Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó: Historia y sentido', JGA 1995–1997/131–141.

20. CIJP, 'Informe sobre el proceso', JGA 1995–1997/126–130.

21. Letter from Community to CIJP titled 'Un proceso autónomo', undated, JGA 2002/210–211.

22. Letter from CIJP to the Community, undated, JGA 2002/242–254
23. Letter from Community to CIJP, 10 October 2002, JGA 2002/260
24. The '*Derecho de Petición*' (literally, 'right to petition') is a legal figure created by the 1991 Colombian Constitution, as a mechanism by which citizens can petition authorities.

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The Cultural Change of 'Organisation'

FROM DISPLACEMENT TO THE PROCESS OF ORGANISATION

What began as a protection strategy to enable them to remain in their territory—the short-term logic of negative peace—began to evolve when the *campesinos* of San José were living together in the town. These descendants of settlers had never been a 'community' in the sense that indigenous or afro-descendent populations are in Colombia, who tend to have collective identities. Their *campesino* culture was based on each family living in their own farmstead, some grouped together in village-like settlements and others scattered across the mountains in their own plots of land. They had some communal practices, the *mingas* or *convites*; the settler practice of sharing workforce to clear paths through wild mountains for collective benefit; the solidarity economics of Balsamar; collective decision-making and organisational processes in the UP and JAC meetings; and neighbours meeting and socialising on Sundays when they went to buy provisions in the town. But they did not yet have the kind of links and self-identification as a 'community' that would later develop. G.T. said that before 1997, the inhabitants of a particular hamlet might "work together to improve the paths, but we never worked crops together in groups" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014).

They made the declaration of neutrality hoping that this public commitment would make the conflict actors respect their way of life and allow them to work their land in peace. But as soon as they were displaced in San José,

95

this process began to change, and they changed with it: they evolved into a political community—a group with a sense of belonging.

G.G. said that they reflected on the way that indigenous communities worked together in order to be stronger as a collective and drew inspiration from that:

> The indigenous organisations had that strength, through their organisation, by having lots of people united, they could do many things in that way, demand respect and so on. We, the *campesinos*, did not have that experience. Because our parents and our grandparents were more independent, each one working their own farm, their land, they didn't have the indigenous communities' experience, each one went their own way, maintaining their farm, their cattle. So we reflected on this, [and saw how] that kind of organisation, in this country, was pretty important, [and we had to] learn from those examples. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014)

The situation was urgent; there were new assassinations every day. In G.G.'s words:

> In that moment we didn't know what to do. In the 32 hamlets of San José there was nobody left, they were displaced and went to Medellín, to Bogotá, to other parts of the country. The people who remained were people who didn't even have enough money to go down to Apartadó, they had lost everything, the paramilitaries did away with everything […] for example a family with eight or ten children, they didn't have the money to go to Medellín. So we thought, what are we going to do? We are going to die of hunger! Well, let's unite and see what we can do. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014)

Several inhabitants feared they would lose their lands if they left (those who refused to go in the trucks which Cuartas sent), but of course also feared for their lives if they stayed. They asked CIJP for permanent accompaniment, saying that if they accepted, there would be a large group of *campesinos* who would resist displacement. If they did not, most would leave (Giraldo 2007: 54).

CIJP accepted, and a new stage in the Peace Community's history began, leading them to create something far broader than the initial, temporary protection strategy. They began to hold meetings and think about the collective process, because they recognised that only by working and coexisting together would they manage to survive. These meetings had two purposes:

firstly, how to meet the daily challenges of survival; secondly, an ideological reflection, united by the ideal and the practice of 'organisation'.

They analysed the difficulties they were facing, such as paramilitarism, and their health, education and basic sustenance needs. They did not receive humanitarian assistance from the government, so people were hungry. The Church "visited all the businesses in Apartadó asking for food and they brought us one meal a day. So there was a giant pot, we would cook together and serve everyone", G.T. said. But "we were not used to living in villages, so diseases spread quickly. Colds, malaria, everything" (interview, January 2015).

They analysed the possibility of remaining in the town of San José, and felt that the risks of staying were the same as the risks of leaving. J.E. said that some 350 "decided to wager on the defence of our land. Because it was about who was willing to put their life on the line" (interview, January 2015). Those 350 said, "We won't move from here. We signed a declaration renouncing support to any armed actor […]. We said, leaving here means losing our land. Coming back again afterwards will be a problem. They'll take out lands away" (interview with G.T., January 2015). G.T. said there were no leaders among those who remained. "We started the organisation there, from zero, the leaders who had not been killed were threatened, they had had to flee" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). They held meetings twice or three times a day, and began to coordinate themselves in committees, and think about how to regulate the process in order to protect themselves and meet their basic needs: "We had to design a whole coordination, delegate people who represented the families of each settlement. Delegate committees to distribute food. We had to create an Internal Council to dialogue with the institutions and with the international community" (interview with J.E., January 2015).

They had previously been engaged in collective discussions in the lead-up to the declaration of neutrality, but only with representatives of each settlement, in order to agree to their foundational principles and to learn to "say no" to the armed actors (Chap. 3). This time, it was broader:

> We thought initially about neutrality, because we thought that so long as we committed to not collaborating with any armed actor, we would be respected in the hamlets. But we weren't respected and the people were displaced. And there in San José, we continued with that idea, but we had to develop other strategies in order to maintain ourselves. And that's when new leaders were born, because there were no leaders, and we developed the Community's

regulations and statutes, the hymn, the logo, all that. So when we were talking with the NGOs about the Peace Community, we weren't talking about work groups or community work; all that came after the displacement. The people started to say, 'We need regulations in order to survive, we have to be communal because we have to start growing crops, we can't let ourselves die of hunger' […] [we] have to be clear about our principles, because we are in the midst of crossfire and people can't be individuals, they have to be organised, in work groups, conscious about things, they must be committed to community work, they must be accompanied. And we talked about all that, every day with the people, consulting with them, and they contributed ideas. (Interview with G.T., January 2015)

The idea that the people "can't be individuals" but "they have to be organised", suggests that in the beginning, the effort to "organise" themselves came above all from a pressing necessity to survive, one step further in the need for protection; but also that a sense of "community" was created in the process. G.G. also said that the Peace Community "really was built" in that stage of displacement; "everyone, men and women started to build together", because "we were all reflecting on the fact that we had to unite, because there was no other option, we had to defend our lives" in the context of crossfire (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014).

In that moment, the experience of "community work" began. In the displacement, the majority of their traditional crops had been lost: beans, corn, rice, plantain and cassava. Their owners could not attend to them because many of the farms were far from the town and they could not go to work in a combat zone. Cacao, because it was a tree, survived. The army and paramilitaries also burnt crops to prevent FARC eating what the *campesinos* had left. As cacao is not a subsistence crop but a cash crop, the army did not destroy it, as it did not represent possible sustenance for FARC.

It was dangerous to leave the town individually, so the *campesinos* organised themselves into groups of 50 or a 100 people to go and work the cacao groves in the hamlets closest to San José town, often "escorted" by CIJP and sometimes delegates of the ICRC. The idea of work groups was born, like the concept of 'neutrality' itself, initially as a protection mechanism. In G.T.'s words:

We couldn't leave the town; there were *guerrilleros* who killed, paramilitaries who killed; but there was also the army who protected the paramilitaries so they could kill. So no one could leave. So the idea arose, going out in groups. I remember we started with just one group, sowing plantain and corn. And we saw that it worked, and we thought that with those groups we could

administer the cacao we had left behind. We created groups to work in Arenas, in La Unión, with accompaniment from the ICRC. We went in the morning, and came back in the afternoon with the cacao harvested and collected, and we could dry it and sell it. So it was like that that the idea of working in groups was born, community work. That among ourselves we could protect each other. If there's someone alone, they can kill us. But if there's a group of fifty people, they can't forcibly disappear us. So it's from the very need to feed ourselves, to organise ourselves communally". (Interview, January 2015)

No matter who the owner was or who the land belonged to, they worked together to clear the cacao groves of the weeds that quickly grow up over the trees if they are not regularly maintained, and began to harvest the cacao, getting economic income again which they used to cover the collective needs of all the Community, and planted quick-yielding subsistence crops to address the widespread hunger, and stopped depending on the charity of the Church. They organised similar big groups to march to the abandoned farms and collect things the families had left behind, hoping the armed actors had not burned everything.

In this process, the experience of working together and sharing profits began. G.T. said that in the process of going out to work in the morning, and evaluating their strategy in the afternoon, they made progress, and "bit by bit our strength grew, and we grew alongside the crops (interview, January 2015). This phrase indicates the affective interdependence of the Community with the cacao, the link between working the land and the organisational process. It casts the cacao as an active, living being, symbiotic with the Community, an equal partner, and life-giver.

The cacao, therefore, was at the centre of the Community's survival project. The daily practices they developed were twofold: collective work in the cacao groves, and meetings to discuss what a 'Peace Community' should be. While they were working out how to get things organised, and the overarching political ideology behind their organisation, they were also engaging in the daily practice of cacao production, working in the cacao groves, with their richness of life, closeness to nature, and imminent threats from the armed actors.

The Regulations

On 23 July 1997, four months after the initial declaration, the Community approved a new series of principles. These were "a collective production with which we propose different ways of relating to each other". They were

adamant that "the Community starts from a conviction: that we cannot think of you or me, but we must think of the other, with a sense of US"; therefore, "it is so important to strengthen community links through work". Community work became "of obligatory character for the members".[1]

These principles were (i) freedom, defined as "communities' capacity for autonomy, and of each member to take decisions autonomously without any kind of pressure, and without feeling excluded"; (ii) transparency to the armed actors; (iii) respect for plurality, meaning that each member "has the right to debate, to disagree, and to propose alternatives. Whether he is black, indigenous, *chilapo* [from the department of Córdoba], *paisa* [from the department of Antioquia], liberal, conservative, communist"; (iv) solidarity, defined as the idea that "efforts add up together for the common good" in order to "humanise our coexistence"; and (v) resistance and justice, understood as the reason for their resistance; "because we know that there is an unjust situation". The concept of "humanisation" is interesting:

> In the face of the logic imposed on us, by which capital seeks to multiply itself via the exploitation of many for the benefit of a few, the Peace Community seeks alternatives in community work that makes it possible for all of us to sow and make the land produce, in order to share its fruits, and in commercialising the products of the land and improving the pay for those who have worked it.

Based on these principles, freedom, equality, respect, solidarity and dialogue, they sought to create something "alternative": the "new man of the Peace Community" in response to a way of thinking that "has generated a process of dehumanisation".

I have never heard any Community member speak of the idea of 'the new man' (I suspect this concept belongs more to the logics of CIJP, and was not transferred to the Community with such success as other logics), but the concept of 'humanisation' is deeply ingrained, and is a word exchanged frequently among members. Pardo underlines how in the Community, "the collective interest is prioritised over the individual interest", and the solidarity economics "contrast with the capitalist economic model based on individualism and the concentration of capital". He also highlights their conceptualisation of work as "a space of personal and community fulfilment" (2007: 175). Lancheros was heavily involved in the designing of the regulations (Giraldo 2012), and his philosophy undoubtedly influenced the way they were conceptualised and worded.

On 21 November 1997, towards the end of their first year, a general assembly was called to constitute formally the 'new' Peace Community, adopt statues and name leaders. Two hundred members were present. The statutes and the regulations were presented and approved by majority. The first Internal Council was appointed, whose general coordinator was Luis Eduardo Guerra (later assassinated in the Mulatos massacre). Before that, an informal council of only four people operated, because as G.T. emphasised, in the first months, in order to "find leaders", they had to ask, "Who wants to run the same risk as the rest of our comrades?" (interview, January 2015). In the Colombian conflict, the assassination of community leaders, and the related dissuasion of people from getting involved in social mobilisation and politics, has truncated many social movements. The fact that the Peace Community were able to galvanise new leaders in this process is one of the strengths that allowed them to continue firm in their project.

The assembly also appointed a series of committees: health, women, sports, work, agriculture, education and culture.[2] The statutes define the Community as a not-for-profit organisation, constituted indefinitely, composed of any of the hamlets in the township of San José that want to join, if a representative expresses in writing the desire to belong. The objectives of the new organisation included "creating a legal structure which promotes citizen participation and the training of members to belong and participate equally in all areas of social life, which will allow us to achieve self-management, development and social projection". The requirements for being a member included being older than 12, not having links with armed groups, and "having a desire to live in community, showing interest in community work".[3]

Alther (2006) explores the difference between neutrality as a survival strategy, and peace-building. There is a link between protection and organisation: "When a community is organised, it is better able to protect itself from sudden threat, and is in a position to start to develop its own protection capacities" (2006: 281). The organisational process, then, was a long-term protection strategy, because the community could better satisfy the basic needs of everybody. That has enormous impact on its long-term capacity for resistance. This is the logic of positive peace: by creating societal change based on social values, a new culture can emerge which is able to prevent future spirals of violence.

The obligatory 'community work' rule is today one of the mainstays of the Community's collective identity. This weekly activity can include working on collectively owned crops, or building something for common usage

(Chap. 8). During a day of community work I observed in San Josecito, the Community built cement floors for the wooden houses of the most elderly people in the settlement, to improve their housing and reduce pests like fleas and mosquitos. All the inhabitants of the settlement began work early; they went down to the river and carried sand from the banks to the four houses they were going to work on that day. The men and the older boys filled large wooden boxes with sand, balanced in pairs on the backs of mules. Those who did not own mules carried heavy buckets, one in each hand. The women carried lighter buckets on their shoulders. Even five-year-old children took part, carrying sand in smaller receptacles, such as bowls and even plastic plates. Two men stayed at the river, in charge of filling the empty buckets with spades. On arrival at the houses, they poured the sand out onto a growing pile. Others came and mixed it with cement and water. Those with knowledge of construction applied the cement mix to the floors. Throughout the whole process, what was valued was the effort of each one in doing their bit, even the children, with their plastic bowls of sand, making the work, and the day, a moment of community integration (field diary, January 2015).

Cacao and the Cultural Change

Cacao played a vital role in the process of creating the new community. G.G. explained:

> Cacao is a tree, it got full of weeds, it got covered in suckers, but the trees were there and the production was there, a bit less, but it was there. On the other hand, in three months the corn disappeared, the bean crops, all our subsistence crops disappeared. And it was difficult to plant [new crops] because we didn't have the economy [for seeds]. But the cacao was there, in the midst of weeds, in the midst of fear. We were able to harvest the cacao, bring it to the town, dry it and sell it in Apartadó, or send it to Medellín to the *Nacional* or the *Luker,* and to start surviving, because we were experiencing hunger. So we began to have economic income again, and we could buy medicine for the sick, and food. So for that reason, historically, cacao has been fundamental for us. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014)

The material environment of the cacao groves grew wilder in its abandonment, but survived—it was resistant, like the Community itself, and was their chance at saving themselves. The elision in G.G.'s comment "in

the midst of weeds, in the midst of fear" indicates the combination of grown-over wilderness, and the threat of violence, coexisting in the cacao groves. It also elides the material and the emotional experience in the practice of 'recuperating' the cacao production, and G.G.'s affective anthropomorphisation of the cacao.

The cacao was central to the Community's desire to become more autonomous, and win back a bit of the culture they had lost in the destruction of the UP and Balsamar. By 1998, the Community was buying all cacao produced in the region, from members and non-members, like a cooperative (Pardo and Darío 2007: 182). Initially they sought funds from international NGOs in order to start buying, "and in that way, we began again to bring the price up and regulate it, and we managed to get the [direct] contract with the *Nacional* and the *Luker* again" (J.E., focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). J.S. said that "the model was similar to the [Balsamar] Cooperative. Having the storage facility to sell the cacao and buy a few things, mostly corn. […] And the profit isn't to get more capital but to think about a fund for common good" (focus group, La Unión, April 2014). The continuities with the previous experience of Balsamar and the UP are clear—the social sense, the fair price, the common projects—but the discontinuities begin to show in terms of the reach of the collective economics.

In 1999 they began a project of 'cacao reactivation'. The Internal Council organised community work days in different cacao groves to clear them of weeds and prune the trees, and used the community fund, established in the early days of their displacement to meet the urgent needs of survival, to support the workers with food and tools. As well as renovating abandoned crops, they also began to sow new cacao. This was an evolution of previous approaches to work and economics; they were working on different people's lands and finding ways to make the individualised economic system more collectively beneficial.

María Teresa Uribe emphasises that the *campesino* culture in the times of the Balsamar Cooperative and the UP already involved a concept of solidarity economics, but it was then comprised of "family economic units". The conflict and the forced displacement produced a change from traditional *campesino* domestic economics in which the family house is the centre on which economic activity is based, as described in Gudeman and Rivera's (1990) classic study, to a "collectivised unit" (Uribe 2004: 105). J.E. said, "it has been a whole process of thinking about how to bring the economy up and see how the *campesino* can be maintained" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014).

Cacao has characteristics that made it an appropriate crop for this process. Firstly, it entails a continual production cycle, though there are harvest seasons of higher yield, but this meant that they could continuously amass income from it. Secondly, because San José was a zone of ongoing conflict, it was not always possible to go out to work, so their work capacity depended on where the theatre of war was in any given moment. Cacao is a more 'stable' crop in comparison with others, which deteriorate rapidly if they cannot be tended for a few weeks; so it was hardy enough to continue producing under less than optimal conditions. Cacao therefore has a special place in the Community's history and identity. "They've been part of the resistance, these trees", B.A. said, laughing. "It's a more resistant crop than others because it's a tree. It can put up with more, it doesn't die easily. It just grows higher, stops producing so much, but you just put your hands to it and it comes back" (interview, January 2015).

The cacao production also brought together people from different hamlets who had not been part of the Balsamar dynamic. The cacao-producing hamlets were those closest to the town of San José—Arenas, La Unión, La Cristalina—another reason why this was the crop they turned to, in order to survive displacement in the town, because it was close enough to go to and work and return home in the same day, whereas other settlements are seven or eight hours' walk away. G.G.'s family was from an area that had traditionally been cattle-grazing rather than cacao-producing—the hamlets of El Porvenir, Playa Larga and La Esperanza. He explained that when the people were concentrated in San José during the forced displacement, "those of us who didn't know cacao before, we shared with people who worked cacao":

> We asked how it was pruned, how it was harvested, all that […]. And after the displacement, many people lost everything, cattle, everything, and people depended on the cacao groves. […] those of us who did not know about cacao, we learned during the displacement. […] there are people here who were practically the founders of the cacao production here. We learned from them, all the management of it from the seed. […] The people who were here since Balsamar, they had all the knowledge and they could explain it. (Focus group, San Josecito, April 2014)

The cacao crop, therefore, was central to integrating the Community members in a common project, and the basis for their creation of an 'organic' organised structure, which was also integrated into its natural

surroundings, because another property of cacao, as it is a tree, is that it is a "reforesting crop" (Pardo and Darío 2007: 181).

In those initial years, the Community had an important goal: returning to the settlements they had been displaced from, in order to reoccupy the lands they feared would be stolen if they abandoned them. The return project was crucial for the Community in order to recover both their way of life in the countryside (they were not used to living in towns), and their sense of occupying the whole territory in the way they had done before. This meant interrupting the spatialising practices of the armed actors who were turning the hamlets into an uninhabitable theatre of war, which was dangerous and difficult. According to various Community members, the forced sale of land was very common in those years. "Either you sell to me, or your widow will", the paramilitaries said. Also, the situation of land titles in the whole township was—and continues to be—chaotic. In order to be sure of keeping their properties, they had to be living on their lands, and working the surrounding crops on a daily basis. It was a brave project because the armed actors could come and displace them again at any time (and did in some cases), and they needed to restart the domestic economics as quickly as possible in each place in order to gain the autonomy and stability necessary to stay there.

G.T. said, "the cacao is a crop that allowed people to return" (interview, January 2015). Families who returned to abandoned settlements began to work overgrown cacao groves and become independent economically, settlement by settlement. Over the years, many cacao groves have been 'recuperated' in this way, but according to G.T., "there are still cacao groves there in the forest, underneath jungle; waiting for people to go back to work them" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2015). In Mulatos he showed me a large cacao grove, half of which he and the rest of the settlement inhabitants had 'recuperated' together, the other half of which was still unworked, "covered in jungle". In its 'natural' or 'wild' state, the cacao was taller and thinner: "it hasn't had administration, so the trees grow higher. They keep producing though, look, there are some pods up there", said G.T. In contrast, the pruned half looked like any well-organised plantation, "it looks as though it had never been abandoned". It had been left between 1996 and 2012, 16 years, but when they came to start working it, "the cacao was there, as if it was waiting for its master to arrive to give it maintenance. Something mysterious. Higher, more elevated, but it stayed alive". One day they might turn to the wild half of the grove. "Renovating" cacao is easier and more economically advantageous than sowing new cacao

from seed, because "it just needs administration". Three years had passed since they began the Mulatos recuperation, and the maintained half covered around four hectares, had about 1500 trees, and in 2013 they had harvested from it some 700 kilos of cacao (interview, January 2015).

Here we have another affective palimpsest, but, unlike the buildings left over from the UP and Balsamar, one that is both part of nature and part of human activity. The wild cacao symbolises their displacement and what they have lost—but also their potential for "recuperation". The anthropomorphic way G.T. speaks about the cacao—it is "waiting for its master"; it is "alive"—indicates the perception of cacao as a living and integral part of the symbiosis between the *campesinos* and their natural environment—the organic narrative.

The first return was to La Unión, on 23 March 1998 to commemorate one year since the founding of the Community. Three hundred people went to settle there, but not to return to their previous way of life as family units; they knew they had to be together to survive. They decided to build a new settlement, structured so they could live communally instead of in separate and distant farmsteads. They applied both to state agencies and international NGOs for funding to start them off in these new settlements: "We know that we cannot return to our hamlets if we do not do it in an organised way, and in community settlements, in order to defend ourselves". They requested money to buy building materials such as wire netting, wood, and zinc sheets for roofs, animals like fish and chickens, seeds to plant to grow agricultural crops for 30 work groups to farm (cassava, beans, plantain, rice, passion fruit and *lulo*), vegetables for kitchen gardens (onion, coriander, aubergine, tomato, cucumber and pepper), and vaccines, among other things.[4]

The return to La Unión was supported by Oxfam and ICRC, but they gave them food provisions only for the first three months, which turned out to be insufficient because the families needed two crop cycles in order to become economically autonomous and self-sustainable. However, by then, the project to recuperate the Cooperative model had created the community fund based on the cacao trade, and they used this to help the returned families become economically stable (Pardo and Darío 2007: 202).

On 25 March 1998, the Community wrote a letter to Liberal president Ernesto Samper (1994–1998), informing him of the return to La Unión and complaining about the lack of support from the state. According to this letter, Community members and state officials had met several times to discuss the return; the state had agreed to send food supplies every 12 days,

but this had not been fulfilled. The letter connected this broken promise with a prior experience: in September 1997, they wrote, the state had promised to help them with seeds, tools, technical support in agriculture, fish cultivation, chickens, cattle, pigs, "that is, the chance to reactivate ourselves and sustain ourselves economically", and this had not happened. They reiterated their request that the state fund their food supplies for six months while they "reactivated" themselves in their return process in La Unión, explaining that six months' support was necessary because of ongoing conflict in the region: "sometimes we want to work, [but] we cannot go because of combats in the area. […] the public security impedes us frequently from carrying out our community objectives; so [our ability to] plant seeds or collect our harvests depends on what is happening at that moment".[5] But they did not receive concerted support from the state for any of their returns, and this constitutes an antecedent to the radical narrative because of repeated disillusionment with what they see as the state's broken promises.[6]

With the support of Swiss NGO Diakonía, in 1999 nine families returned to La Esperanza—again, the international NGOs playing the role of the state. Diakonía financed machinery to build houses, but the families were forced to leave again due to threats. On 24 September 1999, Community members returned to Arenas Altas, where they built a new settlement with the support of a religious congregation to commemorate 30 months since their foundation (Pardo and Darío 2007: 202).[7]

*   *   *

This book does not pretend to give an exhaustive chronology of the Community's organisational process. Giraldo's book (2010) contains a complete documentation of all the aggressions they have suffered to 2010. What I hope to show is the Community's process of cultural constitution within a historical context, in order to understand their evolution as a social movement.

The 'organisational' experience of the foundational first few years produced a cultural change. Their first conception of themselves as a 'Peace Community' simply meant the idea of 'neutrality' as a strategy of temporary, humanitarian protection—the short-term logic of negative peace. The experience of being displaced in the town of San José and the need for led to a situation in which working together was safer and more practical, both physically and psychologically. But this experience acquired

a significance which became a life philosophy in which coexistence and community life are valued as principles, not just practical necessities, and also as antithetical to the 'dehumanising' logic of war—the more idealistic logic of positive peace. The day before commemorating 18 months, the Community wrote a proclamation emphasising this shift in their identity narrative:

> The essence of our process is community work and solidarity. We have committed to not participating, nor being silent about injustices, to not collaborating with any of the armed actors: paramilitaries-army and guerrilla, and to build communally a sense of resistance.[8]

The practice of community work built community bonds and a community economics: "we sow in solidarity, and distribute our produce, and the work groups still function like that" (G.T., event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014). Out of this practice of working together and conceptualising what they were doing, the 'alternative community' identity began to be forged.

Notes

1. Community, 'Principios', JGA 1995–1997/145–151.
2. Community, 'Acta de asamblea constitutiva' 21 November 1997. JGA 1995–1997/166–171.
3. Community, 'Estatutos de la Comunidad'. JGA 1995–1997/172–199.
4. Community, Proposal: 'Necesidades del retorno y reactivación de cultivos', JGA 1998/133–136.
5. Letter from the Community to President Samper, 25 March 1998. JGA 1998/57–60.
6. The support, in fact, was not non-existent. For the return to Arenas Altas, the local municipality of Apartadó gave 1000 kg of seeds and some parts for the construction of an aqueduct (3 hoses, 15 rods and some tubing). However, this support was minimal, and there was no concerted support plan; therefore, I consider fair the Community's affirmation that they did their returns without state support. Community, 'Informe de la Comunidad de Paz sobre la gestión del Estado en la comunidad', undated. JGA 2001A/147–151.
7. Proposal by the Community for their return to Arenas Altas. JGA 1999/105.
8. Community, 'Una Comunidad de paz en medio de la guerra celebra 18 meses de haberse declarado como Comunidad de Paz', 22 September 1998. JGA 1998/169.

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The Radical Narrative

On the morning of 23 March 2015, the Community were preparing for their yearly anniversary, marking 18 years since their foundation. They had cut the grass in San Josecito for the event and built new wooden bunk beds to accommodate guests, including the ambassadors of France and Germany. Sitting in their thatched-roof kiosk where the commemoration was to be held that afternoon, I watched two men bring a huge white flag into the kiosk, painted with green capital letters, and hang it carefully from the walls. It read, "WE HAVE SUFFERED ALL KINDS OF AGGRESSIONS AT THE HANDS OF THE COLOMBIAN STATE".

It gave me an odd feeling. I thought: you have survived for 18 years, staying in your territory against all odds, building a support network with international visibility, fighting for autonomy, building peace from the bottom up… and *that is the identity phrase that you choose with which to celebrate?* It seems to hold a ritualistic reaffirmation of a collective identity and a world view, a need to reaffirm the idea of the perpetrator state, one of their founding beliefs, in order to continue being the Peace Community.

The Community's critics believe that the Community's position of 'rupture' with the state is too 'closed' and 'radical'. Some see the Community as 'stuck in the past', unable to recognise the opportunities which have arisen under the Santos administration for victims' rights. But the rupture's complex genealogy has created polarised identity narratives, and must be understood within the terms of the Community's own social experience, and its internal logic.

The Community's perception of 'the state' is based on a history of multiple state-society encounters, which they interpret and re-write over

time in interaction between members. These encounters include direct state violence, but also inefficient but seemingly benign bureaucracy and broken promises. When central, civilian authorities condemn abuses and promise to help the Community, but the army continues collaborating with paramilitaries in new violations, the Community understandably interprets the central authorities, such as the President, as either liars, or unable to exercise control over the power structures in Urabá.

Herzfeld (1993) sees the bureaucratic world as a machine for the "social production of indifference". Gupta claims "indifference" is too uniform a concept, claiming that "bureaucratic action repeatedly and systematically produces arbitrary outcomes in its provision of care" (2012: 6). Both deconstruct the notion of intent—popular discourse often portrays cynical, corrupt bureaucrats who act for hidden personal interests; or a state that secretly commands bureaucrats not to act. The Community's social experience in the state-society encounter gave them good reason to mistrust the state, because they saw the soldiers who permitted or carried out massacres as belonging to the same structure as the officials who broke their promises—the 'aggregation' of disparate institutions into the reified 'state-idea'. I do not dispute the possibility of corrupt officials on their case, but my archive review revealed frequent changeovers of officials, state documents which get the historical context of San José wrong and misconstrue the Community's narratives, and other factors which point to bureaucratic inefficiency *as well as* potential corruption.

To understand the way that the radical narrative works as an interpretative framework, we must set out its historical and cultural construction, and examine its constitutive narrative elements.

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The Genealogy of the Rupture 1997–2005

The genealogy of the 'rupture' is the historical process by which the radical narrative, which I have characterised as a 'victim-drama', is produced. The framework chronology used in this chapter is taken from Gildardo Tuberquia's account, related in a public event organised by Kirsty Brimelow QC and myself at Doughty Street Chambers in London in July 2015.[1] It is an account of events, but also a politico-cultural construct which performs a social function. The selection of key events follows Gildardo's chronology but is mirrored in many other accounts I have heard over the years from other members. The chronology of an individual leader is not just an individual construct—it is formed in interaction between members, over time, through the everyday practice of (re-)production of narratives, alongside other everyday practices that form a collective identity of which the radical narrative is a constitutive part. Gildardo's retrospective interpretation of the Community's history reproduces the collective, influencing it and being influenced by it—structure and agency—and reveals the Community's internal logic of how events developed.

The Rupture with the Military

After the foundation of the Peace Community in 1997, CIJP facilitated various institutional relationships. The NGO's work included publishing communiqués on the human rights situation, which they called 'historical records' and 'ethical condemnations', and which they sent to their international

network and to government institutions. This form of documenting events is a strategy the Community continues to use. CIJP took Community members to meet authorities; so at the beginning, relationships began with multiple state entities. In Gildardo's words, "our intention […] was always to have a close relationship with the government and seek recognition from them".

The relationship with the military was the first to break down, because when the Community denounced violations by soldiers, they were called to military installations to give testimony, which they felt exposed them to reprisal because perpetrators and prosecutors were part of the same institution. In 1999, the Military Criminal Justice repeatedly called members of CIJP and Community members to the installations of the Seventeenth Brigade to denounce formally what they were publishing in their communiqués. CIJP's position, expressed in several letters and meetings, was that they did not present formal denouncements, but documented abuses in their communiqués, because in their 12 years of experience they had concluded that the Military Criminal Justice system was a structure of impunity that violated the principle of impartiality, precisely because the accused belonged to the same military structure. This indicates the importance of CIJP's trajectory prior to accompanying the Peace Community in the way they perceived and dealt with state institutions. Their other complaint was that when victims were called to the military installations to give testimony, they were then identified by possible perpetrators as people who had spoken out, which exposed them to reprisals: "The Military Justice system has converted witnesses into later victims", they wrote. They requested that all cases be attended by the civil justice system.[2]

Though they refused to collaborate with the military justice system, they did attend meetings in the Seventeenth Brigade to discuss security. On more than one occasion, the then commander promised to instruct his subordinates not to enter the Community's spaces if there were no situation which seriously merited their presence.[3] The presence of soldiers in the Community's spaces was an issue that sparked the production of a counter-narrative, especially from the Armed Forces: a notion that because the Community did not want the army to enter their spaces, what they were really after was an 'independent republic'; and, related to this, that the community were guerrilla sympathisers.

This term 'independent republic' was first used at the beginning of the armed conflict by Conservative senator Álvaro Gómez, referring to the

existence of autonomous territories controlled by the guerrilla.[4] Gómez used it in the context of what was called 'Operation Sovereignty', a military offensive in 1964 to try to take control back of these areas, and justifying the bombing of Marquetalia, which many analysts see as a definitive event in the creation of FARC (Molano 2016: 13). Ever since, the term has been recycled in different moments throughout the Colombian conflict to refer pejoratively to areas of the country controlled by FARC, where the state is unable to enter.

The idea of 'neutrality' caused friction among state institutions from the beginning of the creation of the peace communities in Urabá. San José de Apartadó was already stigmatised in public discourse because of perceived associations with UP and Balsamar: the counter-narrative of 'the Peace Community are *guerrilleros*' built on this, and the fact that 'neutrality' meant 'saying no' to the army, the legitimate and legally constituted state forces, provoked suspicion. The army saw the request to not enter their territory as a threat to a core tenet of statehood: sovereignty. It also rang alarm bells because of a perceived similarity with the demilitarised zone of San Vicente de Caguán, the area granted to the FARC as a condition for peace talks, and the seat of the negotiations in the failed peace process of 1998–2002.

In 2000, the General Commander of the Military Forces of Colombia formally requested the government clarify the "official position" about the issue of peace communities, in particular the presence of the military in them, because it was an issue that "has caused fatigue in diverse spheres of the Colombian state and therefore to the Armed Forces".[5] The response from the then Minister of Defence, Luis Fernando Ramírez, and the then Minister of the Interior, Humberto de la Calle, was that with the exception of the area of the demilitarised zone in San Vicente del Caguán, "there is no forbidden territory for the Armed Forces".[6] This position was reiterated on several occasions, and continues to be repeated today, as I have witnessed in mediation scenarios.[7] The idea of neutrality was a sore point. It touched on a universal principle about the rights of the Armed Forces and the nature of their work in the country. The Community's conception of neutrality seemed to question state sovereignty. Because of the frustrations in this relationship, in 2000 the Community decided no longer to speak with the Armed Forces, only with civilian authorities.

MASSACRES AND COMMISSIONS

An important event in the Community's historical account was the massacre of La Unión. Gildardo said:

> [We wanted] justice for the whole situation, for the displacement, for the murders, for the massacres. In 2000, the paramilitaries and the military carried out two massacres. One in La Unión, where they killed six people, […] and also five people who were Work Group leaders. In San José, there was another killing [on 19 February 2000[8]] and they assassinated five people.

According to the CIJP communiqué about the massacre, on 8 July 2000 soldiers patrolled La Unión all day, and a helicopter from the Seventeenth Brigade circled overhead. At night, 20 hooded and masked men stormed the settlement, killed 6 men and burnt a community house down. They told the rest of the inhabitants that they had 20 days to leave the area, and accused them of being "a guerrilla community not a peace community". The 63 families of La Unión fled once again to San José.[9]

E. was 18 when the paramilitaries came to the settlement, going from house to house calling people out and forcibly gathering the inhabitants in the communal kiosk, where they announced they were going to be in charge from then on. Then, E. said, they began to send people out of the kiosk. First they pointed at the women and children, who fled to hide in the woods. Then they began to point to men, and told them to follow the women. They sent the elderly men away, and some of the younger ones. E. was in that grey zone between teenager and man. "It seemed like they weren't sure about me, but finally they pointed to me and I ran. I was the last person they pointed to, and as I was running, I heard the shots of them killing those that were left" (personal communication, May 2013).

B. managed to hide in her house and not go to the kiosk:

> I didn't see anything, but the mother of two of the men who were killed was in the two-story house in front of the kiosk, and she watched them kill her sons from the window. One of them refused to kneel, as a show of defiance, not wanting to submit to his assassins.

B. also told me about the way the judicial authorities had handled this event, which she found "humiliating". It took three days for the Institute of Legal Medicine to arrive in a helicopter with the Technical Investigation Agency of the Police (*Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación*—CTI). The Community had taken the bodies to their football pitch, a short distance

away from the houses, because they were starting to decompose in the tropical heat. The officials loaded two of the bodies into the helicopter and took off, but seemingly they could not stand the smell and threw them out, profoundly offending the Community. They fell onto the pitch again. Next day, the same officials returned on mules to perform the necropsy *in situ* and bury them in La Unión (field diary, December 2014). The violence of this encounter with para-state armed forces was compounded by the treatment they received by bureaucratic state entities.

Gildardo explained that after the La Unión massacre and the earlier killings in San José, "a special Investigation Commission was formed with several organs of the state […] due to these two killings, with the aim of investigating them". A phase began of multiple commissions and endless meetings with civilian authorities. The Community, with CIJP's support, had already tried to obtain justice for some of the crimes committed before the massacre but with no results, and no perpetrator had been sanctioned (Pardo 2007: 190).

In August 2000, Community members met with the then Vice-President, Gustavo Bell Lemus, and asked him to create this Investigation Commission (the Vice-Presidency at that time was in charge of human rights and IHL).[10] This proposal had two complementary objectives: to seek justice, and to prevent more attacks, because they considered that "all actions of exemplary justice against perpetrators would lead to the generation of actions of prevention".[11] They saw justice as a prerequisite for protection. The Investigation Commission was formed, comprised of the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Ombudsman's Office, coordinated by the Vice-presidency, and with observers from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. This Commission carried out a first visit that same month, agreed with the Community how the organism would function, and took testimonies in San José and in La Unión.[12] Initially, the idea was to investigate the La Unión massacre. However, on seeing the quantity of assassinations and violations, the commission agreed to widen its mandate and look at all the cases together, to be more efficient.[13]

For this first visit, the Community presented the Commissioners with a document specifying a total of 79 victims, and saying they hoped that their participation in the Commission would be perceived as "a real and undoubtable show of the Community's will […] to give another historical opportunity for the justice system to demonstrate that it is possible to break this impunity".[14] The letter spoke of their frustrations with the judicial system, including their complaint that the Attorney General's Office did not believe

their testimonies and demanded stronger proof like videos and photos, failing to take into account their *campesino* reality in which they go out to work in the fields without such equipment. The letter said that they had always wanted to collaborate with the justice system but they had "no trust" in the local legal entities due to the influence of paramilitarism on local officials. They reiterated their concern that "people continue to affirm that we are closed to the state". The petitions they made were (1) that the Commission delegate their proceedings to national and not local organisms; (2) that the Commission abstain from visiting the Community with army or police accompaniment; (3) and that it present a preliminary report after a given period of time.[15] The Community clearly already felt defensive about criticisms of their being too 'closed' and uncollaborative.

The Commission compiled over 120 testimonies.[16] However, misunderstandings soon began to emerge. Coordinating institutions is a challenge in any country, and bureaucracy in Colombia tends to be particularly slow and laborious, especially when there are staff changeovers. Different interpretations began to emerge about the Commission's scope and *modus operandi*, incomprehensible to the Community because they considered these to have been agreed in the first visit.

On 29 September 2000, the Community wrote to the Vice-Presidency, concerned that the Commission had not returned.[17] In October, a second visit took place, but according to the Community, did not respect the conditions agreed in the first visit.[18] The Vice-Presidency, despite having authorised the creation of the Commission, began to manifest differences of opinion about its scope and *modus operandi*, and to reiterate that "there is no forbidden territory for the army". The Community, tired of this 'independent republic' counter-narrative, insisted that they had never refused the presence of the army, just requested that its location take into account their security as civilians in a conflict zone and not convert them into a military objective.[19]

Six months later, on 22 March 2001, the Commission returned to the Community. The delegate from the Vice-Presidency was new. He reiterated the 'independent republic' counter-narrative and expressed his interest in the Investigation Commission, saying that it was a good idea, but that it could include other institutions. The Community reiterated their position that the participants and the *modus operandi* had already been agreed. Then there was another disagreement, because the Vice-Presidency's delegate said that his institution could not form part of an investigative process due to the principle of independence between the executive and legal branches. He argued that the name 'Investigation Commission' was

inadequate, and said it should be called a 'Steering Commission for the Follow-up of Investigations'. The Community clarified that the role of the Vice-Presidency, agreed with the previous delegate, was not of investigation but of coordination. The Vice-Presidency's delegate insisted that it was important to arrange a meeting between the Community and the army; the Community explained again their reasons for not wanting that, and pleaded that the Investigation Commission continue.[20]

This account of the minutes of meetings is not exhaustive, but need not go on further—it gives enough of an idea of how things were tending towards the absurd and generating fatigue on both sides. The Community felt things were going backward, and increasingly they wondered if this inefficiency was a deliberate strategy. Gildardo said that they felt the Investigation Commission "was not progressing"; it "was there, but at the same time the threats from the army and paramilitaries continued". Their 'aggregation' of state institutions elided the inefficiency of the commission with the ongoing violence on the ground; enabling the conclusion that the bureaucracy was deliberately useless.

Then, said Gildardo, in 2002 there was a food blockade:

> The military prohibited the *campesinos* from taking more than 20.000 pesos [of supplies] from Apartadó to the Community, and […] the paramilitaries began to kill the drivers, so that no driver would dare to go up to the Community. That was a very tough moment. […] they also killed a community mother, who was in charge of cooking for the children. [She] was a witness who had given declarations to the Commission, and they assassinated her. Some other people who had also given testimony to this Commission were also threatened, and some displaced. In that moment, we decided to ask the Commission for an evaluation.

On 23 September 2002, given the threats to the witnesses who had collaborated with the Investigation Commission, and frustrated with "fruitless meetings and meetings", the Community formally requested from the Vice-Presidency an evaluation of the work of the Investigation Commission.[21] The experience of the food blockade is crucial in the construction of the organic narrative, in tandem with the radical narrative; this is explored further in Chap. 8. For the purpose of this chapter, it is sufficient to note it as a milestone in the account.

The interpretation of 'the state' as hypocritical, because of the disjuncture between the violent actions of state forces on the ground and the treatment they receive in meetings, explains why the Community began to

insist on an evaluation of the Commission's work, emphasising the fact that they had collaborated with the Commission, but that it had achieved nothing. This request was the seed of what would later become the demand for a broader Commission for Evaluating the Justice System, one of the four conditions for resuming dialogue with the state. Did they want justice? Or, from their position of interpreting the state as systemically corrupt and against them, did they just want proof or recognition that the Investigation Commission had failed to do anything, thus validating their victim-drama narrative? Their commitment to a moral truth is a key part of their radical narrative. Some of their critics see them as too idealistic and unpragmatic; and similarly, some of their supporters venerate this position as heroic. Both of these positions, however, suppose objectives connected to broader political positions. They do not take into account the investment in a specific collective identity as a *sui generis* historical and cultural process.

The Rupture with the Justice System

According to Gildardo, when the Community saw the failure of the Investigation Commission—the lack of results, the threats, the assassinations of witnesses who gave testimony, and the lack of improvement meanwhile in the ongoing situation, after three years of their own efforts and expectations—"we decided to break with the judicial system, to not give any more official declarations, because that was putting us at risk". On 19 November 2003, they published a communiqué titled "We have no other option but to be coherent", in which they declared their rupture with the Colombian justice system. The communiqué explained that this rupture was based on "an ethical principle", because in their view, instead of meting out justice to the perpetrators, the system had itself become "a persecutor of the victims, and it makes them out to be victimisers who attack the state". Their position was based on "a conscientious objection which opposes the structural injustice". In practical terms, this meant not defending themselves in judicial proceedings, not being represented by a lawyer in any process, nor giving their versions of events in any trials. They would simply continue to publish their communiqués, for humanity and for historical record, about their human rights situation.[22]

There was an antecedent which Gildardo did not mention in his speech, but which I have heard referred to in other Community members' accounts, and which also contributed to the rupture with the justice system. In September 2003, a meeting was held in San José de Apartadó convening communities and organisations that were beneficiaries of orders

for protection measures from the Inter-American Human Rights System (personal communication with Javier Giraldo and two Community members, June 2014).[23] The purpose of the meeting was to share their experiences of state and para-state violence, lack of access to justice, and discuss possible resistance strategies. The fact that invitations were issued based on recognition of risk by the Inter-American System reiterates the international dimension in the subjectivities of victims of state violence in Colombia at the time.

The communities found they were experiencing similar security situations, and that the justice system was failing to deliver. The idea was proposed to break with the judicial system, as an ethical act of conscientious objection. Not all those present agreed, but those who shared the idea, announced shortly after the formation of the Network of Communities in Rupture and Resistance (*Red de comunidades en rupture y resistencia*— Recorre).[24] These two words, 'rupture' and 'resistance', are key elements of the Community's collective identity.

Recorre's declaration was written in interaction between several communities with varied material and imaginative realities and emotions. It proclaims the objective of "generating bonds of solidarity", "denouncing" and "generating alternatives, departing from a rupture with the justice system". The position regarding the state was clear; they saw it as "a fascist state, one of total criminal action against the communities", product "of a system which generates death, that is, neoliberalism, in its action in favour of multinationals". It is also clear that they perceive the state to be illegitimate because of the proxy forces of paramilitarism, saying, "it is clear that the actions of paramilitarism are created by the state" and "the Colombian state has been the principal perpetrator". It describes the Colombian justice system as "a paramilitarised system which has fallen into total impunity and has converted the victim into victimiser […] for that reason, collaborating with it justifies its logic of terror and impunity". The adjective 'paramilitary' applied to the state comes to stand in for 'illegitimate' in the broader sense evoked by the discourses of revolutionary left-wing struggles in Colombia, of Liberation Theology, of Gandhian non-violence as appealed to by Eduar Lancheros, and of the normative values of international human rights standards; all ingredients which are not specific to Colombia, but global.

Recorre declared an ethical principal of 'rupture' (*rompimiento*) with the legal system, invoking the Right to Conscientious Objection enshrined by Article 18 of the Colombian 1991 Constitution. They proposed a

strategy of "exposing the state's actions of terror" on the one hand, and on the other the development of "an anticapitalist quest" with a "community sense" to generate "alternative solidarity economics which go against that kind of society and capitalist economic model" and "alternatives of justice and equality" (Aparicio 2012: 270–273). In sharing experiences, these communities strengthened their perception that 'capitalism' was associated with the state and with paramilitaries, and therefore with the illegitimacy of the Colombian state. Similarly, the notions of 'rupture', 'community' and 'alternatives' become cast as antidotes, an antecedent to the intersection between the radical and organic narratives in the Peace Community's 'alternative community' collective identity narrative (Chap. 9). In this interaction between communities who were suffering state and para-state violence, the Community's victim-drama was reinforced, and their ethical stance of non-participation was strengthened, building on their pre-existing conception of neutrality.

Osorio and Perdomo claim that Recorre's decision to break with the justice system was unprecedented in Colombia (2011: 78). They argue the declaration is supported by the Constitution and by IHL (2011: 68), on the grounds that non-cooperation with the legal system is based on the affirmation that the state is not fulfilling its obligation to guarantee fundamental rights to justice, truth, due process and legality, and that conscientious objection translates in practice to "not collaborating with a judicial system which violates fundamental and universal principles", especially those to do with legality and due process, "due to the lack of an independent and impartial tribunal" (2011: 69). Recorre's alternative strategy proposes taking the state to court before international tribunals in order to access justice (2011: 78), indicating the idealisation of the international system as morally superior to the national, an integral part of the Community's victim-drama narrative, reinforced by the encounter with other communities who similarly appealed to transnational human rights networks for support in the face of state violence.

Recorre seems to have stopped functioning as a network. However, from the same initial meeting in San José de Apartadó, another initiative was formed called the '*Campesino* University' and does continue to function sporadically: meetings over several days between communities with the purpose of sharing knowledge about grassroots justice and administration, healthcare, education and food sovereignty. Meanwhile, despite the rupture with the justice system, the Community continued to meet with central state entities.

The Inter-American Human Rights System
and the Concept of 'Protection'

While meetings about the Investigation Commission were ongoing, there was a parallel scenario of dialogue between the Community and the state. The IACHR had ordered the state to adopt protection measures for the Community, and these had to be concerted between state institutions and beneficiaries. The Inter-American Human Rights System had followed the Community's risk situation since their foundation in 1997, in part thanks to CIJP's advocacy strategy. First the Inter-American Commission and then the Court emitted multiple resolutions, ordering the Colombian state to adopt protection measures for members.[25]

By early 2003, the two scenarios were getting confused: the issues discussed in the Investigation Commission and the scenarios of discussion about the IACHR measures overlapped, a situation compounded by the fact that both scenarios included the same institutions, and the lack of continuity of officials. In one meeting, a delegate from the Ombudsman's Office was charged with taking the minutes, and wrote that the Community made "a new proposal" in the context of "the precautionary measures decreed by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights", to create "a commission for the verification and evaluation of the work of the Investigation Commission created in the year 2000". On the document, somebody, perhaps Giraldo, had circled the word "new" in pencil, as evidently this proposal was *not* new; rather the delegate was new, and had no idea of the trajectory of this series of commissions. The word "precautionary" was also circled, perhaps for the legal imprecision of the person taking the minutes: the Court, a jurisdictional organ, *orders* 'interim' measures, while the Commission, a quasi-jurisdictional organ, *requests* 'precautionary' measures, and whoever was writing the minutes had confused the two. This could seem an insignificant detail, but it indicates the level of preparation of those officials working on the Community's case, and also the lack of care.[26]

After the rupture with the justice system in November 2003, the only scenario of dialogue with the state left were the meetings about protection. The Community continued demanding a commission to evaluate the failures of the Investigation Commission, which they saw as necessary for protection. They proposed to review "why the Investigation Commission did not work", to analyse "if it is true that the Community has not collaborated in this search for justice"; and to "demonstrate why justice has not been done for this crime against humanity".[27] They no longer believed

in the justice system, but they wanted to prove what they saw as structural impunity.

In this scenario, a polarisation of narratives developed around the concept of 'protection'. The Community emphasised exemplary justice as a mechanism for preventing new violations. The state saw protection as technical—the deployment of Armed Forces, and the allocation of concrete measures such as mobile phones and bullet-proof vests. Giraldo interpreted this as evidence that there was no political will to clarify truth and sanction perpetrators.[28] The state institutions proposed to build a police station in San José for protection; the Community proposed that it should be elsewhere so as not to make the civilian population a conflict target. Gildardo said:

> They said that the Armed Forces had to be in the middle of the Community protecting it in order to prevent killings. But the history we had was that the military and the paramilitaries went around together, so it was difficult for us to accept the Armed Forces within our settlements. So we proposed that […] the Armed Forces should be midway on the road [between San José and Apartadó]".

There was a profound tension here: the Community emphasised their view of protection as punishment for perpetrators, and showed their deep mistrust in the protective capacity of the state. They called for protection, but did not believe in the protection the state was offering. G.G. saw the Armed Forces as hypocritical, because "they are supposed to be there to provide security to the civilian population", but "their presence has caused many deaths", both by crossfire, and by assassinations carried out in conjuncture with paramilitaries (field diary, May 2015).

The discussion about protection laid the groundwork for two of the Community's four demands for resuming dialogue with the state—the demand that a police station should not be in the middle of the town of San José, but at a point on the road called Tierra Amarilla where paramilitary checkpoints had previously operated, and the recognition of their 'humanitarian zones'. This latter proposal was formulated specifically for the discussion with the state about protection measures.

Gildardo explained that some families who were not members of the Peace Community had returned to the hamlets, and wanted to convert their schools or health centres (those cement buildings erected in the period of the UP) into 'humanitarian zones', for civilians to take refuge in case of combat. In order for this to function, they needed the buildings to

be respected by the Armed Forces and by the other armed actors, in a similar way to the Peace Community's initial 1997 request to the conflict actors to respect their 'neutrality' and not involve them in the conflict. The difference was that the proposal for humanitarian zones was only for the protection of civilians in moments of armed confrontation; those able to use the safe-houses would not have to abide by all the principles the Community lived by, but still maintained they had rights as civilians not to be accidental casualties in war.

According to their initial written proposal, this concept of 'humanitarian zones' emerged following a series of consultations with non-member *campesinos*. All were concerned about the paramilitary advance, about the forced displacement of many *campesinos*, about bombings and threats. The Community proposed "to create in each hamlet places of peace, whose objective is to be humanitarian zones". These would be "specific and delimited [places], the spaces of schools, and their surroundings where kiosks will be built and where they demand no presence of any armed actor". They proposed periodic observation and verification visits by state organs of control in order to foster transparency, and accompaniment from the Office for the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights.

They would also be meeting places, "to allow the hamlet to progress with their own community reflections". Each humanitarian zone would have a "peace committee" of three people elected by the hamlet, who could work together with the committees of the other hamlets, and with the Internal Council of the Community, to organise community work. This initiative was motivated "by the *campesino* solidarity between the hamlets and the Peace Community".[29] The idea of coordination between members and non-members of the Peace Community is important, because it emphasises the articulation role the Community was seen to play by many non-members in the area. Though these zones never really became functional, and the state never agreed to recognise them, this articulation role continues, as many non-members rely on the international presence the Community mobilises in order to stay in their territory, because it creates a sort of umbrella system of visibilisation: if someone who is not a member of the Community is attacked, but the Community vouches for them and says they were not involved in any illegal group, then many national and international organisations support demands to the state to protect them.[30] The articulation role, however, is not just about protection, the short-term logic of negative peace, but is also about organising community work, promoting solidarity and helping non-members

access a better price for their cacao when possible; the longer-term logic of positive peace. G.T. explained:

> We saw that massacres were occurring and we talked about it with high-level government, and we saw that this could be a solution. […] The idea was that in each hamlet the little school or health centre would be used, it would be marked with signs that said 'humanitarian zone of such-and-such hamlet', and it would be respected. For people who were not Peace Community members but regular *campesinos*, as a way of avoiding displacement, and in moments of combat, of bombings, [they could] go in there and stay a day or two while the problems passed. (G.T., event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014)

It is worth emphasising the difference between this proposal for 'humanitarian zones' and the current use of the term in other places in Colombia (e.g. in the Chocó side of Urabá, among communities accompanied by CIJP in the river basins of Curvaradó, Jiguamiandó and Cacarica). Many of the original 'peace communities' of the Lower Atrato (Chap. 3) today live in 'humanitarian zones'; entire settlements demarcated with fencing and signs, not safe-houses for temporary refuge (Burnyeat 2013).

While the dialogue about protection continued, said Gildardo, the Community perceived that "the justice system was turning against us, the Community, especially against the leaders. There were judicial proceedings against all the leaders". He claimed the state was tracking the whereabouts of their leaders, tapping their cell phones and investigating the Community's bank accounts. The Community was one of many targets of the wire-tapping ('*chuzadas*') done by the DAS which became a major political scandal. They proposed creating another commission (to confuse readers further); a government 'observation commission' which could come to the Community and verify that the trumped-up charges, the stigmatisations and the counter-narratives were all unfounded.[31] This commission never came into being, but the Community's somewhat defensive narrative is evident in their wanting to demonstrate their transparency.

One of the leaders who the Community delegated for this dialogue was Luis Eduardo Guerra. Another was Gildardo, who related his experience in one of the last meetings before the 2005 massacre and the total rupture[32]:

> The Vice-President's [Francisco Santos], reaction was that the Community's proposals [about the police station and the humanitarian zones] were very good. He asked us to submit them in writing. When we went out into the street, Luis Eduardo said, why were they so friendly? We had never seen those people so friendly. We asked ourselves, might they be plotting something

against the Community? They said that if we sent the written proposals, they would send a reply before Christmas 2004. We never got a reply, and then in 2005, on 21 February, the soldiers together with the paramilitaries murdered Luis Eduardo, his partner Bellanira, and Deiner, his eleven-year-old son. They also murdered Alfonso Bolívar [another leader] with his partner and their two little children, of six years old and eighteen months, and a farm worker. So eight people were massacred, which led us to break with the government, because we saw that this dialogue was useless. All the efforts we had made as a Community to talk with the government had been completely useless.

The Community believed there was a plot to exterminate them that was being coordinated from the highest level of the state. The notion of objective intent, which Herzfeld and Gupta flag as problematic in interpretations of the actions of state bureaucrats, is clearly mobilised in Gildardo's comment: the Vice-President and other officials were "friendly" because they were "plotting something". The aggregation of the different actors, paramilitaries, soldiers and bureaucrats, converge in this narrative into the single, homogenised state.

The Massacre of Mulatos and La Resbalosa

The last meeting took place at the end of January 2005, again with the then Vice-President Francisco Santos.[33] On 15 January, Guerra gave an interview:

Our project is to continue resisting and defending our rights. We don't know until when, because what we have learned throughout all we've lived through is that today we are talking, tomorrow we could be dead. […] Our resistance is against the state, let us be clear, but an unarmed resistance, a civil resistance. By even defending our own Constitution. By saying to the state: 'It is you who are violating the Constitution', what we are doing is legitimating, not attacking the state. So our project continues, we don't know for how long.[34]

This quote reveals the heart of the 'radical narrative': the ethical repudiation of what they perceive as the illegitimacy of the state. It was a death foretold: "Tomorrow we could be dead." On 21 February, Guerra, his partner Bellanira Areiza and son Deiner Andrés Guerra, were murdered in the hamlet of Mulatos by a mixed troop of soldiers and paramilitaries, who then continued to the adjacent hamlet of La Resbalosa and killed Alfonso

Bolívar, his wife Sandra Milena Muñoz, their six-year-old daughter Natalia Andrea Tuberquia, 18-month-old son Santiago Tuberquia, and farmhand Alejandro Pérez.

Each year, when they commemorate the massacre in the little chapel they built on the site where they found his body, the Community listens to a recording of the voice of their martyred leader. The massacre is a key event in the Community's historical narrative. It led to the crystallisation of their political position and their decision to break off the relationship with the state. Additionally, the reactions from the state and public opinion to the massacre were key in the development of counter-narratives and the broader questioning of the project of neutrality.

Mulatos, an area divided into two hamlets (Mulatos Medio and Mulatos Cabeceras), takes its name from the long Mulatos River, born in the mountains, which goes all the way down to the Caribbean Sea. The Community built a settlement in Mulatos Medio in 2010, on the site where they found the bodies of Luis Eduardo, Bellanira and Deiner, called the 'Peace Village of Luis Eduardo Guerra'. It is seven or eight hours' walk from San José over steep trails, first climbing up to a steep peak called Chontalito, which takes some four hours (depending on mud), and then gently downhill, over long ridges where the mountain range opens out around you: valleys, greens, virgin forest, areas sown with crops or with grazing cattle. You hear birds, including my favourite, which the *campesinos* call '*gulungu*' or '*rabiamarillo*' (yellow-tail), black with a long yellow tail, whose song sounds like a xylophone and whose nests hang down from the trees like bags. There are wild flowers like heliconias, big and red, which florists in Bogotá sell at half the size for 20, 30, 40 thousand pesos. Sometimes you see a snake on the path and must be careful because some are venomous, like the '*mapaná*', a type of pit viper. You often see and hear police and army helicopters overhead. The colours are absurdly vivid. Nature seems magnified in its intensity. The leaves are enormous. There is one, large and flat, which the *campesinos* call '*tobo*'. If they are caught by a rainstorm on their way, they cut one and use it as an umbrella. The soil contains whole worlds, complex ecosystems of insects, leaves and twigs, mushrooms, bacteria, earth and excess of water. It is a very humid region. With the tropical sun this creates a fertile soil, riven through with minerals. Walking through it, you begin to understand why this land is so desired, by so many people.

Before the mass forced displacement of 1997, some 200 families lived in Mulatos, but most had not returned by 2005. Luis Eduardo, like others

with land there, was living in San José, visiting Mulatos periodically to tend a cacao grove he had in a place called Macho Solo, staying with his stepmother who had returned. According to a Community communiqué, he travelled to Mulatos on 19 February to harvest cacao with Bellanira and Deiner. He planned to return on 21 to take Deiner to Medellín, where he was receiving medical treatment, as he had been injured in a blast on August 2004 by an unexploded grenade the army had left abandoned. But that morning, at the stepmother's house, they heard gunfire, so Luis Eduardo decided it was not safe to travel down to San José, and that they would instead go and harvest more cacao. They were intercepted and murdered around 7am on the banks of the Mulatos River by a mixed troop of soldiers and paramilitaries.

The same troop continued on to the adjacent hamlet of La Resbalosa, an hour and a half away, on the departmental border between Antioquia and Córdoba. Alfonso Bolívar was in his home with his wife Sandra, daughter Natalia, and baby son Santiago, plus two farmhands. Alfonso and the farmhands ran from the house. One of them, Alejandro Pérez, fell; the other managed to escape and reported the events. When Alfonso heard Sandra, shouting "Leave the children alone", he went back to the house, telling the farmhands that "he preferred to return and be killed alongside his children". They were all killed.

Combats and bombings continued all day in the area. Only on 23 February were some inhabitants able to flee to San José, bringing news of the killings,[35] and the Community immediately telephoned the Vice-Presidency. A Judicial Commission was sent to Apartadó on 24 February, comprising officials from the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Attorney General's Office, and ten technicians.[36] The Community organised a dele-gation of members to walk seven hours through the mountains to Mulatos and find the bodies. On 25 February they got to La Resbalosa, where they found blood, women's hair, and graffiti signed by the AUC and by the army's 33rd Counter-guerrilla Battalion. Forty metres from Alfonso's house, in the middle of a cacao plantation, they found five bodies in two communal graves, "completely dismembered, the head and extremities separated from the body; each body part also chopped into two or three pieces".[37] The bodies were covered with a layer of cacao husks, which the *campesinos* leave in piles after harvesting to decompose and fertilise the soil. Santiago, the 18-month-old boy, had his stomach sliced open.[38]

The army arrived soon after the Community, accused the Community delegation of "being guerrilla fighters, and ordered them to get down on

the ground". They replied that they were not *guerrilleros* and refused to get down. The soldiers allegedly told them, "Be thankful you managed to get the news out fast, if not we would have carried out a bigger massacre". The judicial commission came and removed the bodies in a helicopter.[39]

Seeing Luis Eduardo's body was not there, the Community went in search of it. Following vultures flying over the Mulatos River, they found the other three bodies.[40] Deiner's head was lying some fifteen metres from his body, and the bodies of Bellanira and Luis Eduardo were intertwined.[41] They immediately informed the government of the location for the judicial commission to come, but the helicopters went straight to Apartadó with the bodies from La Resbalosa. Next day, 26 February, the government promised the commission would arrive. Several helicopters flew overhead during the day, but the commission did not come. CJL phoned the Vice-Presidency continuously, insisting on the urgency of the judicial procedures, and the government kept promising that the commission would arrive in the afternoon. Finally, the government said that the helicopter had not arrived "due to bad weather" (which the Community interpreted as a lie given the presence of many helicopters) and promised it would come first thing the next day.[42]

But on the 27 the judicial commission did not arrive, so the Community organised a group to carry the bodies down to San José themselves, over the mountainous terrain, "because due to the heat and exposure to the open air, they were starting to decompose".[43] Usually, when sick people are taken over the steep tracks to take them down to the town, they are laid in hammocks, a young man carrying each end, swapping over from time to time to share the workload. CJL criticised the lack of efficacy in the practice of the judicial proceedings:

> We call on the National and International Community regarding the lack of immediacy and promptness in the performance of this first phase of the judicial investigation, which is of great importance for the clarification of the facts and of the criminal responsibilities.[44]

Another group went to search for the neighbours, including Luis Eduardo's stepmother. They came to the cluster of houses where she lived, one of which was occupied by the 33rd Battalion 'Cacique Lutaima', whose soldiers had spray-painted the walls with the message, "Out guerrilla! Your worst nightmare El Cacique says so!" The inhabitants were in another house; the army had forbidden them to leave. Soldiers had threatened

Luis Eduardo's stepmother, "because they say that I'm the guerrilla's nurse". The woman started to cry, and said, "I told Luis Eduardo not to go to the cacao grove that day to harvest those beans. […] He wouldn't listen because he wasn't afraid, and anyway he needed the money to take the boy to the hospital". Ever since he had left, and had not returned, the family had been praying. The soldiers "told us that they had killed some guerrilla fighters by the river, one who was with a woman and a child. I said to them, have you killed Luis Eduardo and the little boy?"[45]

According to the Community's communiqué, the last words that Luis Eduardo said to his stepmother were, "that he was going to work, because he had to resist, and make another, different world". The Community affirmed:

> His last words are a legacy that now, more than ever we are willing to follow: to carry out our civil resistance, maintaining our principles. We will not cede, even if we have to be forcibly displaced by the presence of the police or the army within the Community, even if they carry on killing us, even if they carry on slandering us; we believe in a new world where we will be respected and we can live in dignity.[46]

The few families that were still in Mulatos were displaced again. After the massacre, said G.T., the army poisoned the Mulatos River, which killed lots of animals. People found dead animals in the river. "The people gave Mulatos up for lost, they decided never to return" (interview January 2015).

In 2010, the Community founded the 'Peace Village' as a commemorative site, and the hamlet was inhabited again. The embodied practice of occupying this site, working its cacao groves and conducting yearly commemorative pilgrimages there to remember the massacre forges an 'alternative' geography to that produced by the conflict actors, inscribing the landscape with their historical memory and thus with their identity narratives; what Courtheyn (2016) calls an 'other politics'.

The Counter-Narratives

As we have already seen, three counter-narratives to the victim-drama began to circulate from the beginning of the Community's neutrality project: the 'independent republic' counter-narrative because they rejected the Armed Forces in their living spaces; 'the Community are *guerrilleros*'

counter-narrative because of the past associations with the UP and Balsamar, and because the 'independent republic' idea was connected to the guerrilla; and the 'closed Community' counter-narrative because they did not collaborate with the justice system. These occasionally continued to circulate in public and political spaces between 1997 and 2005 in response to particular events,[47] but it was the aftermath of the Mulatos massacre which really crystallised and strengthened the counter-narratives. This, in turn, hardened the Community's victim-drama narrative, because they felt attacked and defensive: identity narratives develop based on inter-action with sympathetic audiences, such as the international human rights community; and with antipathetic audiences, such as ex-President Uribe and the Colombian army.

Uribe had disagreed with the Community's position of neutrality when he was governor of Antioquia (Chap. 3). On 27 May 2004, now President of the Republic, Uribe publicly called for "the finishing off of that FARC channel through San José de Apartadó", and insisted that there was no forbidden territory for the armed forces,[48] saying:

> We continue to have great difficulty because some of the leaders of that community, encouraged by foreigners there, are obstructing justice [...]. If any of those leaders need to go to jail for obstructing justice, then let them go to jail.[49]

Uribe was noted during his presidency for stigmatising human rights defenders, and even major international NGOs, often labelling them as guerrilla sympathisers.[50] This behaviour was shared by many state officials at the time, and exposed the person to threats and violent reprisals, even if the slander was indirectly worded.[51]

If Uribe's 2004 stigmatisation caused indignation in the Community, the Mulatos massacre provoked even greater polarisation. The Community publicly denounced the army, saying "the Colombian state, in a show of its incredible illegitimacy, has carried out another massacre".[52] This unleashed a national debate about the legitimacy of the Community, on the one hand, and the state, on the other. Gildardo, in his account, said:

> We have always said clearly who has committed the killings. When it has been the military, we point to the military, when they act together with paramilitaries, we do the same, and when there have been acts committed by the guerrilla, we have also made it public. This killing, because we pointed

at the army and the paramilitaries, caused a really strong reaction in defence of the military. [...] There were ministers, governors, and even Álvaro Uribe himself who stigmatised the Peace Community and the people who accompanied the Community saying they were connected to FARC. [...] Instead of condemning the killings that had happened, he made these kinds of declarations in the media.

On 20 March, Uribe said on national television:

In this community of San José there are good people, but some of their leaders, patrons and defenders are seriously accused by people who have lived there of collaborating with FARC and of wanting to use the community to protect that terrorist organisation.[53]

The government's initial version was that Guerra was a *guerrillero* and planning to demobilise, so FARC killed him.[54] The army claimed there were no troops in that area during the events, so they could not have been involved; an argument refuted later in trial and army participation was proven.[55]

In March, the government sent a commission to San José (another commission!) of delegates from the Attorney General's Office, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Ombudsman's Office to take testimonies for the investigation. But the Community maintained their position of not giving any more official testimonies, to be coherent with their rupture with the justice system. Their attitude, due to the lack of continuity of officials, and insufficient context-sensitivity among institutions, who mostly had no idea of the antecedents, was badly received by the state. Headlines circulated such as "Public Prosecutor's Office: the Community refuses to collaborate",[56] strengthening the 'closed Community' counter-narrative.

When this commission was returning from San José to Apartadó, it was attacked on the road, supposedly by the FARC. The police squadron retaliated and there was a crossfire situation, leading to two wounded policemen, and strengthening the counter-narrative of 'the Community are *guerrilleros*'.[57] The government and the Public Prosecutor's Office insisted that Father Javier Giraldo and Gloria Cuartas give testimonies[58]; but they joined the Community's position of rupture with the justice system. Cuartas said she refused to give any declarations because "all the testimonies we have contributed [...] have not served to clarify the crimes [...] and I join the rupture with the Colombian judicial system.[59]

The then Vice-president Francisco Santos said that the Community's accusation of the army was "a bald-faced lie". Stories circulated in the aftermath, with cynical headlines like "Only God saw how they were killed", "A demobilised guerrilla fighter blames FARC for the deaths in San José", "Denouncement, the only clue in the massacre" (Anrup and Español 2011: 160). One, titled "The Controversial San José Community", was subtitled, "For some, they are a people persecuted for their neutrality; for others, they live in a manipulated regime which Farc uses as a strategic channel", and cited the director of the Antioquia Section of the Public Prosecutor's Office, Francisco Galvis, saying that FARC "use the Peace Community as a place of rest and holidaying".[60] Fernando Londoño, Minister of the Interior from 2002 to 2004 and an outspoken right-wing journalist, wrote a sarcastic opinion piece calling San José a "utopia":

> A primitive, simple town […] whose inhabitants opt for peace […] let's bring in a few euros, a few speeches, some lessons for the beneficiaries of theory, and let all the actors of the armed conflict leave the area, on one side the guerrilla fighters, and on the other, the judges, the soldiers and the police […]. This naïve pantomime, at which I do not know whether to laugh because of how comical it is, or cry because of what it hides, has managed to convince a portion of European opinion and now, God help us, the legion of the new South America illuminated by Fidel Castro's virtue.[61]

In another piece, Londoño wrote:

> Why can the community not accept the state, but they can the Farc? And why are they allowed to slander the army in impunity? And why is a portion of sovereign national land allocated to them, and authorised to be immune to the army's authority? San José de Apartadó is a nerve centre of the political war against Colombia. With others of its kind, we would be lost.[62]

The seeming threat to state sovereignty which the Community's conception of neutrality represented, heightened in visibility after the massacre, was at the heart of the counter-narratives. It touched another, related, sore point: the classification of the ongoing violence in Colombia as an 'internal armed conflict', which would warrant the application of IHL, or as a 'terrorist threat', as Uribe affirmed (Chap. 1). The discursive whirlwind in the wake of the massacre provoked a debate of national political relevance about the validity of the position of neutrality (not just that of San José but also of the other community peace initiatives in Colombia, whether they were called peace communities or something else), and

whether one could or should talk about neutrality in Colombia. The then Peace Advisor of Antioquia, Jaime Fajardo, said the Peace Community should not classify the Armed Forces in the same way as the guerrilla, "as if we were just another armed actor". Fajardo believed that the Community was generating a "confrontation with the state", and affirmed, "we repudiate that *ghetto*".[63] The then Defence Minister, Jorge Alberto Uribe, said that peace communities should not be allowed "without the presence of the Armed Forces".[64]

The government's High Presidential Advisor for Social Action sent a memorandum to ambassadors and diplomats in international agencies, issuing instructions about how to "align" their language about the conflict, explaining that they should refrain from using the terms "armed conflict", "non-state actors", "peace community", "observation of the humanitarian situation" or "humanitarian region or camp", because these terms "generate ambiguity" and "legitimate the illegal armed groups". The memorandum included a series of arguments as to why these terms were inappropriate, including the claim that such words "must not lead to confusions, such as those generated with the peace community of San José de Apartadó".[65]

The army's became more combative after the massacre. A Defence Ministry manual for troops about peace communities includes subtitles like "Perverse Neutrality: Cultivating Violence and Poverty in the Peace Communities" and "Massacre in San José: Unfounded Accusations", claiming the Community were in permanent contact with FARC, that FARC was using the Community as a refuge for criminal activities, and that the Community's "neutrality" was used to "justify the absence of the state, leading to an increase in the activities of terrorist organisations".[66] It also claims that the Community had been intimidated and pressured by the guerrilla to refuse to collaborate with the justice system, and for this reason, instead of giving official declarations to the Public Prosecutor's Office, they make accusations in the media against the Armed Forces without presenting evidence or giving testimony: a combination of the 'closed Community' and 'the Community are *guerrilleros*' counter-narratives. Somewhat surreally, it says:

> The peace communities in Colombia have been an experience of communal living, approved by the government, in which non-violence is promoted, as well as the right to life which is constantly threatened by the terrorist organisations. However, these same organisations have used the communities as refuges for their criminal activities. The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó has not been an exception.[67]

The manual argues that the Community has appealed to the "right to neutrality" to "justify the absence of the state, leading to an increase in the activities of terrorist organisations", and argues that this is an "erroneous use of the concept of neutrality" which is "only applicable to conflicts between states" (disregarding Articles 14 and 15 of the IV Geneva Convention which provide the basis for the Community's idea of neutrality). It claims that speaking of neutrality "in the confrontation between a terrorist organisation and a legitimately-constituted democratic state is a way of rejecting the democratic system that protects them". This reveals the core perception about the threat to sovereignty and the qualification of the nature of the conflict, and provides the justification for delegitimising the Community.

This debate centres on the scope of the application of IHL in the Colombian context, and thereby the tension between international and domestic law. The manual continues:

> Although IHL urges the state to minimise harm to the civilian population, Colombia has acquired an even greater commitment, which is to respect, enforce respect of and protect the civilian population from the constant threat and violent action of the terrorist organisations.

Where the victim-drama narrative casts international law as superior, the army's counter-narrative does the reverse. At stake in this discussion is not so much what a few *campesinos* in a remote corner of the country say, but the implications their political position seems to have for the concept of the state, its legitimacy, its sovereignty, and monopoly of force over national territory, as well as a discursive battle over how to categorise the violence in the country. The Community, on the other hand, stuck to their value systems, based on their moral feelings of injustice, appealing to international normative values. Anrup and Español consider that the interaction of the Community's moral values with international justice systems has transformed "their conception about the valid normativity" and that their referents are international human rights law and IHL (2011: 164). This is coherent with the progressive internationalisation of human rights culture in Colombia (Tate 2007).

The army's counter-narrative reached such lengths that a military legal advisor, Fernando Vargas, founder of the National Committee of Victims of the Guerrilla, published a book in 2006 called *Peace Communities: A Strategy of War*, in which he accused the Community of creating a

"gulag", a separate state within the Colombian state (Aparicio 2012: 263), combining the 'independent republic' and 'the Community are *guerrilleros*' counter-narratives.

The national discussions about the massacre and the concept of neutrality in Colombia led to two publicly televised debates in the Chamber of Representatives of the Congress, with various government organisms.[68] In the second debate on 25 May 2005, a General Canal labelled the Community a "façade of the guerrilla". Giraldo argued that the military had been unable to destroy the Community by force, "so they had to turn to stigmatisation and trumped-up charges".[69] The Chamber concluded that the state had lacked the will to carry out investigations about the events in San José, that the Public Prosecutor's Office had failed to act impartially, and "the Colombian authorities, called to protect and guarantee their rights, have been indolent, either actively part or accomplices of these events" which "constitute Crimes against Humanity and acts of Genocide". They officially requested an intervention from the ICC: "as members of the Colombian Congress, this [call] is necessary and indispensable, as we cannot cover this up or be accomplices".[70] To date, the ICC has not taken on the case, nor has the Inter-American Court, despite issuing so many resolutions about protection measures.

The constellation of counter-narratives and the debates that occurred around the Community hardened their perception that the state was against them. Meanwhile, state or para-state violence against the Community continued on the ground. Around that time, FARC's 5th Front was under the command of Daniel Sierra Martínez, alias 'Samir'. In this period, the guerrilla threatened and murdered many Community members. The Community frequently claims that the state and paramilitaries together have been responsible for roughly 80% of the violations against them; whilst FARC have been responsible for around 20%. 'Samir' had joined the Front in 1999 but had begun to work secretly for the Seventeenth Brigade of the army in the early 2000s. According to Front commanders A. and D., 'Samir' had tried to "sabotage the territories, assassinate the Community's members" in order to "generate a rejection" against FARC as a way of "getting us out of the region". 'Samir' even suggested to his Front that they assassinate Eduar Lancheros, but the rest of the Front refused. They did not discover his double agency until he deserted from FARC in 2008 and went to live in the installations of the Seventeenth Brigade, and they believed that all his actions as Front commander were orders that came directly from the Brigade (interview, September 2016).

The state-society encounters in the Community's social experience take place over multiple levels—central and local government, central and local bureaucrats, local army, and even actions of the FARC. The level of subterfuge involved in putting an infiltrator into the FARC compounds an interpretative framework in which the Community increasingly perceives broken promises from bureaucrats as a deliberate strategy. The 'aggregation' of the 'state-idea' into a reified totality reached its peak under Uribe, who spearheaded the crystallisation of the counter-narratives, a legacy which will be difficult to change (Chap. 6).

The Police Station

The next stage in Gildardo's account of the rupture is the installation of the police station. This had been one of the points of discussion in the dialogue around protection measures ordered by the Inter-American Court. The massacre caused a change in this dynamic. Uribe used the claim that FARC had perpetrated the massacre, and the 'independent republic' counter-narrative—strengthened in the debates on the legitimacy of 'neutral communities'—to justify building a police station bang in the middle of the town of San Joséde Apartadó. This went against the previous negotiations with the Community, who had said they would accept a police station, but in Tierra Amarilla, half way between Apartadó and San José. But Uribe was insistent, saying, "we cannot permit in this country the existence of places where the state is not allowed to be present".[71]

The Community responded saying they had never been against the presence of the state in their midst, but that they had wanted civilian, not military authorities in the actual town.[72] Renato Areiza, one of the Community leaders at the time, said in an interview that prior to the massacre, "we had almost finalised the conditions for accepting the Armed Forces' entry", with the sole demand that it should not be in the middle of civilian buildings.[73]

The year before, government institutions had insisted that the negotiation of protection measures focus on the presence of the Armed Forces. According to Giraldo, the officials "claimed 'to understand' the repulsion that the presence of the army caused" due to the aggression the Community had suffered from soldiers, and instead, "entreated that the Community accept a police station". The Community did accept, but manifested their lack of trust in the protective capacity of the police, by asking that their presence

be accompanied by "effective signs of transformation and reparation" in order to facilitate trust-building. They wrote a proposal about how police agents could be trained in order to ensure adequate and sensitive treatment to Community members, including mechanisms to ensure that the police officers refrain from sexually pestering the young women of the Community, training about the Peace Community's aims and history, and supervision of agents' behaviour. According to Giraldo, "many of these proposals seemed 'sensible' to the official delegates". But then came the massacre and everything changed.[74]

The police arrived in the town of San José on 30 March 2005 with psychologists, sociologists and cameramen. They distributed leaflets in which they proposed "collaborative work between the police and the community", claiming that this had been agreed with the Community. Next day, 31 March:

> A motorbike with two people in civilian dress carrying pistols arrived at the entrance of San José, then the police priest arrived, announcing with a megaphone the arrival of the police. Half an hour later, a *chiva*[75] arrived with some 100 people, including several policemen with sweets and drums, inviting the community to work with the police, and filming the town.[76]

According to Giraldo, the arrival of the police was a "circus-like ceremony", with clowns, drums and whistles, and the chaplain with his megaphone invited the Community to accept the presence of the armed agents "in the name of God". Representatives of Urabá guilds telephoned Community leaders "to inform them that if they accepted the Armed Forces in their midst, they would offer dozens of thousands of millions of pesos in investments", for paving the road and putting big supermarkets in San José. According to Father Javier:

> Over the following days, the police brought hairdressers, dentists and nurses [to San José]. All of the social services that the municipal budget had unjustly denied them for years, suddenly were being offered free, in abundance, and at arm's reach.[77]

This bizarre show of bribery, intimidation and hearts-and-minds tactics designed to divide the Community only strengthened their conviction to refuse to live alongside armed actors. After Uribe's announcement that a police station would be built in San José, the Community began to build

a new settlement, San Josecito de la Dignidad, ten minutes' walk from San José down the unpaved road towards Apartadó. Gildardo explained:

> [Uribe] authorised the Armed Forces to occupy the space of San José where the Community was, which was one of the points we had been negotiating. So it was imposed by the government, sending the Armed Forces there, to control the guerrilla. There was a strong reaction from the Community, practically causing forced displacement from the town of San José, with the aim of keeping far away from all weapons. […] 60 families left and went to build [a settlement] from scratch. We had no houses, no electricity, no aqueduct or anything. But we started again.

At that time, more than 500 Community members were living in San José. On 1 April, they all left, and moved to San Josecito, though they had only managed to build ten houses, and had to share among various families, many sleeping under sheets of plastic while they built more houses (field diary, January 2015). The few inhabitants of the town who were not Community members also expressed their concern about the arrival of the police and many also fled.[78] The town was left almost empty. Only five families remained, and commerce was paralysed,[79] recalling the ghost town it had been in 1996 after the Balsamar massacre. According to the Community, the plot of land where the police built their station belonged to a local *campesino* who had not been consulted or offered any economic compensation for the use of his land, although it was announced on local radio that he had sold his property to the state.[80]

The police installed themselves in their new station, a two-story building painted white (which I always think looks like a particularly ugly modern art gallery) on a hill overlooking the town. It is an obviously strategic location, from where they can observe everything happening in San José.

As the Community had affirmed, the police station was indeed a military target, as was the army camp which was installed later on an adjacent hill. In the five years I spent visiting the Community, prior to the bilateral ceasefire agreed in the peace process, the FARC attacked the police and army dozens of times, who of course responded, sometimes causing civilian deaths if somebody had the bad luck to be caught in crossfire, or damage to farm animals and buildings. The walls and roof of the school are riddled with bullet holes. A. said:

> The Armed Forces say they are here to protect the civilian population. But what we have seen is the opposite. Below the military camp is the school. So the guerrilla and the armed actors always have their combats there, and the people who are most in danger are the civilians. (Interview, January 2015)

The Full Rupture and the Four Points

When the police arrived and the Community decamped to San Josecito, they announced in a communiqué that "In this situation, we see there is no sense at the moment to continue in dialogue with the government in the negotiation of protection measures […]. Now we will keep silent with the state entities".[81]

By this point, the rupture seems almost inevitable. Gildardo's account of events reveals a clear internal logic and a historical construction of an interpretative framework according to which the Community perceived the state's actions. It was not, in that moment, an abstract rupture; but specifically with the dialogue about Inter-American Court protection measures.

Gildardo said:

> As conditions to resume discussions with the government we made a document with four points. The first was a retraction by the government, by the President, of the declarations Uribe had made in the media. A second was the respect of the humanitarian zones, a third was the removal of the Armed Forces from San José, and a fourth was a Commission for Evaluating the Justice system. […] These four points we have given as conditions [to resume the relationship with the state].

The rupture became discursively final and more abstract: a rupture with 'the state'. It crystallised as an ethical principle: non-participation, not interacting with any institution until the four points enumerated by Gildardo are fulfilled. In the context of the genealogy of the rupture, the formulation of these four points is governed by a logic which is sensible to the members, because it is part of their everyday social experience and the sharing of narratives.

Notes

1. All citations by Gildardo in this chapter from his speech on 3 July 2015 at the public event 'Rupture and Reconciliation in Colombia', hosted by Doughty Street Chambers and the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales.
2. Letter from CIJP to Military Criminal Judge 114, 13 September 2015. JGA 1999/120–121. Letter from CIJP to Procurador General de la

Nación, 24 September 1999. JGA 1999/141–142. Letter from CIJP to Procurador General de la Nación, 13 September 1999. JGA 1999/122–123.

3. Minutes from meeting in the Seventeenth Brigade, 10 January 2000. JGA 2000/1–2. Minutes from meeting in the Seventeenth Brigade, 5 February 2000. JGA 2000/15–16.

4. Gómez took the term originally from Spanish military dictator Primo de Rivera, who used it to refer to Cataluña in the Spanish Civil War (Molano 2016: 13).

5. Letter from the General Command of the Military Forces of Colombia to the Ministry of Defence, 19 June 2000. JGA 2000/286.

6. Letter from the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Defence to the General Command of the Military Forces of Colombia, date unclear on copy, possibly November 2000. JGA 2000/518.

7. I have heard many times members from CIJP and Father Javier Giraldo argue that an antecedent contrary to this position refutes the claim. In 1997, there were a series of agreements between the national government and representatives of the communities displaced in Pavarandó. One of the government's commitments for the return of the displaced communities about their security was, "The national army will not maintain a permanent presence within the settlements of the communities that return, so long as there is no altercation of public order which merits an intervention" (UNDP 2003: 134).

8. CIJP communiqué 8 July 2015. JGA 2000/300–304.

9. Ibid.

10. Letter from the Community to the Vice-Presidency, 27 April 2001. JGA 2001A/139–141.

11. Community, 'Un Caminar en Dignidad: Documento entregado al Señor Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia, en reunión del día 23 September 2002'. JGA 2002/268–275.

12. Community, 'Documento Constancia Segunda Visita Comisión Especial de Investigación', 6 November 2000. JGA 2000/506–509.

13. Community, 'Un Caminar en Dignidad: Documento entregado al Señor Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia, en reunión del día 23 September 2002'. JGA 2002/268–275.

14. Ibid.

15. Community, 'Contexto, estigmatización y ataques hacia la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó – documento para la Comisión de Investigación', undated. JGA 2000/541–544.

16. CJL communiqué, 28 May 2004. JGA 2004/65–67.

17. Letter from the Community to the Vice-Presidency, 29 September 2000. JGA 2000/421.

18. Community, 'Documento Constancia Segunda Visita Comisión Especial de Investigación', 6 November 2000. JGA 2000/506–509.

19. Community, Report from meeting in Vice-Presidency, 9 March 2001. JGA 2001A/75–80.

20. Official state minutes, 'Acta reunión Comunidad de Paz-Organismos del Estado', San José de Apartadó, 22 March 2001. JGA 2001A/86–89.

21. Community, 'Un Caminar en Dignidad: Documento entregado al Señor Vicepresidente de la República de Colombia', submitted 23 September 2002. JGA 2002/268–275.

22. Community communiqué, 'No tenemos otra opción más que ser coherentes: Constancia pública de rompimiento de Justicia de la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó', 19 November 2003. JGA 2003/98–103.

23. Various communities and organisations were present at the meeting, including the Asociación del Valle del Río Cimitarra (ACVC), San José de Apartadó, Fedeagromisbol—Sur de Bolívar, the U'Was, the Asociación Campesina Indígena del Norte de Cauca—ACIN, Proceso de Comunidades Negras, Asociación Campesina de Arauca (ACA), Dabeiba, Consejo Comunitario La Nupa—Río Caunapí, and Consejo Comunitario del río Naya, and the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers Collective (CCAJAR) was also there. Not all these communities continued to participate in posterior meetings.

24. See Recorre (Red de Comunidades en Ruptura y Resistencia 2003). '¿Qué es la Red de Comunidades en Ruptura y Resistencia?' and 'Comunidades campesinas declaran ruptura con el sistema judicial colombiano' in *Prensa Rural.* http://www.prensarural.org/recorre/quesomos.htm and http://www.prensarural.org/recorre/recorre20031204.htm respectively [accessed 13 May 2014].

25. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights requested the adoption of precautionary measures in favour of the members of the Peace Community on 17 December 1997 (1997 measures: http://www.cidh.org/medidas/1997.sp.htm); the IACHR ordered the Colombian state to adopt interim measures for the members of the Peace Community in the President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights' Resolution of 9 October 2000 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_01.pdf); the Inter-American Court of Human Rights Resolution of 18 June 2002 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_03.pdf); of 18 November 2004 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_04.pdf); of 15 March 2005 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_05.pdf); of 2 February 2006 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_06.pdf); of 17 December 2007 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_07.pdf); of 6 February 2008 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_08.pdf); and of

30 August 2010 (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/medidas/apartado_se_09.pdf). All online documents referenced in this footnote were accessed 25 July 2015.

26. Official state minutes, 'Minutes of the meeting on 15 May 2003, precautionary measures decreed in favour of the Community of San José de Apartadó'. JGA 2003/55–63.

27. Community proposal, 'Comunidad de Paz, propuesta para la conformación de la comisión de evaluación', 27 February 2004. JGA 2004/15–18.

28. Giraldo, Javier (2005). 'San José de Apartadó en el nudo de la "seguridad democrática"', in Magazine *Noche y Niebla* No. 30, http://www.nocheyniebla.org/files/u1/30/pdf/03NudoSeguridad.pdf [accessed 12 October 2015].

29. Community proposal, 'San José de Apartadó: Zonas Humanitarias'. JGA 2005A/1–3.

30. E.g. in the case of the forced disappearance of the *campesino* Buenaventura Hoyos Hernández, inhabitant of the San José township, in 2013. The Community and Javier Giraldo advocated on his behalf, and sent information about his case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which requested the Colombian state adopt precautionary measures to protect Hoyos. Resolution 4/2013, Precautionary measure 301-13, 4 October 2013, http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/decisiones/pdf/MC301-13Resolucion%204-13esp.pdf [accessed 25 July 2015].

31. Letter from the Community to the Vice-Presidency, 2 July 2004. JGA 2004/90–92.

32. This was a meeting in Bogotá with several leaders, including Luis Eduardo Guerra and accompanied by Father Javier, with the then Vice-President Francisco Santos and representatives of other institutions, 13 December 2004. Letter from CJL to National Police, 1 April 2005. JGA 2005C/55–57.

33. Community communiqué, 1 March 2005, 'El Camino del Terror'. JGA 2005A/20–23.

34. Luis Eduardo Guerra's last interview, 15 January 2005, by the Coordinación Valenciana de Solidaridad con Colombia, a platform made up of NGOs, and Valencian parliamentarians Ramón Cardona and Isaura Navarro, during a visit to Colombia. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnCD3ksF0ZQ [accessed 27 July 2015].

35. Community communiqué, 1 March 2005, 'El Camino del Terror'. JGA 2005A/20–23.

36. CJL communiqué, 'Lentitud y negligencia en la práctica de las diligencias judiciales para la investigación de la masacre ocurrida en la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó', 27 February 2005. JGA 2005A/15–17.

37. Community communiqué, 1 March 2005, 'El Camino del Terror'. JGA 2005A/20–23.

38. Testimony taken by Javier Giraldo in the region on 27 February 2005. JGA 2005A/18–19.
39. Community communiqué, 1 March 2005, 'El Camino del Terror'. JGA 2005A/20–23.
40. Ibid.
41. Abad Colorado, Jesús, 27 March 2005, 'Cuatro días en busca de los cadáveres de la masacre en la comunidad de paz de San José de Apartadó', Special for *El Tiempo*. JGA 2005A/43–49.
42. CJL communiqué, 27 February 2005, 'Lentitud y negligencia en la práctica de las diligencias judiciales para la investigación de la masacre ocurrida en la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó'. JGA 2005A/15–17.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Abad Colorado, Jesús, 27 March 2005, 'Cuatro días en busca de los cadáveres de la masacre en la comunidad de paz de San José de Apartadó', Special for *El Tiempo*, JGA 2005A/43–49.
46. Community communiqué, 1 March 2005, 'El Camino del Terror'. JGA 2005A/20–23.
47. For example, the mayor of Apartadó in 2001, Mario Agudelo Vásquez, asked the Community "to re-evaluate its norms, in order to accept the presence of legally constituted authorities", saying that the army and police "want to help, but feel that the Community doesn't let them". *El Colombiano*, 7 March 2001, 'El alcalde de Apartadó pide replantear Comunidad de Paz', JGA 2001A/104. These counter-narratives even circulated in the diplomatic corps, despite the relationship between the Community and the international community; one US ambassador recommended a US citizen not go to work with one of the NGOs that accompany the Community, FOR, in a letter in which he argued the lack of security and doubts about the Community's method of non-violence. Letter 2 April 2003. JGA 2003/47–48.
48. *El Tiempo*, 5 March 2005. 'La polémica comunidad de San José' http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1636940 [accessed 29 July 2015].
49. Written text of Uribe's speech, 27 May 2004. JGA 2005C/202–206.
50. *Agencia de Prensa IPC,* 23 October 2009. 'Defensores de derechos humanos: bajo el estigma del presidente Uribe'. http://www.ipc.org.co/agenciadeprensa/index.php/2009/10/23/defensores-de-derechos-humanos-bajo-el-estigma-del-presidente-uribe/ [accessed 14 July 2017].
51. The UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders emphasised the 'systematic' nature of stigmatisation by public officials during Uribe's government, which was often accompanied by stigmatisation campaigns by paramilitary groups, and which usually resulted in great risk to the defenders implicated. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human

rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya. 4 March 2010. Mission to Colombia 7–18 September 2009. A/HRC/13/22/Add.3. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/678641/files/A_HRC_13_22_Add.3-EN.pdf [accessed 14 July 2017].

52. Community communiqué, 24 March 2005. JGA 2005A/10–11.

53. Letter from the Presidential program for human rights and IHL to Father Javier Giraldo, 28 June 2005. JGA 2005C/193–201.

54. This argument is found for example in the army manual, 'Comunidades de Paz', Ministry of Defence; JGA 2005A/251–273 (see below).

55. *El Tiempo*, 16 August 2016, 'Ejército participó en masacre de San José de Apartadó'. http://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/cortes/masacre-de-san-jose-de-apartado-37338 [accessed 19 June 2017].

56. *El Tiempo*, 4 March 2005, 'Comunidad se niega a colaborar: Public Prosecutor's Office'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1639580 [accessed 31 July 2015].

57. *El Tiempo*, 3 March 2005, 'Emboscada comisión investigadora de la matanza'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1642298 [accessed 30 July 2015].

58. *El Tiempo*, 14 March 2005, 'Comisión volverá a San José de Apartadó'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1690855 [accessed 30 July 2015].

59. *El Tiempo*, 4 March 2005, 'Comunidad se niega a colaborar: Fiscalía'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1639580 [accessed 31 July 2015].

60. *El Tiempo*, 5 March 2005, 'La polémica comunidad de San José'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1636940 [acessed 31 July 2015].

61. Londoño, Fernando, *El Colombiano* 8 March 2005, 'San José de Apartadó'. JGA 2005B/41.

62. Londoño, Fernando, *El Tiempo*, 14 March 2005, 'San José de Apartadó'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1692825 [accessed 1 June 2014].

63. Fajardo, Jaime, *El Colombiano*, 23 March 2005, 'La Comunidad de Paz debe replantear su proceso'. JGA 2005B/75.

64. *El Tiempo*, 9 March 2005, 'A prueba, neutralidad de ocho comunidades de paz en el Urabá'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1626851 [accessed 31 July 2015].

65. *El Tiempo*, 13 June 2005, 'Gobierno busca alinear lenguaje diplomático'. http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-1688352 [accessed 31 July 2015].

66. Ministry of Defence, Manual 'Comunidades de Paz'; undated, probably 2005. It is reasonable to believe that it was due to public attention on the massacre that the Ministry of Defence decided to train soldiers to maintain

an official position. I have personally witnessed how these counter-narratives continued to circulate in the military up to the time I did my research. JGA 2005A/251–273.

67. N.B. this quote comes directly from an official communiqué by the Ministry of Defence of 5 March, cited also in *El Colombiano*, 9 March 2005, 'Si llega la Policía habrá un desplazamiento en San José'. JGA 2005B/44.

68. Proposition No. 082 of the Chamber of Representatives, approved 5 April 2005, 'Debate público al gobierno nacional sobre la masacre en la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó', JGA 2005C/146–149; Proposition No. 097 of the Chamber of Representatives, approved 18 May 2005, JGA 2005C/ 157–158.

69. Account of the hearing in the Second Constitutional Commission of the Chamber on 25 May 2005, written by Father Javier Giraldo. JGA 2005A/137–139.

70. Letter from the Chamber of Representatives to the then General Attorney of the ICC, Luis Moreno Ocampo, referenced, 'Denuncia y remisión de documentos y pruebas sobre Crímenes de Lesa Humanidad y Actos de Genocidio en contra de la Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó', 25 May 2005. JGA 2005A/146–150.

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Differentiating Between Santos and Uribe

When Juan Manuel Santos took over from Uribe as President in 2010, several shifts began to occur in governance strategies and official discourse (Chap. 1). Key, interrelated elements of this shift include Santos' recognition of the existence of an internal armed conflict in Colombia and therefore the validity of IHL application; the recognition of the existence of victims of both sides of the armed conflict and their right to reparations; an increase in discourse about transitional justice as a field applicable in the Colombian situation in the search of a transition to post-conflict; the passage of the Victims' Law and the creation of the Victims' Unit; and the initiation of peace talks with FARC.

The Peace Community, however, saw Santos as essentially the same as Uribe, and these changes as cosmetic. This was understandable given Santos had been Uribe's Minister of Defence and the candidate endorsed by the outgoing President; it was a position shared by many human rights defenders and sectors of the left in Colombia. Some of these became more moderate and supportive of Santos' actions as time went on, while still remaining critical of his government. The human rights community had been operating by appealing to the international community and highlighting the actions of the state they saw as illegitimate, in much the same vein as the Southern Cone organisations under dictatorships, which influenced human rights culture in Colombia (Tate 2007). For many, this was their only option under Uribe—documentation abounds about state protection

mechanisms provided by the DAS being used to spy on human rights defenders, and perverse alliances between politicians, the military and paramilitary groups.

Unlike in the Southern Cone, however, there was no sudden change of government; no clear before and after. Some perceptions began tentatively to shift when they saw some of Santos' actions; the peace process especially won Santos re-election in 2014; some left-wing human rights defenders went into politics; and human rights organisations gave input in the peace process, playing the role of a 'critical friend'. But many people, including the Peace Community, refused to buy the new discourse about respecting human rights defenders and making reparations to victims, and pointed to continued alliances between the state Armed Forces and illegal armed groups as proof that Santos was no different to Uribe, just a better statesman and better at convincing the international community. This consolidated the image that many people had of the Peace Community as overly 'radical'.

At the heart of these polarised narratives is a dichotomy between history and the future. The crux is the Santos government's differentiation from its predecessor in terms of state links with paramilitarism. The idea that the 2005 demobilisation of the AUC under Uribe was a "farce" is a common narrative among sectors of the left (Chap. 1). Certainly, allegations abound about continued collaboration post-2005 between the Seventeenth Brigade of the army in Urabá and the inheritors of the AUC structures, a situation which may be the same in some parts of the country and different in others. These allegations continued throughout Santos' mandate. The Community's discourse does not distinguish between pre- and post-2005 structures: both are called "paramilitaries", and their perception of the continuity between the two (and therefore the illegitimacy of the state) is a key element of the radical narrative. For a while, their website had a poll for visitors which said "Do you believe the paramilitaries (a) were demobilised? (b) were legalised and incorporated into the Armed Forces? (c) Continue acting together with the Armed Forces? (d) are bands that act alone, as the government affirms?" This indicates how they evaluate potential alliances by checking whether someone agrees with their core identity beliefs.

The government, after the demobilisation of the AUC, began to assert that there were no more paramilitaries. Several years into Santos' administration, at the time of writing, many state officials are more realistic about the continued existence of these structures and their continuities with the

pre-2005 formation, but the issue of what to name them continues to be controversial. The Havana Accord does mention them, but with ambiguous relative clauses. The relevant section is titled thus:

> Agreement on guarantees of security and the fight against criminal organisations and criminal acts that are responsible for or that bring about homicides and massacres that attack human rights advocates, social movements of political movements or that threaten or attack persons taking part in the implementation of the accords and peace-building, including criminal organisations that have been labelled as successors of paramilitarism and their support networks. (Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace, Section 3.4)

Getting the word 'paramilitarism' into the document at all was a difficult manoeuvre, and the complex naming reveals the fact that the *nature* of paramilitarism as a phenomenon post-2005 is still a contested issue, with no official truth.

The Community's radical narrative belongs to the voices from the Colombian left that clamour for recognition of the continuity of paramilitary structures and state complicity after the demobilisation and under Santos' administration.

The Constitutional Court Order

In November 2010, the Community presented their four conditions to the newly inaugurated President Santos. In January 2011, the government expressed its desire to resume dialogue with the Community.[1] The Community insisted that such dialogue had to be based on their four points. On 11 May 2011, the Ministry of the Interior sent a written response to the four requests. On the demand for Uribe's stigmatisations to be retracted, they said, given "that each citizen has the legitimate right to a good name", in the case of declarations "which are considered slanderous", the path to follow is "to lodge the corresponding criminal complaint". The Community is not the only organisation to insistently demand an apology and rectification of their good name from the ex-President: in 2017, Uribe was ordered by the Supreme Court to retract a stigmatising tweet made in 2015 about the 'mothers of Soacha'—an organisation of women whose civilian sons were killed during Uribe's presidency and dressed up as guerrilla fighters, in order

to increase the numbers of insurgents killed—a military scandal known as the 'false positives'.[2] But this victory for the mothers of Soacha took a huge legal and political effort, and so far is the only retraction he has made.

The letter also specified that "it corresponds to the person who made the presumed slanderous comments to retract them", while the Community was beginning to think differently—a President had stigmatised them, so, they thought, a President ought to clear their name.

About the removal of the police station, the letter said, "In no way can the presence of the police be seen as a risk for the population", and it is unacceptable "to equate the public forces of order, which are legitimately constituted and guarantors of the rule of law, with illegal armed groups". This argument echoes the previous government's official discourse on the issue of 'neutrality' and the qualification of legal armed actors as comparable to illegal armed actors.

About the humanitarian zones, it said, "It is not possible at this moment" because "currently there are no negotiations with the illegal armed groups"; if the state said they respected the zones, but FARC did not, then they could become refuge sites for FARC fighters. Also, if in their conception of humanitarian zones, the Community was demanding the removal of the Armed Forces, "the [humanitarian zones] would be forbidden" (the 'independent republic' counter-narrative). The army had already made this argument, in a letter to the IACHR in 2006, because the 2005 IACHR Resolution had taken up this proposal of the humanitarian zones for civilians that were not members of the Community.[3]

Regarding the demand for a Commission to Evaluate the Justice System, the letter claimed that the government welcomed "any effort to strengthen the justice system in general". They said the correct space for this was the Inter-Institutional Commission on Justice Reform, created via Degree 4095 of 2010 and comprising various ministries, magistrates and institutions, and suggested "this commission would be happy to listen to the voices of civil society leaders interested in contributing to the strengthening of justice in Colombia".[4] This did not really engage with the Community's demands or historical experience.

This letter strengthened the Community's perception of a state that had no will to fulfil the conditions, and their perception that Santos' government was the same as Uribe's but with a "prettier" discourse on human rights. They complained in a communiqué of the state's lack of will to address seriously their four demands.[5]

Gildardo, after explaining the four points, said, "in recent years, [the four points] have been converted into a Court order. It orders the government, recognising the Community is right, to talk about these four points with us". The Constitutional Court had already issued a sentence about the Community's risk situation prior to the rupture (T-327 of 2002) as part of its monitoring of the situation of forced displacement in the country. Two years after the rupture, the Court issued another sentence (T-1025 of 2007) which translated the four points into orders to the government. As this was not fulfilled, a hearing was held to monitor compliance with the sentence, and the result was Order 164 of 2012. Those present on the Community's side included Father Javier Giraldo and Jesús Emilio Tuberquia (the then legal representative), and on the government's part, delegates from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministries of Justice and Defence, the Ombudsman's Office, the National Public Prosecutor's Office, the commander of the Seventeenth Brigade, and Court judges.

According to official minutes from the hearing, the Ministry of Justice's delegate recommended the use of new institutional mechanisms for victims, such as the Victims' Law. Giraldo argued that "the Peace Community's experience cannot be referred to as a situation of post-conflict in which it would be possible to talk about transitional justice", due to the continuation of paramilitary structures and combat in the region. This was a common criticism from grassroots human rights organisations at the time—that it was not permissible to discuss transitional justice mechanisms such as reparations, without first having a transition. Giraldo reiterated several times the historical injustice the Community had suffered, thereby justifying their lack of trust in the state's proposals.

The Ministry of the Interior delegate complained that the Community had prevented them from carrying out their work: apparently, the Community had refused to let their staff into San Josecito unless they left their police and army escorts at the entrance, and therefore they had been unable to carry out risk evaluations (the counter-narrative of the 'closed Community'). The commander of the Seventeenth Brigade refused to accept that the presence of the Armed Forces should be negotiated with communities. The delegate from the Public Prosecutor's Office claimed they were unable to advance in investigations because the rupture prevented communication.

Jesús Emilio and Giraldo said they "did not believe" in the government's word, because although they might manifest good will, abuses on the ground continued. Jesús Emilio affirmed that the four conditions were

"unrenounceable", and that the best protection mechanism was "that human rights violations against the Community stop". He claimed the actions of the state were "not directed at fulfilling its obligations but at preventing international monitoring and judgement in its crimes against humanity" (Corte Constitucional 2012).

The Court concluded that the Community "must not renounce any of their four conditions". Order 164 of 2012 "recognised that we were right", in Gildardo's words, and emitted orders to various state institutions to fulfil the Community's four demands. Between January and May 2013, the Community suspended the formal 'rupture' and attended a series of meetings with the Ministry of the Interior, to negotiate the carrying out of Order 164. At the top of the agenda was the retraction.

Order 164 of 2012 ordered the Ministry of the Interior to "coordinate and implement the procedures for the official presentation of the retraction […] and the definition of a procedure to prevent future stigmatisations" such as "the establishment of a single communication channel which reduces risks of stigmatisation and contributes to the reconstruction of trust" (Corte Constitucional 2012). On 29 May 2013, the then Minister of the Interior, Fernando Carrillo, performed an act of public retraction.

However, the Community boycotted the event and refused to accept it as compliance with Order 164. This was due to a series of unfortunate events in the handling of the event, which was probably not intentional, but extremely context-insensitive. Three times, dates had been fixed for the event, and all three times had been cancelled. May 29 was the fourth attempt, and more than 30 Community delegates travelled from various settlements down the mountains to San José and flew to Bogotá. Representatives from various international organisations came to Colombia from abroad. The night before the event, Carrillo telephoned the Community delegation in Bogotá to inform them that it was not going to be President Santos performing the retraction, but rather himself, because Santos had another engagement. He asked the Community if they wanted to continue with the event, or if it should be cancelled. Due to the Community's participatory decision-making process, the delegation in Bogotá felt they had to consult with the other members back in San José, which took time, because they had to get hold of leaders who were in settlements with little or no phone signal, and allow deliberation between San José and Bogotá. Finally, in the early hours of the morning, they reached the consensus not to assist.

However, the Ministry of the Interior decided it was too late to cancel. With 30 empty reserved seats in the front rows, Carrillo went ahead with

the public retraction. In his speech, he emphasised "the commitment to situate the concerns of human rights defenders at the top of the agenda of the government's goals" and the fact that the government put victims within its priorities, because this repositioning was important for "the delimitation of the coming post-conflict". Carrillo contextualised dialogue with the victims within the framework of the peace process which had started in 2012: "We are going for peace", he said.[6]

The Community published a communiqué, recognising the "good will" of the Ministry of the Interior, but explained (1) that they had always maintained that it ought to be the President who performed the retraction given that it was a President who stigmatised them; (2) and during all the meetings with the Ministry of the Interior, they had agreed it was going to be Santos; and they argued that (3) Constitutional Court Sentence 1191 of 2004 orders presidents not to make comments that put third parties at risk, and if they do so, they are personally responsible for remediating the effects. They described this retraction as a "new affront" and "yet another aggression from high-level government", and qualified Santos' non-assistance as "contempt of court". Santos not participating strengthened their idea that the state had no will to fulfil the four conditions.[7]

Colombian media did not react well to the Community's boycott. Headlines emphasised the "non-acceptance" of the Community and their "inconformity".[8] Despite the fact that the Community's communiqué explained the long process of dialogue with the Ministry of the Interior, the simplification of narratives in the public sphere flattened this complexity, and the impression remained of the Community being 'radical' and 'closed' in their position. Uribe tweeted, "I ratify what I said about FARC terrorists and foreigners utilising some people in peace communities".[9] The counter-narratives were reconfirmed, and the polarisation between the state and the Community was reinforced.

The "Unforgiveable" Apology

In November 2013, two representatives from the Community's Internal Council went on a speaking tour of Europe. In London they met with British QC Kirsty Brimelow, who had previously visited the Community as part of a delegation of the Colombian Caravan of Jurists. Brimelow proposed to the Community delegates that she speak to the President on their behalf. With their consent, she travelled to Colombia and met Santos privately in December 2013.

Days later, on 10 December, International Human Rights Day, in a public event at the Presidential Palace of Nariño, Santos apologised to the Community for the stigmatisations made by Uribe in 2004 and 2005. His speech was moving, he invoked Nelson Mandela who had just passed away, he emphasised the government's obligations to fulfil the orders of the Constitutional Court, and said, in the first person, "I ask for forgiveness". He recognised in the Community "a brave struggle for the rights of all Colombians, who despite having lived through the conflict in flesh and blood, have persisted in their purpose to achieve peace for the country". Various interests undoubtedly converged for Santos when he took up Brimelow's suggestion to apologise to the Community, including the 2014 presidential elections, in which he sought re-election, largely based a peace ticket.

Brimelow believed that a gesture as significant as a presidential apology would be enough to get things moving. However, when Santos decided to act on her suggestion, his team failed to take into account the historical antecedents the Community had already been through in their relationship with the state, and the actual terms of Order 164/12 which specified that such an event should be coordinated with the Community (as had been done in the run-up to the failed retraction of 2013) and accompanied by mechanisms to prevent future stigmatisations.

There was no one from the Community present in the event. They were not informed, nor invited to the ceremony. Santos apologised to people who were not present. Six days after the presidential apology, which took the Community completely by surprise, the Community issued a communiqué in response, saying that they "valued positively the terms of the presidential gesture" and the fact that Santos "recognised the injustice committed and tried to redress it with words that invite the country and the world to correct an identity that has been stigmatised over 9 years". However, they considered that the speech fulfilled only part of Order No. 1 of Order 164/12, and "we are surprised at the lack of compliance with the second part of the order" which urges the state to "define a procedure to prevent future stigmatisations". They also lamented the lack of communication from the government about the event, and reiterated their perception of the "systematic extermination" against them by the state and paramilitarism, asking sarcastically, "will these simple words of apology be sufficient to stop the systematic crimes against humanity […] without being accompanied by real and efficient measures that clarify, correct, sanction and make reparations?"[10]

After the event, the press circulated narratives which reiterated Santos' recognition about how "this type of act will be part of post-conflict scenarios", contextualising the retraction within the peace process.[11] Given the performative success of this narrative, the Community's position had little resonance. I heard many people criticise the Community for their response to the apology, seeing it as 'unpragmatic' and 'overly radical', failing to see the bigger picture of the important shift in governance from a President who stigmatised human rights defenders to a President who compared them to Mandela. But due to the chain of previous events, and the Community's interpretations of the state in their construction of the victim-drama narrative, they had a deeply rooted mistrust in the state.

The Community's perception that Santos' government sought to change its discourse without changing its behaviour strengthened a narrative that reinforced itself in vicious cycles. The presidential apology was received with scepticism and did not manage to change that mistrust, nor the narrative about the state's plan to exterminate the Community. Gildardo said:

Santos apologised and publicly recognised the Community, he recognised that all these things have happened, but he did not comply fully with the Court orders. Because as well as the retraction, the Court also orders the state to create a strategy to ensure that in the future these kinds of stigmatisations do not reoccur.

The public communiqués written by Community leaders and agreed in assemblies reflect and influence narratives of individual members on the ground. B. said that she thought that Santos did not apologies "from the heart":

Santos didn't do it from the heart. […] When someone does something wishing well for humanity and says something from the heart, that person fulfils their word. But I ask, how many threats and things happened since Santos apologised? So what apology is he talking about? I, B., will never give in. (Focus group, San Josecito, September 2014)

The non-acceptance of the apology is associated with 'not giving in' in their resistance, and at the same time, the link between that resistance and the collective identity. The main argument against the apology here is the idea that the gesture lacks significance and sincerity, because they continue to be stigmatised and threated by the Seventeenth Brigade. The second

part of the order about the retraction in Order 164/12 stipulates the need for a plan to prevent future stigmatisations, but the Community insists that the 'apology' has failed in this sense, because subsequent stigmatisations were made on local radio by the commander of the Brigade.[12] Santos' public declaration that stigmatising human rights defenders was wrong had no apparent effect on his subordinates, heightening the Community's sense of the hypocrisy between central government and local reality, making them think that either the President's words were purely cosmetic, or that he was unable to control the army.

Other Community members saw the apology with ambiguity. J. said, "Even if he didn't say it from his heart, it has an impact internally on the Community, because it's a recognition. Nationally and in Colombia. They are achievements we have been able to obtain. Because when do Presidents apologise?" (focus group, San Josecito, September 2014). On the other hand, R. told me he thought the apology was "unforgiveable", because it was not negotiated with the Community. "You can't apologise to someone if that person isn't even there", he said. "He wasn't apologising to the Community, but trying to demonstrate humility to the world". However, R. also thought that "the fact that a president kneels before a group of *campesinos*" was important (field diary, February 2014).

A. thought the apology was useless, because the army continued to violate human rights: "What good is it for Santos to apologise if the state continues to do the same as always?" He added that some people saw the fact that there were fewer massacres and deaths under Santos than under Uribe as positive, and a sign that things had improved, but for him, "one single death means that things have got worse" (field diary, May 2015).

The idea that 'things had got better' in human rights terms was a narrative which circulated in the space of interaction between the Colombian state and the international community after the change from Uribe to Santos, based on government statistics about human rights violations. It is objectively impossible not to recognise that the patterns of violence in Urabá have changed since the days of Rito Alejo del Río and the 'head-choppers', and the paramilitary surge in the early 2000s under Uribe. However, the Community's position challenges the idea that the government is to be celebrated for achieving a decrease in violence. I recall J.E. also saying that one single assassination in a year, even if the previous year had seen 30, was a sign that things had got worse. "Every dead person had a mother, a family, what would you think if they killed a son or a brother

of yours? You wouldn't think that things were getting better" (field diary, May 2015). According to this logic, each event is read in the framework of the 'tragedy' of the victim-drama.

Depending on who you talk to in the Community, some members see Santos' apology as partial compliance with one of their four conditions. Gildardo said that despite the lack of compliance with the second part of the order, "we as a Community accept this gesture of apology, and we are interested in seeing the remaining three points fulfilled". Others affirm that the Community "does not accept" this apology, and insist that "the government has never wanted to fulfil any of our four points". A 2015 infographic about the Peace Community on CINEP's webpage affirms that the retraction was "not accepted by the Community".[13] This might indicate the NGO's own desire for the Community to "not give in", due to their own emotional investment in the Community's radical narrative. But this is only speculation; what is certain is that the reception of the presidential apology has been controversial and ambiguous.

"No to Individual Reparations for Victims"

The presidential apology forms part of the logic of transitional justice, which Santos contributed to further when he came into power. The discourse of transitional justice had been present in Colombia previously, but was contentious: Uribe's government had used it in the context of the 2005 demobilisation of AUC, and was seen by many critics as a justification for overly generous amnesty laws, and extraditing top paramilitary commanders to the USA on drug-trafficking charges, preventing them from telling too much truth in Colombia, especially regarding their links to political and military authorities. Santos' government began to align official discourse on transitional justice with international standards and debates, especially concerning the rights of victims of atrocities to truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence. It is within this discursive shift that the Victims' Law was passed, and the Victims' Unit was created to process the assignation of reparation measures, both financial and symbolic.

The state's ambitious project to make reparations to eight million victims of the armed conflict has been greatly applauded, but its execution increasingly criticised. The first phase of the project was 'individual reparations'—mostly financial pay-outs to individual persons—and a subsequent phase added the possibility of 'collective reparations', generally including monetary and symbolic measures designed to commemorate

the memory of the harm suffered and transform the living conditions which had been damaged in the conflict, enabling communities to build dignified life projects. This necessitates the identification of a collective subject that has been violated as a collective, but had been much less developed at the time of research.

Since the previous attempt to pass a 'Victims' Law' in 2009, many victims had felt that monetary reparations only constituted 'compensation', not 'reparation' (Burnyeat 2010: 42), indicating the challenge the state would face in making reparations which were actually significant and contributed to (re-)building trust with citizens. However, many of the victims of the conflict live in socioeconomically precarious conditions, making large sums of money difficult to turn down. This has led to divisions among organisations, and accusations about 'false victims' wanting to get money out of the state. The Peace Community, however, has made one of their core principles that their members should not accept any reparations, a highly unusual precedent in Colombia.

The metal signposts flanking all the Community settlements are hand-painted white, with black spidery letters proclaiming "Peace Community of San José de Apartadó". They also have the logo (a circle with green mountains, a blue river, a black silhouetted horse and tree and a yellow sun), and a list of their principles. These principles have evolved since those described in Chap. 3. Today, these signs say that all Peace Community members commit to the following:

- Participate in community work
- Say no to injustice and impunity
- No to individual reparations for victims
- Not growing illicit crops [see Chap. 8]
- Not manipulating or giving information to any of the parties in the conflict
- Not carrying arms
- Not drinking alcohol
- Not participating in the war directly or indirectly

J.E. said that the reason the Community does not agree with individual reparations is because the state's reparations programme is linked with the Justice and Peace Law (975 of 2005) for the demobilisation of the AUC. This is not strictly true—Law 1448 of 2011 is separate from 975, but in J.E.'s mind they are connected by the discourse of transitional justice,

which he sees as masking a strategy to create immunity for perpetrators and re-victimise victims. He said, "individual reparations serve to legitimate everything the state has done", and create the idea that anyone who has money can kill, and pay the money and get away with it. Therefore, to accept monetary reparations is "a degradation, it is to sign a pact of death" (event in the University of Los Andes, March 2015).

G.T. explained, "We do not seek money, we agree with reparations but comprehensive reparations, when the whole thing is looked at with depth […]. When you look at housing, healthcare, security for *campesinos*, land tenure, education". C. and N.'s three-year-old daughter was killed in 2003 in what G.T. called "fake combat", in which the army shot at their house and one of the bullets hit the girl, and then pretended that they were in combat with the guerrilla, but they were not. The family, who were not yet members of the Community at that point, denounced the army formally. Eventually they received a favourable court sentence, ordering the state to make financial reparations for around 230 million pesos, but by then they had become Community members. They refused to accept the money "until all abuses stop", and G.T. said the money has been frozen in an account (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014).

This shows the internal logic of the radical narrative—their four demands are the only thing they want from the state, and the receipt of monetary reparations would delegitimise this request, and create a bridge with the state which strayed from their insistence on the four points. However, a community is a multiplicity of people, and there have been cases of Community members accepting individual reparations' money. But the Community is strict about this principle—since 2011, when I first started working with the Community, there have been at least two cases of members accepting money from the Victims' Unit in reparations, and they have been expelled from the Community and had to go and live in other settlements. This shows the firmness with which the Community police the fulfilment of their principles.

J.E. explained that individual reparations divided people, therefore they should be collective and comprehensive. I asked him whether the Community would ever consider collective reparations which were not only economic from the Victims' Unit. He replied that the Community's four points would first have to be fulfilled. "You can't start with the canopy of the tree", he said, "but with the roots". First the four points, and build trust over several years, "then we can talk about reparations" (field diary, May 2015).

B.G. said that for her, 'justice' could never be equated with money: "money doesn't last. What lasts is the memory of the lost family members". Her 15-year-old daughter was killed by paramilitaries and soldiers. She told me that she would like to see those responsible in jail, most of all, the superior commanders (field diary, February 2014). This emphasis on exemplary punishment indicates the desire for both truth and justice felt by many victims in the country, and the lack of real meaning they perceive in the state's gesture of making financial reparations (the message that reparations are meant to convey), but not all have the clarity of the Peace Community to turn them down.

G.T. also emphasised the lack of justice there had been in the Mulatos massacre case. He said, "There are some paramilitaries who have confessed, and some soldiers who have also given themselves up, but we say that [the case] is in impunity, because the majority are free. Generals, colonels. The soldiers in jail are very low-ranking" (interview, January 2015). His phrase, "we say that [the case] is in impunity," implies his recognition that it is not *nothing* what has been done; there are some soldiers and paramilitaries that have been condemned, but that there is a subjective (collective) evaluation that this does not signify justice, and that hypothetically there would be justice only if the high-ranking soldiers were imprisoned.

However, I have doubts as to whether the Community really wants 'justice', or if by this point, what they want is to prove that 'the state' maintains a structural impunity. Many times I have heard them say "justice doesn't exist", and that the only path left to them is to demonstrate, to *prove*, that there is no justice, nor political will from the state. This is a narrative of interminable, tragic victimisation. J.E. told me that no one in the Community actually believed that the government would ever fulfil the four points. The only reason they continued to insist on them was to "unmask", to expose, and to prove that there is no will (field diary, July 2015). The word "unmask" recalls Recorre's declaration, and Eduar Lancheros' books.

Perceptions of the Peace Process

The period of formal field research, January 2014 to September 2015, was a time of much political change nationally. The peace talks were ongoing between FARC and the government (Chap. 1), and this was top of the political agenda in public opinion. Uribe and the extreme right spearheaded the successful misinformation campaign which started as

soon as Santos announced peace talks with FARC in 2012, and led to the 'No' vote winning in the peace referendum of October 2016 (Gómez-Suárez 2016).

But not all the left was pro-peace. Many left-wing social movements, especially victims of the state, were sceptical of a Santos-led peace process, for the continuity they perceived in the governance between Uribe and Santos' administrations. These sectors also worried that the peace process would lead to a decrease of international concern about the human rights situation in Colombia, and a 'legalisation' of the paramilitaries, who would be able to continue terrorising populations because they were not included in peace talks. They were especially concerned that the Santos government's neoliberal economic model, which privileges extractive mining, would result in more forced displacement, in the name of 'development', but without the echo chamber they currently had in the international human rights community because of the existence of an armed conflict.

I do not pretend to summarise here the geopolitics of the 2012–2016 peace talks, or to analyse exhaustively the Community's perceptions on this issue, which may have evolved considerably since the period of research. However, during my field visits I had conversations with different Community members about the peace process, which was going through different stages, and these conversations are useful for understanding the way in which the historically-constituted radical narrative functions as a framework for interpreting current events on an everyday basis, such as news about developments in the peace process, and for (re-)affirming their perception of the state, and thereby their own collective identity as victims of the state.

Early on in the process, J.E. said:

> The policies of the state have always been aimed at violence, because for the governments of Colombia maintaining the war is business. It's beneficial to big businessmen, so it's a very big challenge, it's a process that will take many years. Hopefully one day we will see peace, but I think there are lots of obstacles.[14]

Similarly, B.G. said "war is a business", a phrase reiterated by many members as well as throughout Colombia (field diary, February 2014). This recalls historical narratives about the conflict in Urabá as having an under-emphasised economic dimension (Chap. 2). It also reveals the perception many Community members have about the role of multinational businesses in the conflict, an important element in the organic narrative (Chap. 8).

However, other Community members imagined the impact of an eventual agreement as positive for their security situation, at least in terms of the risk of crossfire. G.T. said:

> For the Community's security it would be very useful. […] Because in the region there are constant combats. And the civilian population are the ones who practically get the worst of it. [Recently] there was a combat in a *campesino*'s house. The army was there, stealing chickens, stealing the *campesino*'s food, […] they went into the house to raid it. And the guerrilla attacked them at that moment, shot at them, right there. In that sense, if there was a peace agreement, there wouldn't be those combats anymore. So the people would not suffer that. At the moment there is that kind of panic among the people. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014)

Despite a general agreement among members that if there were a peace agreement, combats in the region would cease, there was also a shared scepticism about the paramilitaries, who they believed would continue to exist and serve the economic interests of the state and the businessmen who wanted their land. R. told me he did not believe that a peace agreement would mean much change for the Community, due to the state's lack of will to dis-articulate paramilitarism, although he also said it would be a good thing if the combats in the region stopped (field diary, February 2014). It was not only the state that the Community mistrusted; A. was not convinced the FARC would actually comply with an agreement; he doubted they would really stop forcibly recruiting members and give up their arms. He said the peace process was a "lie" (field diary, July 2014). Many people just said, "We'll have to wait and see what happens".

In 2014, general elections were held, and President Santos ran for re-election. The peace process was the central issue around which public opinion turned for the elections. The first round in May saw an insufficient majority, which in Colombia leads to a second round between the top two candidates: Santos versus Óscar Iván Zuluaga. When Uribe left presidential office in 2010, in increasing annoyance at the change of governance displayed by Santos, whose candidacy he had endorsed, he started a new party, the Democratic Centre party (*Centro Democrático*—CD). Since he had already been president for two terms, and his attempt to change the Constitution to allow him to run for a third had been overruled by the Constitutional Court, this was Uribe's way of continuing to influence the political sphere. Zuluaga was 'Uribe's candidate', and thus attracted a lot of votes due to the popularity of the ex-President.

Public opinion on the second round of elections in June 2014 hinged almost exclusively on the peace process: the CD's stance was that Colombia should not be "negotiating with terrorists", and they promised to deliver "peace without impunity" and without being soft on the FARC (Gómez-Suárez 2016). In these elections, many sectors united to re-elect Santos, including sectors of the left previously in opposition, in order to prevent Zuluaga from winning and preserve the Havana negotiations.

Peace Community members generally do not vote, "because of everything we have lived through. Political candidates promise things and then don't fulfil them. We don't vote. We don't believe in politicians" (G.T., event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). H. told me:

> I voted only once in my life. For Bernardo Jaramillo [of the UP]. Because the people said, we're going to have a president. Then they killed him and we saw that voting was useless. I felt my vote had contributed to him being killed. I will never vote again, in order not to be part of that problem. (Field diary, April 2014)

This shows the importance of the past as a legacy that continues to influence the present—and the way the present continues to re-inscribe the past. The assassination of presidential candidate Jaramillo in 1990 was one of the most symbolic moments in the destruction of the UP, contributing to many people's growing disillusionment with politics in Colombia. But H.'s idea that his vote "contributed to him being killed" and his subsequent desire to abstain from "being part of" the system that allowed it belongs to the logic of the radical narrative. J.E. said they did not vote because voting is a way of legitimating the state, and would not be coherent with the rupture (field diary, July 2014). The logic is that participating in a state system legitimates it, and the Community perceives the state as illegitimate, so they attempt not to participate in it as far as possible.

Not voting is not a principle, but the choice of each member. Before the 2014 elections, the Internal Council called a meeting with Community members in order to "generate reflection" about the fact that voting meant legitimating the state, and that it would make no sense to insist on their four points as the only bilateral agenda for their relationship with Santos and also vote for him (field diary, July 2014).

After Santos won the re-election in June 2014, many Community members were critical of the sectors of the left who had endorsed his campaign on the basis of the peace process. A.T. expressed his disgust and said

that the left had "gone over to the dark side", and "we think that was a mistake. Santos is the establishment, he is paramilitarism". I said I thought that Zuluaga winning would have been worse, but A.T. claimed "it would have been better if Zuluaga had won. At least things would be clear. We know who Zuluaga is. With Santos, there is one discourse and another reality". This is a seemingly extreme version of the narrative about the differentiation between Uribe and Santos, and the idea that Santos is the same as Uribe in terms of links with paramilitarism but with a "prettier" discourse. J.E. had the same position—"ugly is ugly" he said, about the left's decision to support Santos' campaign. Both of them saw this as an abandonment of the left's ideals (field diary, July 2014).

However, a community is a multiplicity of people, and though the same narratives circulate and positions consolidate among its members, there are also differences. R. said the elections were "a joke" because it was the right against the extreme right. But he also thought it was better that Zuluaga had not won, and that Santos' government had done some good things, even though his general perception was that Santos' neoliberal economic model meant "death for *campesinos*" (field diary, July 2014).

In August 2014, left-wing public opinion began to look more favourably on the peace process when the teams negotiating in Havana began to discuss the issue of victims. A Historical Commission on the Conflict and its Victims was created. Twelve experts and two chairs, half chosen by the government's negotiating team and half by FARC, were mandated with writing a historical account about the roots of the conflict and its effects, to serve as input for the discussion of this issue. One of the commissioners chosen by FARC was Javier Giraldo. Victims of both sides went to Havana: 5 delegations, of 12 victims each. The Catholic Church, the UN and the National University were in charge of selecting them. When I visited the Community after the first delegation's visit, which had positive echoes in the media, J.E. said, "It seems that this process is really using a serious methodology". He said he understood it was not going to be perfect, but he thought it was moving in a positive direction (field diary, August 2014). The inclusion of victims in the talks led to a more favourable perception among many Colombians, but I was pleasantly surprised to see that my sceptical friend was among them.

The Community was invited to send a delegate to Havana. At first, the Community decided not to participate in that official space. Partly, they told me, to avoid possible stigmatisations in the press, and partly they felt it would be incompatible with their four-point bilateral agenda in relation to the state. The Church invited them to participate in the first three

delegations, and three times they rejected the invitation. But then they decided to send Germán Graciano, the then legal representative, on the fourth victims' delegation. Their decision, however, was specifically to take the opportunity to present again their petition about the humanitarian zones. Given that the previous reason the government had given, in 2011, for not discussing this proposal was the fact that there had been no dialogue with the FARC, they believed it now made sense to propose it again.

Germán went along with the rest of the exercise, giving his personal testimony to the negotiating parties—13 members of his family had been killed in the conflict, by guerrilla, paramilitaries and soldiers—but he handed a letter from the Community to the heads of both negotiating teams, setting out an updated version of their proposal for humanitarian zones. They never received a response.

The decision to send Germán to Havana did not mean they stopped being sceptical about the peace process, or about the state. "What peace are we talking about?" many members said, "they are just exchanging interests". The Peace Community, as with many Colombians, did not feel that 'peace' was the right word to describe the ending of the armed conflict between FARC and the state. 'Peace' for them meant something much greater than the absence of violence (Chap. 9).

These perceptions about the peace process were not unique, but were influenced by their interaction with moods of public opinion that crystallised across Colombia in response to developments in the national agenda; and among the Community's inter-subjective 'emotional communities'. Giraldo is the person who visits the Community from the outside most regularly, and his influence is crucial in the formation of their perception about what is happening nationally. They trust him because of the years of solidarity, support, love and mutual influence created over tragic and taxing time. I have seen him give speeches in many general assemblies, presenting his interpretation of the political context of the moment, and his profound scepticism of the state is always palpable.

After one presentation to the assembly about the peace process, which highlighted things the government "did not want" to do, he opened a space for questions. B.A. raised his hand and said, "So it seems that the government doesn't want to change, they only want the guerrilla to surrender, right?" (field diary, December 2014). In interpreting national political events, the Community members seek to reconfirm their thoughts and belief system, because that means reconfirming their individual and collective identities. Their perception of the state is part of that. The narrative

that Santos' government has not changed anything but its discourse, and that one cannot talk of reparations while the victimisation continues, is deep-rooted among many social movements and victims' organisations.

These are circular narratives that self-confirm individual and collective identities. This is not to say that Giraldo tells the Community what to think and the Community accepts it uncritically. Doubtless, Giraldo's experience accompanying the Community, their multiple failed attempts to access justice, and his interaction with the *campesinos*, have influenced his perception of the state too. The inter-subjectivities between Giraldo and the Community, and the memory of Eduar Lancheros, have been woven mutually throughout time, and are traced through with emotional bonds.

While the Community was interpreting the state's actions in the peace process through national media and reports from people like Giraldo, their continued perception of the state as perpetrator was also influenced by the behaviour of the army, the main representatives of the state they encounter on an everyday basis. During the research period, the Community denounced in their communiqués countless hostile encounters with soldiers; the stigmatisations on the radio from the commander of the Seventeenth Brigade; threats they received that the paramilitaries were "going to exterminate that son-of-a-bitch Peace Community" in alliance with the army; and problems of soldiers camping in the Community's crops, destroying them, sometimes contaminating organic crops with plastic bottles and rubbish, putting their organic certification at risk.

They interpret all the army's behaviour within the framework of the radical narrative: as proof that "the state wants to exterminate the Community". G.T. said:

> The government has used many strategies to exterminate the Peace Community. They have wanted to eliminate us since we began. They have used displacement, bombing, legal framings, stigmatising people as guerrilla fighters, they have robbed our producers, they have raped women, they have destroyed subsistence crops, they have burned down people's houses. There have been many strategies of terror. (Interview, January 2015)

With this consolidated perception, every army action on the ground reinforces this idea. Seemingly benign acts, such as pitching camp in an organic cacao grove, which on its own might be seen as a lack of respect for their livelihood, but no worse, are read in this historically-constituted framework.

C. told me his son had encountered a group of soldiers from the Seventeenth Brigade in his cacao grove, who had said they did not want the FARC to demobilise because they would lose their jobs. They even wrote on a tree, "Guerrilla, do not demobilise!" (field diary, May 2015). I do not pretend to represent the entire Brigade's perceptions of the peace process, but this anecdote indicates the position of *some* soldiers in Urabá, whose behaviour influences the Community's ongoing interpretation of 'the state' as perpetrator.

*   *   *

My intention is not to analyse the government's motives, nor evaluate the truth of one or other version of events, but to analyse the Community's interpretation of the state's actions. This 'radical narrative' is a culturally- and historically-constituted interpretative scheme, a framework according to which the Community perceives all state actions. Therefore, every action they see of the state and every para/military violation on the ground reconfirms this interpretation, and at the same time, their collective identity.

The Community's 'radical narrative' has developed over time, via state-society encounters of both state violence and *seemingly* benign bureaucratic inefficiency, which pre-date their foundation in 1997. It has been influenced by the politico-cultural antecedents of the UP and Balsamar, and *leitmotifs* of autonomy and organisation. It has grown in interaction with audiences in favour of their project, like the human rights community, contributing to the crystallisation of certain elements of the narrative such as an appeal to international human rights discourse. It has hardened via interaction with counter-narratives, notably from Uribe and the army; and it has developed new elements under the government of Juan Manuel Santos and his shifts towards victims' rights and peace. It interprets 'the state' as a homogenous actor, converging with the paramilitary project and with economic interests.

The idea that the Community's agenda with the state is strictly limited to the four points is not completely true. Many members go to hospitals in Apartadó, some settlements receive electricity, and the Community is registered in the Chamber of Commerce as a non-profit organisation. These services would not be possible without the state. I have heard criticisms that this lessens their political stance of 'rupture' or shows inner contradictions. However, given the *sui generis* signification of 'rupture' employed by the Community, I do not agree. They do not live in a fully

autonomous 'independent republic', though they use some self-sustainable farming methods. Their 'rupture' is about repudiating a system they believe to be corrupt, a conscientious objection; as their 'neutrality' is about refusing to allow the spatialising practices of the conflict actors to turn their lands into a geography of war. My ethnographic endeavour is to understand the Community in their own terms; not to argue in favour or against the 'radical narrative', but to comprehend its internal logic construction.

As emphasised by Mitchell (2006), the state is culturally constituted both materially and imaginatively. The material effects of the state in the 'margins' of San José de Apartadó have been, as shown throughout Part II, violence and inefficient bureaucracy—intentional or otherwise. The Community's imagination of the state is a social reality in itself, and their story shows the failures that occur when state officials fail to take this social reality seriously. Grandiose gestures such as President Santos' apology has little effect on the Community's state-idea because of the lack of sensitivity to historically-formed perceptions of the state, and actions by troops on the ground are construed as never-ending proof of a shadowy extermination campaign.

Notes

1. Reply from the Presidency to Father Javier Giraldo to a *derecho de petición*, 26 January 2011. JGA 2011/58.
2. *Semana*, 20 May 2017. '"Pido perdón a las madres de Soacha": Álvaro Uribe'. http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/alvaro-uribe-le-pido-perdon-a-las-madres-de-soacha-por-afectar-la-memoria-de-sus-hijos/525896 [accessed 17 July 2017].
3. "On 12 January 2006, the army sent a document to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, in which they affirmed that the Humanitarian Zones were inviable, because in the Geneva Conventions it is supposed that such zones should be created by agreement between sides in combat and at that moment there was no dialogue between the government and the guerrilla", letter from the Community submitted to Humberto de la Calle and Iván Márquez, the heads of the government and FARC negotiating teams in the Havana peace process, 29 October 2014, during the fourth delegation of victims to Havana. Author's personal archive.
4. Letter from the Ministry of the Interior and Justice Ministry to Father Javier Giraldo, 11 May 2011, JGA 2011/151–153.

5. Community communiqué, 14 June 2011. 'Respuesta al gobierno nacional ante la negativa a interlocutar con la Comunidad de Paz'. http://cdpsan-jose.org/?q=node/198 [accessed 1 June 2014].

6. Ministry of the Interior, 29 May 2013. 'Intervención del Ministro del Interior Fernando Carrillo en el acto de retractación frente a acusaciones realizadas contra la "Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó y sus acompañantes"'. Author's personal archive.

7. Community communiqué, 29 May 2013, 'Una agresión más del alto gobierno'. http://cdpsanjose.org/?q=node/262 [accessed 1 June 2014].

8. For example, *Caracol Radio*, 29 May 2013, 'Comunidad de Apartadó no acepta desagravio del Gobierno por ausencia de Santos', http://www.cara-col.com.co/noticias/regional/comunidad-de-apartado-no-acepta-desa-gravio-del-gobierno-por-ausencia-de-santos/20130529/nota/1906946.aspx; *El Colombiano* 29 May 2013, 'Víctimas de Apartadó no aceptaron desagravio del Gobierno',

http://www.elcolombiano.com/BancoConocimiento/V/victimas_de_apartado_no_aceptaron_desagravio_del_gobierno/victimas_de_apartado_no_aceptaron_desagravio_del_gobierno.asp;

Terra, 29 May 2013, 'El Estado que pidió un perdón que no fue aceptado por sus víctimas',

http://noticias.terra.com.pe/internacional/latinoamerica/el-estado-que-pidio-un-perdon-que-no-fue-aceptado-por-sus-victimas,318ddf70a20fe310VgnCLD2000000ec6eb0aRCRD.html; and *RCN Radio*, 29 May 2013, 'Comunidad de Apartadó, inconforme porque Santos no pidió perdón público',

http://www.rcnradio.com/noticias/comunidad-de-apartado-incon-forme-con-actitud-del-gobierno-por-no-pedir-perdon-publico-69014

9. *El Tiempo*, 29 May 2013, 'Estado rectifica acusaciones de Uribe contra San José de Apartadó'. http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/carrillo-dice-que-rectifica-acusaciones-de-uribe-por-san-jose-de-apartado_12832082-4 [accessed 1 June 2014].

10. Community communiqué, 16 December 2013, 'El Presidente nos pide perdón'. http://cdpsanjose.org/?q=node/290 [accessed 16 December 2013].

11. *El Tiempo*, 13 December 2013. 'Santos pidió perdón a Comunidad de Paz de San José de Apartadó'. http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/santos-pide-perdon-a-comunidad-de-san-jose-de-apartado_13272615-4 [accessed 13 December 2013].

12. For example, Community communiqué, 27 October 2014. http://www.cdpsanjose.org/node/61 [accessed 5 January 2017].

13. CINEP. 2015. 'Infografía: San José de Apartadó, Comunidad de Paz'. http://www.cinep.org.co/Home2/component/k2/item/113-recurso-002-infografia-san-jose-de-apartado.html [accessed 14 July 2015].

14. Interview in November 2013 for PBI UK, author's personal archive.

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The Organic Narrative

In Western global culture, we tend to hierarchise knowledge. Scientific and university-learned knowledge is most revered, and anything manual that does not require certificates and classroom study, such as construction work or peasant agriculture, is looked down upon. Putting bricks on top of each other, or pulling tubercles out of soil—anyone can do that, and its practitioners are cast as uneducated and replaceable. We tend not to appreciate all the knowledge that goes into manual work, when actually it requires a lot of experience, practice and learning to do it well. And, while the human race could survive without another anthropology PhD thesis, it could not survive without skilled farmers producing the food with which we nourish ourselves.

It is well-known by now that in the capitalist model of resource extraction, those who work with primary commodities such as cacao receive the least profit for their work. We generally berate this, but how many of us know what this work really involves? Yet we are connected through our bodies to the Peace Community and all those who grow food in the midst of different forms of violence and hardship, as they use their bodies to produce it, with daily and consistent practices that structure their lives, requiring care, work, organisation, love, knowledge, and community.

Colombian sociologist Fals Borda called for Latino academics to take more pride in autochthonous knowledge practices, without abandoning Western scientific knowledge. He believed that "when elitist culture draws on popular culture and local ecology, paths open that are rich in originality

and scientific creativity" (1970: 130). This kind of debate is still dominant in contemporary scholarship, especially in the search for knowledge practices which could help to alleviate some of the wrongs of global capitalism. However, as I have said, the analytic movement of this book is not to draw from the Peace Community an exportable model. Rather, it is to understand the production of their collective identity through its two core narratives, the radical and the organic. This narrative production takes place through and with the daily practices of cacao production, which they had been doing long before becoming a Peace Community.

A glimpse at the way the members of the Community transmit their knowledge of cacao production through practice enables an analogous understanding of the way in which narratives are transmitted and thus produced and re-produced in the cultural and material context of the cacao groves. This validates the major argument of this book, to understand the production of identity narratives as cultural practice.

The practice of cacao production is a complex process. It requires far more artisanal skill and detailed attention to its different stages than, say, the banana production in the Urabá lowlands. This physical practice is a total social fact (Mauss 1954) which (re-)produces subjectivities in which multiple cultural and historical dimensions intersect, including the *campesino* culture and economics (Gudeman and Rivera 1990); the history of settler immigration in Urabá and the experience of the armed conflict (Chap. 2); their connection to their land, wanting to stay in it and resist displacement, which undoubtedly strengthens their affective connection with land, with their work and their cacao trees, which are frequently anthropomorphised; the radical narrative (Part II) and its them/us dichotomy, in which the state is conflated with paramilitarism and with economic interests in their land; and the idea of the 'alternative community' which they look towards, which encapsulates their work, their relationship to nature, their grassroots organisational process, and their saying no to violence (Chap. 9).

In their progressive disillusionment with the Colombian state, and their increasing connections with the international community and its human rights discourse, they began to seek opportunities for exportation. The unusual commercial relationship with the 'ethical' company Lush Cosmetics brought new elements into the Community's discourse, which intersected with pre-existing elements. Commercial relationships are subject to change, especially in unstable contexts like that of the Peace Community, and may have evolved since the period of research.

The Community also produces artisanal chocolate in solid unsweetened bars for making hot chocolate, which they sell informally among each other and to international visitors. The organic narrative coexists with all of this.

The organic narrative is the interpretative framework according to which the Community perceives their relationships with their natural and social environments, which mirror each other symbiotically in the parallel of 'organic' with 'organisation'. To understand its component parts, we must appreciate the everyday practices of cacao production which structure the Community's cultural context, and the social relationships of solidarity and learning or teaching of knowledge which take place there. We must also dissect the constitutive elements of the organic narrative in historical context, and understand their interconnection with the radical narrative. Chapters 7 and 8 look at practices of production and the elements of the organic narrative, and show how the two are interrelated.

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Practices of Production

When I hear that someone is drinking a cup of the Community's hot chocolate, I feel happiness, because I am very pleased that people are getting to know the product that is coming out of the Community. I feel my heart speeding up, it's like being in love. When you're in love with your product, and you hear that other people are also falling in love with it, you are very happy […] I like the end product when I see it. It's tiring work, I get exhausted, but when you see it, and when someone comes and asks if you've got chocolate to sell, and you can say yes, that happiness makes it all worth it, that's what I like the best, that people are enjoying the product. (L., interview, March 2015)

L. is one of the members who operate the machinery to transform the cacao beans into chocolate. The 'being in love' she describes here has to do with the 'tiring work', the effort she puts in; but also with the satisfaction with the 'end product', and the connection with the consumer. Affective bonds forge around the materiality of cacao, the connection with the Community members through the embodied practice of working with it, and the imaginary of the person who will 'enjoy the product'. These affective bonds, between Community members and with the cacao itself, exist at every level of the chain of production, whether the cacao is destined for exportation or for processing into artisanal chocolate bars, including the recent physical and narrative practices relating to the exportation with Lush Cosmetics, such as the maintenance of the 'organic' and 'Fair Trade' certifications.

Technologies of Cacao

Bourdieu emphasises the (re-)production of gender differences among Kabyle men and women through the trans-subjective transmission of practical sense in the division of labour in olive picking (Chap. 1). In the Peace Community's practice of cacao production, and the trans-subjective transmission of its practical sense between members, their values and identity narratives are also transmitted and developed. The cacao, to use Latour's terms, is the non-human object around which the social occurs. In each stage of production, the everyday practices form expertise, subjectivities and what Bourdieu called a 'bodily hexis'. In order to approximate the reader to the experiences of practice, and of the trans-subjective transmission of practical sense between members, this section comprises a series of ethnographic vignettes about my participant observation in the cacao groves.

Though one can best appreciate practical sense by *doing*, my subjective descriptions of learning, through my own bodily experiences as a foreign participant in a culture which is not my own, may provide a modest glimpse onto the quality of *being* in the lush, tropical environment, which is also a war zone. With this foundation, the reader may be then better able to imagine themselves in the shoes of the Community members, and thereby the way in which the daily practice of cacao production relates to their thinking and being, and appreciate the contrast they feel and perceive with the 'antitheses' of their organic cacao production, evident in the them/us elements of the organic narrative (Chap. 8).

These vignettes, then, take the reader through each stage of the cacao production, through my experience with different 'teachers', in different hamlets of San José de Apartadó.

Preparing the Ground

I learn to prepare the ground for sowing cacao during a day of community work in San Josecito on a 'community cacao grove'; a plantation whose profits go to the community fund. I set off with a group of around 25 people to a plot of land some 20 minutes' walk from the settlement. Water spills over the top of one of my wellington boots crossing a stream, soaking my sock, but it doesn't matter because I'm soon drenched in sweat anyway. We get to the start of the '*chapeo*', the ground-clearing, and they stop to sharpen their machetes, cracking jokes as they pass the file round. The '*peinilla*' is the smallest kind of machete, the '*rula*' is medium-sized and

the biggest is called a '*chambelona*'. They talk about how to divide themselves up to cover the ground, reminding each other they have to take care as they go into the thicket to '*chapear*', because there are baby cacao trees hidden by overgrown weeds, so they must not hurl the '*chambelona*' around too much without looking.

O. arrives with a '*rula*' to lend me, and files it carefully before handing it to me. Some of them trot over to the other side of the hill. I stay with O. on a steep ridge. We start to swing the machetes from side to side, cutting the long grass and the low, wild shrubs. My arm tires, until I develop the technique of cutting at different angles, left, right, left, right, letting the weight of the machete fall in a rhythm. G.G. arrives, worried about my "delicate" hands, and offers me gloves. I thank him but decline; I want to learn what they experience, even though it's only a tiny fraction. I let my left hand get covered in little cuts from the sharp leaves that I'm grabbing, and my right hand in blisters from swinging the machete from side to side. I hear the rhythmic sound of slashing grass. I discover that different types of stalks require different strategies of cutting. I see San Josecito far below, and the road where the *chiveros* pass. The men shout from time to time, to accompany and motivate each other: "Eyyyyy-ooo!". From time to time, they take breaks to file their machetes again or call out to their mate to throw them the water bottle. Around midday there are great shouts of excitement because two dogs that have come with us have found a rabbit and are hunting it. The younger men egg them on with noisy enthusiasm but the rabbit escapes, rather to my relief.

I tire quickly of course, and after a while I sit down in the grass to admire their work. I hear crickets and birdsong, and there is a strong smell of wild coriander, *cimarrón*. It is incredible how much land can be cleared in a few hours when many expert hands work together. Between 9 am and midday they clear the whole plot. It would be so easy to cut one's finger by mistake, or slip down one of the slopes. O. complains about "the youth of today" because the young men are going too quickly; probably, he says, they have also cut down some baby cacao.

Things come to an end slowly as each group finishes their patch. Some come towards us again, the men scraping the sweat off their naked chests and backs with the blunt side of the machetes. J. comes towards me with a huge smile. It's his first time swinging a machete for three years, since they amputated his leg. He got hit by a stray bullet from the FARC; for some years he could walk but gradually it became infected, and had to be cut off. A few months back they gave him a prosthetic, and today is the

first time he tries to use it to go work. He tells me that he fell over three times, but "I'm happy!" G.G. explains that next week, on community work day, they will plant new cacao here.

Planting the Seed

You take the seeds directly from the cacao fruit. Either you put the seed directly into the soil, about four metres from tree to tree, or you sow the seeds in little black plastic bags filled with earth, and plant them out into the ground two or three months later, after germination. G.T. shows me his nursery of seedlings in bags in Mulatos. There are 1000 trees, about half a metre high, almost ready to be transplanted into the ground, under a straw roof protecting them from the sun, in the midst of a cacao grove.

G.T. explains that when the Community returned to Mulatos after the massacre, some of the trees which had got covered over with forest had died. These seedlings were to replace the trees which had not survived their owners' displacement. When they returned to Mulatos, he says, they sowed plantain and cassava there, fast-growing subsistence crops which they could live off while they established themselves in the settlement. Under these, they sowed cacao seeds. While the cacao is growing, the plantain and cassava give it shade, he said, and meanwhile, we also have a food crop. Once the cacao is grown, he said, we maintain that as our cash crop but we can continue to grow some food crops alongside it, like plantain, which is a "good accompanier" to cacao.

The idea of mixing crops is important for the Community. J.E. said that cacao is a "reforestation crop; not a deforestation crop like grass [which they sow for cattle-grazing], but it is a tree, and re-establishes the soil. The soil is in permanent reproduction. It's a form of conservation" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). Similarly, O. said:

> Some crops are mono-crops. Cacao, on the other hand, is a poly-crop, or a bio-crop. It likes to have a variety of crops in the cacao grove. […] it always needs an exchange between trees. It needs a bit of shade, but not from any old tree. Leguminous trees, for example the *chachafruto*. Ones that have small leaves, that decompose easily when they fall to the ground. That creates organic fertiliser and the cacao benefits from that. And the soil is protected, because if it's all clear then it dries up. That is part of the technical administration of cacao. (Focus group, San Josecito, April 2014)

The reason the legume trees are a good complement for the cacao is that via bacterial symbiosis in the roots they can fix atmospheric nitrogen, which virtually no other plants can do. Hence they add nitrogen to the soil directly, as well as via their decomposing, nitrogen-rich leaves.

Administering the Trees

The cacao tree starts producing fruit after two years. From three onwards, it produces a full harvest. It can live for 30 or 40 years but when it gets old it produces less, so the *campesinos* must renovate their crops if they want to maintain production levels. In order to maximise production, a cacao grove requires constant attention.

B.A. administers a cacao grove in Mulatos. It is a one-hectare plot that had been abandoned for several years, and his father, A.A., gave it to him to work because he thought his son was "getting bored". I visit with J.E., and we find B.A. hard at work. I ask J.E. to lend me his machete and teach me, and he shows me about pruning. You have to cut the lianas that grow from the base of the tree up the trunk, and also the baby twigs that sprout from all over the tree and would, if you let them, become new big branches. The idea is to keep the tree neatly pruned, with few, and low branches, "well organised", says J.E. You cut off the dead pods, and the diseased pods. The '*escobabruja*' (witches' broom) makes the pods grow small, deformed and wrinkled. Those with '*monilla*' are covered in dark splodges. You have to keep the base of the trunk clean, and pull off the weeds that grow up it. "The root has to get a bit of sun", says B.A. All the machete cuts have to be as flush with the trunk as possible. There are black ants on all the trunks, and they bite gently when I climb up to reach the highest branches.

B.A. has been working this grove for around a year, and it has just given its first harvest. J.E. is admiring, he says it's "very pretty", and next year will give an excellent harvest. B.A. says that even when it's not harvest time, he likes to collect cacao bit by bit, whenever he's pruning. He is affectionate towards his trees, and his little-and-often style of working keeps them neat. When he finds a ripe pod, he cuts it down and opens it at once, scooping the seeds into a white plastic bucket with a black home-made strap which he carries over his shoulder. He says he likes to come at least once a fortnight to prune, and more often when the moon is waning, "to prevent the *monilla* getting in". Every time he comes, he says that he

collects around five kilos. He explains to me that five kilos are worth (in 2014) 30,000 pesos, the price of a day's work.

J.E. is happy to see me getting a feel for the work. I go through the cacao grove asking him, "I have to cut this off, right?" and he smiles when he sees me catching the drift of what he's teaching me. He teaches B.A. a way of stimulating the growth of new trees from old ones: he makes a diagonal cut with the machete close to the base of the trunk, and he explains that from this cut, a new branch will grow. "It will take to the soil immediately", he said, and can replace the old tree. While the new tree is growing, B.A. will still have the production from the old tree, and when the new one is big enough, he can cut the old one down. B.A. asks J.E. questions, nodding and seeking his elder's approval.

J.E. claims that all the studies done on cacao have proven that it is a job that has to be done by hand; it's not suitable for industrial cultivation. B.A. says that it has to be worked "with the machete and the hand", and suggests, "it must be human heat that sustains it". You cannot grow cacao in the dry, hard lines of the banana plantations in Apartadó. It needs human care, and someone to put in the affection that B.A. does, coming and looking over each tree individually.

The Harvest

J.E. and his 12-year-old son take me to work in a place called Pelahuevo, some 20 minutes up the mountain from La Unión, past the football pitch where they left the bodies after the 2000 massacre for the CTI to collect. My role is to help J.E. cutting down the pods, a task they call *cogiendo*. His son is *recogiendo*, and collects the pods we cut down from the trees. J.E. gives me the *puya*, a long pole over two metres long with a double-edged curved blade at the end. He shows me how to use it to cut cacao pods off the branches. At first I find it tough going. The slopes of the cacao grove are steep, and I get vertigo going up and down among the trees. I use the *puya* as a staff to balance myself. J.E. does not like the *puya*; he prefers to climb the trees and cut the fruit with his machete.

I walk among the trees cutting the pods down. At first my arms tire, but then I develop a physical and intellectual rhythm to the work. I begin to realise it requires strategy. First I have to detect the pods through the branches, which is sometimes difficult because they have the same oblong shape as the leaves and, like the leaves, they range from green (unripe), yellow, orange and bright red to almost purple. I begin to think of the ripe

pods as 'yellow treasure', I don't know why. I search for the best angle to cut the short twig which connects the fruit to the branch. Sometimes I use the inward curve of the *puya* to hook the twig, sometimes it's easier to use the outward curve against the twig. Soon I'm covered in sediment which falls from the branches, and from the roots and plants I grab hold of as I go up and down the slopes. As I cut, I think of the importance of each tiny effort for the final result.

I learn about *recogiendo* with R. and his team, three sons and a son-in-law, also in Pelahuevo. Their three-hectare cacao grove has a mix of old and young trees, some only two years old, giving their first harvest. R. says that a grove should have 720 trees per hectare, if they are sown with a distance of four metres between each tree, though some people sow with slightly less distance. R. hands me a red five-gallon bucket, with a strap to carry it over the shoulder, and the group divides into three-people *cogiendo* and three *recogiendo*, collecting the cacao and organising it into piles.

I follow R., collecting the cacao he chops down, going up and down the slopes; clumsy but determined. I see a thin snake, several butterflies, and several giant spiders. Little stones enter my boots, I feel the uneven pressure on different sides of my feet due to being constantly on a slope, and I soon develop blisters. The sweat heats my body. As we go, R. tells me he was born in La Unión and has lived there all his life. The only three years he lived anywhere else was during the 1997 displacement. "I never even went to Mulatos", he said, "the first time I went there was when we went to find Luis Eduardo's body". He worked on this same plot of land as a farmhand when he was a teenager. It belonged to a cousin of his, who later sold it cheaply to the Community during the 1997 displacement, because he was one of the inhabitants that never wanted to return. There are no cacao groves in San José that do not have layers of history which invoke the violence.

The work is hard. I carry the bucket on my shoulder and it quickly gets very heavy, and it's difficult to go up the slopes with the unequal weight on one side of my body. As I work, my mind wanders aimlessly, thinking of many things and nothing at the same time, making connections. It is almost an experience of meditation. I wonder if it's the same for them. Being alone but together. It also reinforces my idea that the work is the sum of many tiny efforts. One bean, two beans, one pod, two pods. The fact that it is not mechanical, like a production line in a factory, but requires thought and strategy.

This is also an important medium of interaction between father and sons. I ask R. about the black pods; I show him one, and I ask him if it's any good and he says yes. I ask him how he knows, and he shows me that you have to shake it, and if it rattles then it's OK. If it doesn't make a sound and it's very light, then it's past it. He cuts into a black pod and opens it to show me the beans inside. Later I hear him saying to his son-in-law, "Don't forget the black ones, they're still OK." He is teaching, reminding, directing and forming the group. While we work, they occasionally call out to each other: "There's one over there you missed", or "I'll take this part".

J.E. likes to collect the cacao in several little piles because the pod shells are an excellent fertiliser and it "gives back to the tree". R., however, likes to make a few large piles. He picks up a pod from the ground by whacking it gently with the machete so that the blade pierces the shell and sticks into it like a fork, enabling him to lift it up and throw it deftly onto the pile. The rhythm of the work varies depending on where the pile you're working with is. When we start a new pile, we cut and collect the cacao furthest away from it. This is the hardest part, because it means carrying the heavy bucket further. When we fill the buckets, we go to the pile and empty them there. We move on to the trees that are closer to the pile, and get closer and closer until we cross to the other side of the pile and move further away from it to collect, until we get so far away that we start a new pile.

Next to our big yellow and orange piles there are old piles of open, black shells, in varying stages of decomposition, indicating that these places, in small clearings or flats on the slopes, are the usual sites. When we get close to the second pile, we stop to have lunch. R. has brought a big Tupperware box with rice, beans, pork crackling, liver and plantain that he shares with me and with his sons. His son-in-law has his own lunch which his girlfriend has prepared. We talk little, there is the occasional joke, but also leave silences. I think, this is a family unit, working together and bonding. I sit with my back against the pile. There are flies buzzing around it, sometimes they go into the gaps between the pods and remain there trapped a while, buzzing inside the pile.

After lunch we continue working for another two hours. All the *cogiendo* is finished, but there are still some pods to collect which they will finish tomorrow, and they will start scooping the fruit out of the pods. They expect to get around 90 kilos of cacao from this grove. "You are very strong", I tell them as we organise our things to return to the settlement.

"*You* are strong, coming from Bogotá to work in the countryside!" They laugh. We pass a *zapote* tree on the way to La Unión, and it is possibly the sweetest and most delicious thing I have eaten in my life, after such an effort and getting so hot.

Scooping, Fermentation and Drying

Once the cacao is collected in piles in the grove, it can be left for several days without rotting. Then it must be opened, and the beans scooped out. I ask J.E. to show me how to open the pods with the machete. He is concerned I'll cut a finger off by mistake. You have to cut it cleanly with a swift *crack*, but cut only the thick outer skin, and go all the way around the pod with sharp cuts until you can prise it open. The first time, I cut some of the seeds through the middle, and J.E. says that those seeds are no longer any good. I open two or three pods to get a sense of the technique, then give the machete back to J.E. and we laugh.

The beans with their sticky fruit are scooped into buckets, which become fragrant with the scent of fresh cacao and attractive to ants and flies. Then the beans must ferment. This is the weakest link in the Peace Community's production. In order to obtain the quality required to make gourmet chocolate, say, they would have to ferment the beans in large boxes with a centralised, even control over the temperature and the length of time, mixing it around frequently in order to ensure all the beans ferment equally. Some Community members have small wooden boxes, either in the cacao groves or in the settlements, but many of them leave their cacao to ferment in sacks or under large leaves in the cacao grove. This produces an irregular quality of cacao, good enough for producing the cacao butter used by Lush Cosmetics, and drinking chocolate.

After a few days of fermentation, the cacao passes to the wooden drying platforms. When you walk past them, the smell of cacao wafts down. The pointed zinc roof of A.'s house in Arenas Altas is on rollers, and when wheeled back, exposes the flat drying platform. A. helps me up through a square hole in the ceiling with a rickety ladder, and we lift buckets of fermented cacao onto the drying platform, and empty them out in three viscous piles. They are full of maggots. Now the task is to separate the beans. At first, I don't want to touch them because of the maggots, but I breathe deeply and get on with it. They smell of alcohol, of rotten fruit, and sometimes from the least fermented parts comes a waft of that

guanábana smell of fresh cacao. The colour varies between dark caramel to black. Some of them are covered in a white, spongy mould. Some bits maintain the original form from inside the pod, like a cob of corn, and they must be separated from the white interior pith skeleton. They are full of life. I half get used to the maggots, but I give A. the pods that are too teeming for me to deal with, and he laughs at me.

Some days later, I return to Arenas Altas and A. gives me a stick with a rectangle block at the end, which he uses like a broom to push the cacao around. You have to move it around a few times a day, so that it dries evenly. He shows me that if you bite the cacao while it's still wet, you can see its two colours: brilliant purple inside, with brown skin. When it dries, the purple fades and the two colours get more unified. The purple bit is wrinkled and looks like a brain. "It needs two more suns to dry", he tells me.

Once it's fully dried, you use the '*zaranda*', a large wooden frame fitted with a metal sheet studded with holes. You put the cacao in it, shake it, and the '*pasilla*', or the 'rubbish' (the husks and the bad quality beans), fall out of the holes, leaving only the good grains. They sell the '*pasilla*' cheaply to *Casa Luker* for 4000 pesos per kilo (in 2014), who add it to good cacao for bulk in their drinking chocolate. "The Community's rubbish is organic rubbish, it's better quality than the conventional cacao that they use!" A. laughs.

In San Josecito, I work with a group of members on the drying platform of the storage facility. Sometimes, when the Community cooperative buys cacao from the members, it is not quite dry enough, so they have to give it some extra days of sun; or, if they are storing cacao for a long time before a shipment, it might need re-drying before packing and exporting, so this drying platform is frequently in use. There are six square sections on the platform, and around 250 kilos of beans can fit into each. We collect the dry cacao into sacks, and refill the squares with new cacao that needs drying. We work in silence under an increasingly burning sun. N. is wearing an impossibly elegant black and white strapless dress, and has bare feet. Pushing the dry cacao into piles is like scattering light pebbles around, the sound is dry, like stones moving over each other on a beach. Some of the beans have thin little ribbons of black crossing them, the fruit—*mucílago*—which has dried on them. The driest beans are very dark purple inside. It is becoming a familiar object to me, and playing with it, an ordinary activity.

Storing and Exporting

The cacao is loaded on a mule, in heavy burlap sacks, and taken to San Josecito. The distances are long, and the slopes are steep, so this transport is essential for their consolidation as a project in different spaces. Some members who have more individual resources have their own mules; others have to use the 'community' mules which they must request from the Internal Council.

All the cacao goes to the Community's main storage facility, the *bodega*, in San Josecito, where it is bought by the Community and stored until it is ready for shipping or processing into chocolate. The Community's largest buyer is Lush Cosmetics. Normally they send shipments of 25 tonnes, twice per year, with the option of up to 100 tonnes. It goes first to Rotterdam, in Holland, then to England. Another international buyer is GEPA in Germany, who buy 12 tonnes per year.[1] When they have cacao left over, they sell it to the *Nacional de Chocolates* or *Casa Luker* in Medellín, along with 150 kilos of '*pasilla*'. For exportation, the packaging process requires a lot of care; the domestic packaging is less demanding.

To export the cacao beans, humidity must be only 5 or 6%. For the internal market, 8 or 10% is permissible, as it does not have to travel so far. I spend a morning in the storage facility with J., who is in charge of receiving the cacao that *campesinos* bring from the hamlets, both Community members and non-members. All morning, people arrive with sacks of cacao to sell. R. arrives from La Unión and J. helps him unload the sacks from his mule, and together they lift them up onto a hanging weighing scale. One weighs 48 kilos, the other 50. J. squeezes a handful of cacao and complains, he says it's still wet. He takes out a few beans and puts them into the humidity-testing machine. It has a level of 53%, much too high. He mixes the cacao around with his hand and explains to me that it sounds "dull"; "it's got to be dried more". He gives me a handful, and shows me that it's sticky, the skin of the beans is tacky. When I squeeze it, I notice a slightly spongy consistency. But J. buys it anyway, saying he will put it out to dry a couple of days extra in San Josecito.

A non-member arrives with a plastic bag with around four kilos. J. tells him his cacao is too humid, almost wet, and rejects it, sending him packing to the buyers in San José who will pay less for it. "What happened?" he complains, "You've brought me good cacao before!" Another man arrives with two sacks of cacao from La Unión. J. explains that this cacao is well-dried. Touching it in the sacks, swirling it around, it sounds "loose".

He bites the beans to test their dryness, and he shows me how to distinguish between dry and wet cacao. Inside the flaky skin, the cacao is very dark purple, bitter, fragrant. The wetter it is, the more you can taste the contrast between bitter and sweet. The dryer it is, the more it tastes like unsweetened chocolate. It crumbles in the mouth, and the skin flakes off more easily.

Lush paid for the humidity-testing machine. At the beginning of the commercial relationship, there were problems when one cacao shipment arrived in England covered in mould, and a lot went to waste. The company decided that the Community would pay it off in quotas, receiving less money for future shipments until they paid the debt off. Meanwhile, they invested in this machine, and the construction of more drying platforms.

A.T. shows me how to use the humidity tester. You have to put in a sample of cacao, three or four beans. You press a white button, and the machine reads the humidity. If it needs another day or more's drying, they give people two options; either they get less money per kilo, or they take a couple of kilos off the payment calculation, which works out better for most people. The sacks are kept in different sections of the storage facility depending on whether they need more drying or not, and whether they are organic or not. A.T.'s son arrives and starts playing on the weighing scales, hanging a thin tyre off of it and climbing into it to weigh himself. Then he plays with a little plastic car, rolling it up the sacks of cacao. The cacao is part of their context of socialisation.

I ask about the different colours of the cacao beans, from almost black to pale blond, and A.T. tells me that ideally, farmers should harvest every 10 to 15 days, but if they do not, some pods mature more than others. The blackest beans are those that have remained longest on the tree. But the quality does not change. Another variable is the length of fermentation. He tells me that this should be four to six days, but if the farmer leaves the cacao only two or three days, the colour of the bean is lighter. He says that if the cacao is under-fermented, the client will not want it, but the Community is trying to be increasingly responsible about their fermentation, and the Internal Council holds meetings with the producers to remind them how to improve this stage.

J. notes down transactions in his notebook, in the dusty office of the storage facility. He puts "cnb" for conventional (they frequently interchange the v and the b in writing, as they sound the same in Spanish), and "org" for organic, when it comes from certified cacao groves. After writing

down the economic transactions, the notebook goes into a file. The dusty office has a window which looks onto the house behind it, where I see a pig, and some children playing. There are posters on the wall and a photo of Eduar Lancheros, with his phrase "turning pain into hope" photo-shopped onto it in a white scrawl.

J. tells me he grew up in the countryside learning to work cacao. "I'm happy like that, in the countryside, the oxygen of the countryside is very good". He tells me that cacao is a feminine fruit, because "women like chocolate". He tells me too that it is "a romantic fruit". Recently, he tells me, a Guatemalan guy came to San José looking to buy wood (another key business in the region), and when he saw the cacao in the storage facility, he filled his pockets with handfuls of it, because "he said it worked better than Viagra, and also it's natural so it doesn't cause harm, many people put chemicals into their body, but you can just eat four or five cacao beans and you're good to go!" The cacao accrues multiple significations, an object which is central to the life of people in the region.

When they are preparing a large delivery, they use the community work days (Thursdays in San Josecito) so that everyone helps with getting the shipment ready, organising and weighing the cacao and packing it into sacks of 71 kg, which allows 1 kg for the weight of the sack. One Thursday I spend a morning in the storage facility with a big group. Reggaeton blares from an electric radio. J. and two other men fill and weigh the sacks. J.'s wife, U., helps him hold the sacks open while he adds and takes away handfuls to get the right weight. It is then packed into bags of thick green plastic, which are closed with plastic tags; you have to press down onto it to make sure you get all the air out first, to prevent weevils getting in and breaking the cacao and destroying it on the journey. These go into burlap sacks, because the plastic bag would tear on its own with all the moving around.

Two women, D. and M., sew the sacks shut with baling twine, and I help. The needle is long and sharp. D. shows me how to tie a special kind of bow at the end to prevent it coming undone. The young men then carry the sewn-up sacks on their backs to another storage building where there is an electric fan to keep the air as dry as possible. They laugh and call the young men the 'beasts' (a local name for mules and workhorses) because of their strength.

When the whole delivery is ready, it is sent in a truck with export company EXPOCOSURCA, contracted by Lush, to Cartagena, where the sacks are loaded into a container that goes in a ship to Rotterdam.

Transformation into Chocolate

The Community's chocolate machinery was funded by an international NGO. Four people were trained to use them, but really only two people manage the process, one of them L. The first machine is the roaster, a long tube which heats up over a gas flame. L. tips 35 kg of cacao into it and turns it on, and the tube rotates over the flame so it roasts evenly and does not burn. It can take up to 50 kg. We hear the sound of the cacao revolving inside the tube—pebbles on a beach. Roasting takes 45 minutes, depending on the level of humidity. At the front of the tube is a large metal bowl with small holes to allow air in. L. opens a small square in the tube and a hand-ful of test grains fall out into the bowl. You can tell this cacao has not dried evenly, she says, because some of the beans have roasted much quicker than others. When it's fully roasted, the skin flakes off easily between the fingers.

When it's ready, L. opens a hatch and lets the whole load into the con-tainer to cool for a few minutes. She mixes it around with a wooden spatula. Then it passes to the skinning machine, which takes the skin off, and the peeled cacao comes out at the bottom in little shards, dark and shiny. A tube at the back suctions the skin out onto a pile, and can be used as dry fertiliser.

Next, the skinned cacao pieces go into a grinder, two heavy granite wheels that turn, crushing the cacao. From there, the thick liquor drips out; pure, completely bitter, chocolate paste. The wheels are adjusted with screws to ensure it comes out fine, not too grainy. It then cools for an hour or more, and is poured into the plastic moulds that give it the shape of a chocolate bar. At this stage they can mix it with sugar or *panela*, but gen-erally they leave it unsweetened. The full moulds go onto a vibrating metal table for several minutes, to compact the chocolate and prevent bubbles. Finally, they put the moulds into trays, which go onto stacked trolleys and into an industrial fridge for a night or a day. Then they take the chocolate bars out of the moulds and wrap them in baking parchment, and they are ready to sell.

B.G. shows me how to make chocolate by hand, at home. We roast a kilo of beans in a big frying pan, mixing them around with a wooden spoon. They start to give off the strong, bitter smell of chocolate. After around half an hour, she shows me how the skin flakes off the well-toasted beans, just by pressing it between the fingers. We move to the kitchen table and take off the skins manually, one by one. Then, the shiny grains go into the

hand grinder that she uses for grinding corn, a small metal grinder that fixes to the table with screws like a vice. We take it in turns to grind. It comes out a bit lumpy so we grind it a second time, producing a smooth paste. B.G. pats the paste into little balls and puts them onto a tray. Each little ball will make four cups of hot chocolate, she says. We decide to make some immediately because it's a Thursday, and everyone is doing community work in San Josecito, so we think it's a nice idea to bring them chocolate. We go to the communal restaurant and boil an enormous pot of water and put all the chocolate balls into it, with two bricks of *panela*, and a pinch of cinnamon. It slowly starts to boil. The children come to see what we're doing, and they help to stir it until the chocolate and *panela* dissolve. The restaurant kitchen fills with the smell. When it is ready, the children accompany me round San Josecito carrying the cooking pot, serving it out into plastic cups for the workers.

* * *

These vignettes give a snapshot of the physical sense of the Community's daily reality with the cacao. There is a daily structure: breakfast, going out to the place of work, working, having lunch, working, returning. There's no rush, but the work is constant. The sense of time is formed by this structure, and the conception of space is influenced by the physical reality of the slopes, the earth, the trees, and the architecture of the cacao fermentation boxes, drying platforms and the storage facility. The social relations are created by the work groups, and through the bodily sharing of effort, knowledge, the food at lunchtime, and the working in silence, together and alone. Over years, the body and the mind are formed to do this work. Where to step on the steep slopes, how to prune, how to decide in which order to collect pods into piles. The bodily hexis, and the social collectivity and its identity narratives.

THE ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

The Community is granted their organic certification by independent inspection organisation, Certification of Environmental Standards GmbH (CERES),[2] which sends a representative once a year to inspect the cacao groves. One of the prerequisites for the certification is an internal inspection by a Community member, every two or three months. M. is the only person authorised to do this, as she has been trained and registered by CERES. She explained:

I'm the inspector, so I inspect the cacao groves to see what state they're in, to see that people are maintaining them adequately […] I have to do periodic visits to check, for example, that there aren't any chemical residues near, […] that the neighbours aren't fumigating nearby. […] The certification requires an inspection, by someone who is responsible for checking the crops […] I think it's important because everyone is the owner of their own cacao grove but they have a commitment with the certification, the Community has worked to have the fair trade and the organic certifications, so we are committed to working organically. We have to inspect to ensure everyone is fulfilling that commitment. […] CERES have some forms, they come once a year, I fill out the forms every three months and they come and ask me to show them the audits, they make sure everything is being filled out properly. They require a database of detailed information about the crops and the plots of land, so they check to see I'm filling out the forms properly. They also inspect some of the crops at random, with the owner and with myself. (Interview, January 2015)

One day I accompany M. on her inspection of the cacao groves around San Josecito. A., her boyfriend, comes with us to keep her company. At a meeting the night before, the Council instructed everyone to wait in their crops for M. to come. Some of the cacao groves are very steep and it rained that morning; we are soon covered in mud. The round trip from grove to grove, talking to the producers, takes four hours.

We arrive at the first cacao grove, where B.F. is waiting for us. M. asks her questions from the CERES form. She says that the idea is to strengthen the interaction with the producer during the inspection and give them recommendations to improve their production. A. makes comments too, telling B.F. she should prune her trees more. If the canopy is too full of branches then the sun will not get to the whole tree, and when it rains, it will not dry quickly, and will get covered in moss. He also shows B.F. how to make cuts in the base of the trunk so that a sucker grows which can later replace the old tree. He is asserting his knowledge in front of the women, but M., though she shows deference to his knowledge and asks him the names of wild plants as we walk between the groves, does not allow him to intrude on her authority as inspector, insisting on the information she needs to collect.

M. 'translates' the questions from the form to the producers. The questions are technical; such as whether the cacao grove contains leguminous trees and how many, and whether the producer maintains a field diary in which they note down every time they visit the grove to do maintenance,

jotting down pending tasks. Though the majority of the *campesinos* know how to write, it is not a habitual practice for them. M. tells me that often the producers do not understand the questions very well, and she has to explain and make recommendations on the basis of what the forms call for. We find H. sitting under a tree in the grove he works with his work group. M. proclaims that this cacao grove "is nicely *chapeada*, cleared of weeds, but needs more pruning". H. asks about the field diary mentioned in the CERES form and M. explains that the idea is keeping a register of every visit to the *cacaotera*, what he did and how much cacao he collected. "Load of crap", says H., rolling his eyes.

In the next grove, we find Y., who says she has no idea about M.'s questions, because she is only just starting to learn to work with cacao. Her work group was assigned this cacao grove around a year ago. M. asks if she has gone to any of the training the Internal Council has organised—part of the Community's commitment to CERES is regular training sessions for the producers. Y. says no. But M. explains that she means the meetings they have held about cacao, and Y. says yes, she went to one about organic fertilisers, but she doesn't remember much.

M. keeps a running commentary about the groves and notes her observations down: "I know this one was weeded in May, it has to be done again now"; "This one needs the suckers taken off"; "This one needs more weeding"; "These trees must be de-*monilla*-ed" (cutting off the pods with *monilla*). A. and M. stop frequently to debate the best order in which to visit the groves, brusquely affectionate with each other.

M. explains that she has to do the inspection in front of the producers. At least one person from each work group has to be there: "I come and review the conditions, and then I give the report to the Council so that they speak to the person. And if the person accompanies my inspection, I also tell them my conclusions" (interview, January 2015).

M. explains that you can tell by looking if a grove has been fumigated: if the weeds have been cut with a machete they look "choppy", but if they have been fumigated, they look burnt. If she finds out someone has fumigated their cacao grove, they are sanctioned:

> I give the report to the Council and they define a sanction. The *cacaotera* goes into transition. It takes two years for it to be de-intoxicated, depending on the chemical that was used. And that the person is sanctioned for a year, without buying from them at all, because they made that mistake. (Interview, January 2015)

C.'s organic cacao grove borders with his brother's grove, who does fumigate. The border between the two farms is a ditch. On the fumigated side there are lots of dead, brown ferns. He has left a one-metre wide strip on his side of the ditch un-fumigated, so as not to endanger his brother's cacao grove, which is green, full of short grass and leaves decomposing on the dark earth. But not all neighbours are so understanding. E.'s cacao grove is 'conventional'; it used to be organic but his neighbours fumigated and contaminated his grove to the point that he lost his organic status, and they will not stop, so he now fumigates himself. But the price of conventional cacao bought by the Community is still better than the price offered by the intermediaries (field diary, July 2014).

After four hours M. has met several producers, though not all of them were in the groves as had been agreed, partly due to the rain in the morning. I enjoy the walk. The slopes are just as steep and difficult to go up and down as all the others, but I am getting more used to the technique of putting my feet at sharp angles to facilitate my steps. It is still a challenging activity, but only physically now, no longer mentally.

J.E. said that the only difficult thing in getting the organic certification was the paperwork, because their production practices were already in large part organic:

> Almost always the *campesino* production practice is a clean production, just not with certifications […] it wasn't interesting for people until now. Now we're starting to see an interest in clean products. There are many people in the country who still produce cleanly.[3]

He explained that the Community already had "good practices of land usage", such as "sowing plants that protect the soil, that don't cause erosion, that look after nature, that look after the water sources"; those were "some very concrete principles for the Community".[4] This dates back to the mountain subsistence agricultural practices used by the settlers who founded San José de Apartadó (Chap. 2).

In the maintenance of the organic certification, the Community's organic narrative, forged in the daily practices of cacao production, connects with global logics about ethical trade. M.'s inspection and forms alter the historically-established practices, emphasising the organic production and the discursive emphasis on the value of the organic. These global logics resonate with pre-existing narratives and practices, like the importance of self-sustainability, the association of the non-organic with

violence, and the perceptions the Community have about 'normal' capitalist development and multinational companies (Chap. 8). The relationship with Lush, undoubtedly, has contributed to the crystallisation of the organic narrative.

The Commercial Relationship with Lush Cosmetics

In 2009, Community delegates on a European political speaking tour went to an eco-village event organised by Tamera, an alternative community organisation in Portugal.[5] Tamera introduced them to another participant in the event, one of the managers of Lush Cosmetics. Following this encounter, a process of getting to know each other began, and they eventually reached an agreement to buy the Community's cacao beans—50 tonnes per year. Today, Lush is their biggest buyer. Lush markets itself as an alternative trade company, and as well as economically supporting small farmers like the Community to get a better profit for their work, does awareness-raising campaigns about the Community's human rights situation.

This is a multinational company with commercial objectives, and its niche in the market is due to its image as an ethical company; therefore, their commercial relationship with the Community benefits this image. There would be plenty to analyse in this commercial relationship: the debates around how 'fair' Fair Trade really is; the commercialisation of the label 'Organic'; the possible criticisms of the charity model in economic relationships between multinational companies and 'third world' producers; possible dependencies; the fetishised idea of the 'glocal'; and so on. However, my focus is not to analyse Lush's work, but rather the value the Community members ascribe to this commercial relationship, the perception they have of it, and the way this relationship has contributed to strengthening pre-existing narratives about autonomy, 'alternative-ness' and protecting the environment, and how this perception helps to crystallise the 'organic narrative', as local narratives cross with global ones.

Lush is not the first Fair Trade company the Community has worked with. There was a previous failed experience with the baby banana. According to Pardo (2007: 179–181), a group of women from the Community began to grow the 'baby' in 1998, seeking better economic income. They sold at first to the Colombian export company UNIBAN,[6] and then the Community decided to increase this crop. With resources garnered from international NGOs, the Internal Council coordinated a

series of loans to the members, bought mules to transport the fruit, and trained families in the quality standards demanded by the international market. At the time of Pardo's research, the members told him that they wanted to switch to organic production in order to access better prices, and also because they felt that "conserving the environment is another way of defending our territory" (2007: 181), but they had been unable to obtain the certification as yet.

G.T. told me that during the agreement with UNIBAN, they produced seven or eight tonnes per week, but the company began to renege on their agreements and buy increasingly less, making the Community lose money and harvests. G.T. and other Community members believe that there was a "blockade policy" and that external actors "put pressure on the company to gradually decrease their purchases to the point at which we said this isn't any good for us" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014). This interpretation of events shows the conflation of the state, the para-militaries and economic actors such the banana businesses, which recalls the economic dimension of the conflict in Urabá (Chap. 2) and the radical narrative's perception of a systematic extermination campaign against the Community by these perverse alliances.

G.T. said that they began "to knock on doors outside, in Europe and the United States", drawing on their international support network, and managed to establish a contract with a German company, Banafer, and obtained organic certification. Banafer bought their baby banana for two years, but they had problems due to the distance: "it takes one and a half or two months for the fruit to get there, we could not get to the point in which the fruit arrived in good conditions. We failed in the baby banana market", said G.T. (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014).

A friend who in 2010 was working in FOR told me that at that time, some Community members said it was important to maintain the cacao alongside the baby banana, because they are crops that respond to different weather conditions, so if one year resulted in a bad harvest of one, the other was likely to give a good crop. But other members had decided only to grow bananas and had left off growing cacao. When the exportation of the baby banana failed, the discourse of the importance of crop diversification began to increase among members. The cacao had remained, even in the cacao groves that had been abandoned by those who preferred the quick-growing banana crop. They only had to reactivate them again (personal communication, July 2014). So the Community

started to seek other options via their international support networks, and the first international company that began to buy their cacao was GEPA. Then, in 2009, they met Lush.

Since the era of Balsamar and the UP, there had been an interest in 'finding a better price', regulating it, and cutting out the intermediaries in Apartadó, to create greater economic autonomy. G.T. said, "one of the struggles of the Community has always been for people to have a fair trade with a good price. The intermediaries always take advantage of the prices, and are the greatest beneficiaries" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). The Community members believe that the agreement with Lush in some way subverts the traditional capitalist model, though they also perceive contradictions, because it is 'still a multinational'.

This perception about the agreement with Lush being positive and "different" from other capitalist enterprises is formed from several elements:

1. The direct relationship cuts out the series of intermediaries, making a better price possible. This on its own, for small-scale producers like the Peace Community, is quite unusual in the Colombian context. J.E. said, "I think that being able to obtain a market over there has been very novel, because it is *campesinos* commercialising with companies" (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014).
2. They collect directly from the storage facility. Normally the producer contracts the transport, but there were interceptions of trucks by paramilitaries and money from the cacao was robbed, reaching 150 million pesos. The Community discussed this with Lush, who agreed to contract one transport company directly to collect the cacao in trucks, and another company for the transport by sea to Europe. According to J.E., the paramilitaries "are not going to mess with an international company; they would have problems. On the other hand if they mess with us, nothing happens".
3. Lush supports the Community in the process and the payments for the Organic and Fair Trade certifications; procedures that for many *campesino* groups are difficult, technical and expensive.
4. Lush has invested in improving production processes, financing, for example, the construction of drying platforms and the humidity-testing machine.

5. They have also invested in the Community's human rights project. J.E. said that Lush had financed the food and transport for a humanitarian 'pilgrimage' which the Community organised in October 2013 with visitors from NGOs and other communities to verify the human rights situation in a hamlet with paramilitary presence.

6. The Community buys cacao not only from its members but also from other *campesinos* in the region whose cacao groves are not certified as organic. J.E. says that the Community wants to "benefit various *campesinos* from the region, and Lush was very understanding about that", because those other *campesinos* "have to live in the same circumstances", though the aim was to get all production to be organic eventually.[7]

But perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the relationship with Lush is the awareness-raising element. On Lush's webpage they inform clients about the cacao's origin,[8] and in the shops, staff tell customers about the Peace Community's project. In March 2014, a joint campaign was run between Lush and PBI UK Section, called 'Peace Pioneers'. The two-week campaign took place in Lush's shops all over the world, with events, window displays showcasing the Community's cause, and staff telling customers their story; and on social media, with a video about them.[9] Customers on- and offline were involved in advocacy efforts, as 24,000 signatures were collected on a petition asking the Colombian state to comply with Constitutional Court Order 164 (Chap. 6).

This petition connected with the multiple calls from NGOs for the government to fulfil the order. Similarly, Lush has written various letters to the Colombian government lobbying for the Community's rights, behaving almost like the human rights NGOs which accompany the Community, but with a different kind of weight because they are an international company (I do not pretend to evaluate the effectiveness of advocacy carried out by any of the parties towards the Colombian government; merely to emphasise the difference in profile of a company engaging in lobbying). The Community's crops have on various occasions been subject to aerial fumigations over the territory. Intensive aerial fumigations of coca crops in Colombia began in 2000 in the context of Plan Colombia, the US-sponsored war on drugs. Fumigations use glyphosate (classified by the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Research on Cancer as probably carcinogenic) and other chemicals, and the strategy

has been heavily criticised for affecting subsistence crops, forests, animals, water sources and human health.[10] However, as in many regions of the country, these aerial fumigations have affected the Community's crops, including cacao groves with organic certification, resulting in loss of the certification.

Lush has written to the government at least twice about this issue. This NGO-like behaviour, perhaps more than the other elements, contributes to the Community's perception that Lush is on their side, "accompanying" them, and that it is a relationship of solidarity. This relationship has more in common with the human rights NGO relationships than with any previous domestic commercial relationships. The Community has preferred to build strategic alliances with international actors due to their deep-rooted mistrust in the state.

However, this is not just a transplantation of the radical narrative onto their economic activity. They also feel that this relationship unites the economic with the political. G.G. said, "It is not only selling cacao at a high price. [Lush] is also focused on […] demanding that the government respect the Community, and [helping] us improve [the quality of] our product" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014). J.E. said:

> In the Peace Community's vision, the idea is to have food autonomy […]. Commercialisation is a strategy for having allies. […] It is not just about commercialising the product but also sending a message about what the Peace Community is. […] it has a political meaning. For us, those two things are united, but it has not always been seen that way. For us the economic and the political are the same. Many organisations have said we can either support the economic or the political, but we cannot join them together. For us they belong together. Therefore, we keep thinking about how to join them. For us, that's what exportation is about. Whoever buys our products is also making a political contribution. We would like to have a network of consumers with a political conscience. Who would say, let's consume those products because we're going to support the Peace Community. That's the dream. To have political consumers. (Interview, February 2013)

This statement was one of the things that first piqued my interest back in 2013, and I took it as a challenge. It became the foundation of this research project: there can be no clearer message than this, about why 'chocolate' and 'politics' belong together.

Notes

1. German fair-trade company, https://www.gepa.de/
2. http://www.ceres-cert.com/portal/index.php?id=67&L=2 [Accessed 30 August 2015].
3. Interview transcripts for 'Solidarity Economy' (2014 PBI UK non-public report, author's personal archive).
4. Ibid.
5. Tamera (http://tamera.org/), a 'School and Research Centre for Realistic Utopia', is a project founded in Germany which today is based in Portugal, which seeks to form a model of alternative coexistence, based on non-violence and self-sustainability. They have had a relationship with the Peace Community since 2005 and have financed projects, training and exchanges. They are the Community's largest international ally which does not belong strictly to the international human rights community, but to the international community of self-sustainability, autonomy and alternativity, for want of a better way of expressing it.
6. http://www.uniban.com/index.php?lang=es
7. Interview transcripts for 'Solidarity Economy' (2014 PBI UK non-public report, author's personal archive).
8. https://www.lush.co.uk/fair-trade-colombian-cocoa-butter [Accessed 28 August 2015].
9. 'Peace Pioneers' campaign video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Y5DZ1agL7E
10. See Asociación Inter-Americana para la Defensa del Ambiente (AIDA), 'Plan Colombia: Fumigación aérea de cultivos de coca y amapola'. http://www.aida-americas.org/es/%C3%A1reas-de-trabajo/agua-dulce/plan-colombia-los-impactos-nocivos-de-la-fumigaci%C3%B3n-a%C3%A9rea-de-cultivos-de [accessed 2 September 2016].

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The Elements of the Organic Narrative

The core elements that constitute the organic narrative are the importance of food sovereignty, the contrast with the inorganic, perceptions of development and capitalism, and the importance of being organised. All of these have genealogical roots which go back to pre-existing narratives from the days of the UP and Balsamar and the interpretation of the economic dimension of the violence in Urabá, but they develop and take on new dimensions in the context of the violence of the late-1990s and early-2000s, and while the Peace Community's conception of 'neutrality' is developing after the 1997 displacement (Part I). The more recent endeavours to construct Fair Trade and Organic commercial relationships, especially the relationship with Lush (Chap. 7), have contributed to the crystallisation of these elements and thus the strengthening of the organic narrative. This is not to say that the relationship with Lush has unilaterally 'imported' narrative elements into the Community's collective identity—on the contrary, the relationship with Lush in part began and was strengthened on the basis of the Community's perception of shared values. As with the influence of the NGOs in the early years (Chap. 3), the Peace Community appropriates elements selectively, according to what resonates with their existing identity narrative, and the influence is also mutual.

The evolution of the organic narrative is inextricable from the tandem evolution of the radical narrative, especially its them/us dichotomy. Recalling Ahmed (Chap. 1), the radical narrative elides discrete actors together discursively, creating a homogenised and dehumanised threat—in this case, the

state, paramilitarism and economic actors. The organic narrative focuses more on the latter, as the Community is as invested in the idea of economic actors as they are in the 'state-idea', and these conflated 'others' are needed for the continuation of their collective identity.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

The importance the Community ascribe to being self-sustainable or autonomous goes back to the *campesino* culture and the times of UP and Balsamar, but has developed in the context of the violence that they experienced in the late-1990s, especially because of food blockades, mentioned by Gildardo in the historical account of the rupture as a landmark event (Chap. 5). The reaction to these blockades was initially to find strategies of survival, but soon became a core element of their identity, just as the short-term logic of protection, or negative peace, embedded in the earliest conceptions of 'neutrality', grew into a permanent world-view with the longer-term logic of positive peace.

The Community emphasises the importance of having a mixture of crops with the cacao. This idea has three elements: (1) their interest in conserving the soil and the environment; (2) the complementarity of certain crops that are "friends" of cacao and which create a symbiotic relationship; (3) the transcendence of food sovereignty and self-sustainability. The practice of mixing crops is common in Colombian *campesino* culture, but its importance is magnified in the Community's organic narrative due to its historical development in relation to the radical narrative.

Military food blockades on the road between Apartadó and San José began as early as the beginning of 1999.[1] The objective of these blockades was ostensibly to prevent food supplies from getting through to the guerrilla, but as happened elsewhere in the country, civilian farmers who lived in areas with FARC presence ended up being affected.

The most difficult period of blockades was in 2002. G.T. explained:

> They didn't let us bring food in. With everything that happened, we learned. In that blockade, for example, we learned that we could not be dedicated to only one thing, to cattle-farming, to cacao alone, or only coffee. Because if we dedicated ourselves only to that, under a blockade we couldn't eat only coffee, we couldn't eat only cacao, we could not live only from cattle-farming. We learned that we had to hurry up and sow everything that our land could produce. […] A plot where rice wasn't grown, for example, or

one without sugar cane, that had to be increased, had to be planted. […] in that way we began to organise ourselves. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014)

Here we can see the link between 'organising ourselves' and diversifying food crops, and thereby protection.

2002 began with a paramilitary interception and robbery of the Community's cacao. According to CIJP, on 10 January a truck contracted by the Community carrying 10,300 kg of cacao and 40 kg of '*pasilla*' was detained by a group of armed men in civilian dress. The truck turned up later, but minus the cacao.[2] Then, on 10 April, the blockade began. According to a Community communiqué, that day, armed men in civilian dress detained a public transport car on the road and told the driver, "if you carry on transporting food up here […] we'll kill you all". Two days later, a public service vehicle driver was murdered in Tierra Amarilla, on the road between Apartadó and San José.

That month, three public service drivers were killed. Threats circulated in Apartadó from paramilitary groups saying that any vehicle going up to San José would be burnt, and the driver assassinated. The Community had a harvest of baby banana ready to ship, and it started to go bad, but no transport company in Apartadó would accept their requests to collect it. There was an emergency meeting in Bogotá with Community members, the Ombudsman's Office, the Ministry of the Interior, CIJP and the Vice-Presidency, and the institutions agreed to send a commission to guarantee the transport, but it never appeared.[3] Sick Community members had to be taken down to Apartadó on mules, and even on bulls, to receive medical attention. Not even the Colombian Red Cross or the ICRC could get food up to the Community.[4]

On 23 April 2002, the Ministry of the Interior informed the Community that they would send a truck that same afternoon up to San José. But in the afternoon, a Ministry of the Interior delegate informed CIJP that the truck had suffered "mechanical problems which prevent it from moving today"; it would leave the next day. On 24 April, a truck arrived, accompanied by government delegates, but only contained half the food that had been requested *and paid for* by the Community. According to CIJP, rumours were circulating in Apartadó that the paramilitaries were going to punish the Community for sending food up.[5]

On 30 April, without previous notice, an army truck arrived with the other half of the Community's food, but rumours were heard in Apartadó

that the quantity of supplies "was excessive" and there were suspicions that it was destined for FARC.[6] A public jeep driver interviewed by a journalist said, "No one will take you up. You can pay me triple but I won't do it. They have already killed three drivers and no one wants to be the fourth".[7]

According to Pardo Santamaría (2007: 212), there was another paramilitary blockade in 2004, and the Community organised a group of 200 *campesinos* who marched down all together on foot to Apartadó, where they bought products to cover their basic needs and walked back again—protection in numbers, just like in their earliest work groups (Chap. 4). According to Luis Eduardo Guerra's last interview before his murder, this practice continued also in 2005, which he described as "a new strategy to continue attacking us".[8]

The blockades, and the state's inadequate response to the situation (whether unintentional or otherwise), not only contributed to the crystallisation of the Community's perception of the state, but also magnified their feeling about the importance of self-sustainability. The need for survival in the case of blockades was the first bloc in the narrative about food sovereignty. As it evolved, it became mixed with a growing desire to be autonomous as part of an 'alternative' life philosophy.

A. and M. administer a small cacao grove above San Josecito, which A. jokingly calls 'The Supermarket', due to the quantity of crops mixed with the cacao: avocado, baby banana, banana, plantain, *ñampín*, *ñame*, *mafafa*, cassava, mandarin limes, star fruit, a mango tree, ginger, sugar cane, and a variety of different trees to maintain the soil on the slope and create a bit of shade. A. says this place is part of his desire to be totally self-sustainable, and to stop buying from "the multinationals". Not all the Community members have the same idea, he says, complaining, but he is trying to convince them. A community is a multiplicity of people, and the successful establishment of hegemonic or semi-hegemonic narratives depends on their trans-subjective transmission, via repetition and the power of persuasion of different members, especially those with leadership roles.

Similarly, J.S. said:

> We have been thinking about that other economy, an alternative economy, clean, solidary, sovereign, autonomous, so that we can be autonomous in our food. That is our dream. Maybe we aren't a hundred percent there yet, maybe we're at about 20 or 50 percent. But at least we are working on it.

[…] Not having to depend on the outside. Because the food from outside is very complicated, increasingly full of venom. (Focus group, La Unión, April 2014)

The idea of food autonomy rests on a perception about the 'food from outside' as 'complicated' and contaminated by chemicals, and the related idea to forge an 'alternative economy' which is 'clean'. They see this as a goal, "we're at about 20 or 50 percent there" and they want to become more autonomous, and more alternative, but they do not pretend to be 'a hundred percent there yet'. This echoes the them/us dichotomy of the radical narrative and the idea of 'rupture', of not wanting to participate in a political system and also an economic model which they perceive as corrupt and contaminated, but knowing that living outside the system completely is perhaps impossible. This contrast with the inorganic and the economic system is the next constitutive element of the organic narrative.

The Contrast with the Inorganic: "The Agriculture of Death"

The idea that their production that is "clean" and "without chemicals" is common in the discourse of all Community members. J.E. emphasised the importance that his cacao "is a clean product, it doesn't have chemicals, and that makes people think", because human beings "are increasingly used to the fact that production means great quantities of chemicals", and we are "intoxicating ourselves daily". The 'making people think' recalls J.E.'s assertion that the exportation with Lush is about creating 'political consumers' and joining the economic with the political.

The value of the organic is perceived in contrast with inorganic products, their circulation and impact in the whole world, and the effect of the fumigations and inorganic fertilisers on the environment. Often, in order to explain the importance of organic farming, the Community members contrast their practices with inorganic practices: the them/us logic. J.E. contrasted the organic cacao with the Urabá banana:

It's produced purely by chemicals, every day they apply venom and venom, chemicals and chemicals, to be able to get a banana with an opulent appearance, but in the end people don't realise how much venom is there […] that is what we consume today, the majority of humanity. […] I think that many

people today are starting to realise that clean products, without chemicals, are much healthier. (Interview, February 2013)

He said, "In a banana plantation nothing grows, that's why they have to put more chemical fertilisers down because there's no fertiliser in the land" (interview, January 2015). That is the chemical process: fumigate to kill the weeds, and having killed all the plant-life that grows in the cacao grove, you have to put chemical fertiliser down to help the cacao grow; a vicious cycle, evocative of the capitalist extraction model and its environmental damage.

B.A. explained that the cacao husks which they discard in the cacao groves produce a fungus that helps the leaves decompose, and these are converted into nutrients, in a natural fertiliser: "They become food for the soil". Therefore, he said, it was bad to fumigate the weeds that grow among the trees. Some *campesinos*, he said, "think they aren't any good, that they are rubbish; but they are food". "They aren't bad weeds (*maleza*) but good weeds (*bueneza*), because that's where the nutrients are […] the soil takes care of itself, it produces its own food". If you fumigate, those 'good weeds' die (interview, January 2015). This anthropomorphises the cacao trees and the soil, in casting the soil as 'self-sufficient', like the Community itself. B.A. said:

> With the chemicals, we are poisoning the natural resources. […] When we use venom to kill weeds, we are killing the microorganisms which produce the fertiliser for the land, we aren't letting things decompose, but killing them. It is the agriculture of death. We kill everything […] the organic process is a way of changing all that. (Focus group, San Josecito, April 2014)

In contrast to 'the agriculture of death', then, the 'organic process' evokes an 'agriculture of life'. Similarly, O. contrasted the Community's cacao with the chocolate sold by the Medellín chocolate companies:

> The chocolate from the *Nacional* or the *Luker* is bad chocolate, processed and everything. […] It's probably mixed with cow liver and I don't know what else, other things they throw in there. And chemicals. Here everything is natural, natural. Our cacao is clean, healthy, pure, a hundred percent natural, there's a great difference. (Focus group, San Josecito, April 2014)

The organic is seen as 'natural' and 'healthy', and the inorganic as artificial, sick, contaminating.

G.T. said that chemical-aided production might yield more, but "we are damaging the earth and our health". In other words, the natural and the human go together. This is the heart of the organic narrative: the symbiosis between the social and natural environments. He said "we seek organic production" in order to get "international exportation with a fair price and contribute to our good health". He also underlined the need to think about the future generations, for them to have "the opportunity to find healthy and fertile lands. If we use chemicals […] they are going to find lands that are depleted" (interview, January 2015). Different elements are articulated: the 'fair price', the care of the land, and the care of ourselves, as human beings, and of future generations.

J.S. described his experience working organically:

> You discover bit by bit the difference between working with chemicals and with organic fertilisers. I've done some experiments. If you fertilise a plant, maybe it grows in two weeks. With organic compost, it takes a month or maybe more. But the production from the plant with organic compost is much better. The difference is in not rushing because you want it quickly. Grains of corn that have been grown with organic compost are heavier; whereas those that have had chemical fertiliser, if you put them in water, they float. […] All countries are speeding up, wanting to have everything quickly. Factory chickens for example; they give them injections, they give them transgenic food, everything. [And] we eat it. And for me, that isn't beneficial. (Focus group, La Unión, April 2014)

A convergence is drawn here between the logics of capitalism, which the Community values negatively, and which they suggest has to do with 'countries speeding up, wanting to have things quickly', and the practices of putting 'chemicals' in food. This in turn is contrasted with their own 'clean' practices with organic compost.

This is a growing narrative, as several of my interlocutors have affirmed. G.T. said "we are increasingly conscious" and "people in other countries are also putting more effort into the organic, the clean, they are conscious about chemicals, maybe they are dying due to diseases caused by those chemicals" (focus group, Mulatos, July 2014). The growing connection between the Community and international discourses on human rights and solidarity is a key element in the Community's realisation that the 'organic' has value internationally. The idea of the 'organic' in ethical trade, such as in the commercial relationship with Lush, is a market fetish and a useful advocacy tool, as well as a powerful influence on the Community.

The inorganic for the Community is also associated with violence. This interpretation is construed when soldiers contaminate the cacao groves with organic certification. G.T. said:

> We are fighting against a big monster. The soldiers sometimes get in the cacao groves and scatter tins, plastic, and contaminate our cacao. Often we have to go and talk to them and tell them to leave. Because they're in an organic crop, and they are dirtying it with those things. Also they sometimes eat the ripe cacao […]. We explain to them, 'You can't be here because it's an organic crop, it sustains us. If you eat it or affect [our organic certification], our economic situation […] will be affected'. So they see our point and they leave. (January 2015)

Every action by the army is interpreted through (and reinforces) the framework of the radical narrative (Part II); the perpetrator state is the 'big monster'. The Community have got used to 'asking soldiers to leave' because of their neutrality; frequently, they have to go and talk to soldiers who are camped too near their living areas and explain their principle of not living alongside armed actors in order not to be at risk of crossfire. Asking soldiers to leave because they are contaminating their organic certification is a continuation of this logic, strengthening both the idea that the violence of the military is analogous to the 'inorganic' and the 'agriculture of death', and also the conclusion that their organic-ness is related to life, in terms of staying alive, and in terms of protecting ecological multiplicity against the threats of the conflated 'others'. The 'agriculture of life' is not just a way of farming: it is about being an 'alternative community' (Chap. 9).

The interpretation of the inorganic as associated with violence also takes place in the Community's experience with illicit coca crops and fumigations in the region. One of the Community's recently-added principles is "no to coca", though there are *campesinos* in the area, non-members, who grow illicit crops. They added this principle because they analysed the connection between growing coca and the cycles of the conflict, because the coca industry in Urabá is managed by the illegal armed actors and is one of the mainsprings of the violence. Saying 'no' to coca was a logical continuation of 'saying no to the armed actors' in their declaration of neutrality.

J.S. said that "those who are involved in coca also want money very fast", emphasising again the money-making logic he perceives in capitalism

(focus group, La Unión, April 2014). G.T. also said, "it's a very fertile soil, it produces everything" so "we don't need to get involved with other things", but many people want "to get rich quickly and easily and they have got involved with all the armed actors and with drug-trafficking".

The Community's rejection of coca as a crop is to do with its link to the armed conflict, but also to do with soil damage. G.T. said:

> To grow the crop, you need a load of chemicals. And then the processing of coca [into cocaine] requires a load of chemicals that then go into the water sources, so it contaminates the water; the animals and the little fish are going to die. We have given talks about it in the other hamlets. Before sowing one coca seed, [people] need to be conscious of who is behind that crop. (Interview, January 2015)

Again, we see the importance the Community gives to 'being conscious' and 'reflecting', and the role they play as an articulation organisation in the region in trying to raise awareness on such issues.

The violence associated with coca is also due to aerial fumigations, which frequently affect the crops of *campesinos* across the country. G.T. showed me a rice crop in Mulatos which had been completely destroyed in a fumigation, also affecting a young cacao plantation. The whole crop was dead, dry, burnt. "It's a shame, because the cacao was only just beginning to grow", he said. "Supposedly they were going to fumigate the coca. The coca is over a kilometre away, and it was left untouched". Many Community members believe that the anti-narcotics police fumigate the *campesinos*' subsistence crops on purpose, as another strategy to exterminate the Community (the radical narrative), and because they themselves are complicit in drug-trafficking. "I say yes, it was done on purpose, because the coca is very far from here", said G.T.:

> I say it was done to bother the *campesinos*. Always the government's strategy has been that in this territory there shouldn't be *campesinos*, to displace us. They have killed people, they have displaced people, they have chopped up children, now the fumigations […]. It's yet another strategy. (Interview, January 2015)

If a member of the Community grows coca, their membership is up. However, a coca farmer can, if he abandons his illicit crop-growing, become a member of the Community. G.T. said that several people have "managed to get clean", again reinforcing the association of the coca with

the unclean. "And they are happy", because some of them say that "when they were involved in that […] they couldn't sleep well because they were constantly worried […]. A very nice testimony" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2015).

The cultivation of illicit crops is especially predominant on the Córdoba side of the area inhabited by the Peace Community. There have even been strikes by coca farmers who are organised into unions around the Urrá Dam, something which has occurred in many parts of Colombia, especially to make demands about fumigation and substitution programmes which are not agreed with farmers, and sometimes even complaining about the instability of prices (Tate 2015). C. lives in one of the Community settlements on the banks of Urrá. He moved to Córdoba from Southern Antioquia in 2000, when coca was booming, and began to grow it. But the armed conflict escalated. "In this reservoir there are a lot of bodies", he said. He said that if you sold coca to FARC you would have problems with the paramilitaries and vice versa, so he decided to switch: from coca to cacao. His family joined the Community in 2010 and the Internal Council helped them with the cacao seeds.

He shows me his cacao grove, which is now three years old and producing. His cacao is mixed with plantain. The soil is different from the Community's hamlets on the Antioquia side: it's dryer, sandier, and drains faster. But the cacao looks good, and does not seem to suffer from *monilla* or *escobabruja*. The production is 'organic', he tells me, but not certified, meaning he does not use fertiliser but his grove does not have certification. He does not currently sell his cacao to the Community because of the distance; two days walk with cacao loaded on mules, stopping overnight in Mulatos. He sells in Tierralta or Frasquillo, but is seeking support from the Internal Council so that he can add his production to the Lush shipments (field diary, March 2015).

Both coca and cacao are simply crops for commercialisation, within the *campesino* economic model, following logics of capital, investment and work—the *campesino* development model that was damaged in the violence in Urabá. Like Gudeman and Rivera's (1990) interlocutors, the Community members highlight cash crops as the means by which they can guarantee their sustenance. As B.A. said, "What we cannot produce, we buy with the cacao", highlighting the role of cash crops versus food crops. The coca only acquired its negative moral dimensions to the extent that it was increasingly associated with violence.

Instead of this 'agriculture of death', then, the Community seeks "a clean economy for the environment" (G.T., event in Restaurante Lapingachos, March 2014). B. said, "We think about the organic because we think about life" (interview, January 2015). This recalls the original etymological meaning of 'organic' (Chap. 1): as something with life, something with the characteristics of a living organism. It evokes something that is 'natural', 'clean', and also 'self-producing', perhaps even 'symbiotic'.

Perceptions of Development and Capitalism

In days of the UP and Balsamar, as J.E. said, "it was us, the *campesinos*, planning the development that we wanted", but the development of today was "completely the opposite"; "Today we see a development to displace the *campesinos*" (Chap. 2). The radical narrative intersects with the organic narrative in the conformation of perceptions of development, capitalism and multinationals, in the conflation of perpetrators: the state, the para-militaries and economic actors.

The Community's conception of development and capitalism has parallels with global narratives critiquing the liberal development model as an extension of the colonial project (e.g. Escobar 1995). However, rather than go down this path of analysis, the focus here as throughout the book is on understanding what the Community say and do in their own terms. This section, therefore, identifies the elements of this perception which illuminate the organic narrative.

J.E. said:

> Most Colombians think that Free Trade Agreements are very good. We have talked about it in the United States Congress and in the European Parliament [and] they think it's wonderful. But […] it's clear for whom it is good: for companies. (Event in The English School, March 2015)

The Community especially fears the possibility of mining companies entering the region. J.E. said that in the area, "there is great richness and many interests, both from the multinationals and from the state itself. What all they want is to take the land". He believed the economic interests in the region included oil, coal, minerals and water. There are rumours of plans for an Urrá II dam which might displace many *campesinos*.[9] Also, the land is "very fertile, suitable for anything you want to grow", such as mono-crops, and of course, coca (interview, February 2013).

B.A. thought that the multinationals "want to get us off the land" (interview, January 2015). R., like many Community members, said that despite the fact that it would be good to have a peace agreement between FARC and the state, because they would stop fighting, it could also facilitate the entry of multinationals to the region, supported by the paramilitaries, which would mean more violence and displacement (field diary, February 2014), indicating the influence of the organic narrative's interpretative framework on the radical narrative according to which they read the developments in the peace process (Chap. 6).

There are multiple mining titles that have been granted to various companies in the area; however, the existence of a mining title does not mean that a company is definitely going to initiate operations. This study does not pretend to evaluate the probability that extractive projects will take place, nor the collaboration or otherwise of the involved companies and the state with illegal groups for this purpose: just to flag up the Community's narratives. The Community is particularly worried about rumours that have circulated since long before I started working with them in 2011, about a coal resource in the hamlet of Miramar, near the Community settlement of La Cristalina. They have denounced rumours about alleged meetings between mining companies, paramilitary groups and local authorities, planning the forced displacement of the Community in order to exploit the mine.[10] More recently, they have denounced the allegedly illegal construction of a road, by paramilitaries, from the town of Nuevo Antioquia (which the Community says is a 'paramilitary nest') in the direction of Miramar, apparently as an antecedent to constructing the mine.[11] However, J.E. says that the Community will not talk to the state about this concern, because of the single agenda of the four conditions (Chap. 6) (field diary, December 2014).

According to several Community members, some *campesinos* in the region think a mine would be beneficial, because it would bring employment opportunities and 'development' to the area; but the Community is opposed to mining. Their narrative against 'the multinationals' is fed partly by their experiences in Urabá and their interpretation of the economic dimension of the conflict, and is augmented by what they have heard about the practices of companies in other parts of the country, which strengthens their perception about the multinationals as perpetrators. This contrasts with what they perceive as Lush's 'alternative' behaviour. J.E. said:

> I see that Lush, a multinational […] has some very different practices to what we know of other companies, that simply support weapons, pay paramilitaries, introduce munitions and lots of other things like what happened with Chiquita Bananas, like what happened with Coca-Cola who financed the death of trade unionists.[12]

Chiquita Brands and Coca-Cola are two examples of companies that have been charged with grave human rights violations in Colombia, the first for financing the spread of paramilitary groups involved in the assassinations of banana workers, and the second for hiring paramilitaries who tortured trade unionists.[13]

Lush, on the other hand, "ought to be an example for companies", said J.E., because "they contribute to raising awareness when they sell to the consumer, and they help in the struggle to defend human rights". We see again how the relationship with Lush contributes to the crystallisation of a narrative about 'alternativity'—the negative perceptions they have of multinationals are formed also in contrast to what they see as 'good' practice.

J.E. thought that in Colombia "the governments have never wanted a real, true agrarian reform for the *campesinos*", and many *campesinos* have been displaced to cities, where they end up "as disposable people". Also, "a *campesino* without land is like a child without its mother", and for that reason the Community's fight is "for the *campesino*'s right to land" (February 2013). The neocolonial development agenda is associated with what 'the governments want'. He said:

> [Land should be] a right and not a business, but that it not how it's stipulated in the global economic model. Land is part of the market. For us, it should not be part of the market, but rather a fundamental right. The state should guarantee citizens' right to free land, to having a house, accommodation, for free. For us, land is for a *campesino* who doesn't have anywhere to live, so he can have land to build his house. (Interview, January 2015)

The Community's organisational practice aims at a "redistributionist" economy, and so they assign lands that they have bought using the community fund to people who do not have their own land, for them to work. Again, the radical narrative enters here in the ideal of what the state 'should' be, and the perception that this ideal is unrealised. The organic narrative, however, is the propositional side of this perception: the

Community's practice is to try to realise this ideal, as much as possible, and in this way their actions take on the dimension of a non-state—but non-violent—administrative sovereignty. J.E. explained this practice:

> Whoever does not have the possibility of cultivating the land, well, we help them with seeds, with tools, and as well as that, as a Community we help them to get their crops going. All that is part of the sustainability of the families. That is, we have a real distribution of what we have as a Community. From land, to housing, to a glass of milk. It's the way we believe everything should be done. To avoid violence. Because if the state fulfilled these functions, if the economic model gave these possibilities to human beings, there would not be violence. (Interview, January 2015)

His analysis shows the connection the Community makes between the violence they have suffered over the years and the international economic model, conflated with the Colombian state. Of course, he is right—the state of inequality in the world is a disaster and a global injustice, and has not been alleviated with developmentalist discourse; it is what Galtung (1969) called structural violence. Gupta (2012) has argued for seeing poverty as structural violence, in his convincing argument that the Indian state's failure to alleviate poverty has led to preventable deaths not being prevented.

The Peace Community's striking articulacy on this matter stems from their experience of violence, and their development of 'neutrality' as a form of peaceful but insistent resistance and a search for alternatives. At the heart of this is the Peace Community's idea of 'peace'. J.E. said, "As we are opting for peace, we have to know what it is that generates violence, and how to act against it", he said. This idea of redistributionism is part of their 'acting against' the violence of the political and economic system. As I have suggested, this type of narrative and practice fits with Galtung's category of 'positive' peace-building.

The Community's perceptions of development vary, of course, between members. Generational differences shed particular light on the development and transmission of narratives. J.E. had lived through the UP's development project; his son A., however, is too young to have experienced that, but he has been very influenced by his father's anti-development discourse. After a focus group in which J.E. talked about the Balsamar Cooperative, I asked A. what he thought. He said that it all sounded "very developmentist. The products, the trade. All that about bringing electricity to the area. I don't want electricity. I want to live with nature" (field diary, April 2014).

J.E.'s past experience with the UP was of development "for the *campesinos*"; he had arrived at the conclusion that development and capitalism were "corrupting humanity" via his experiences of violence, and the production over time of these perceptions by interacting with other Community members. This narrative had been transmitted to his son, but A. did not have the same past experiences, and it has taken a different form.

The (re-)production of narratives in a community is part of an everyday practice of discursive interaction between members, responding to events and to their natural and social environment, and in mutual influence in the transmission of knowledge and of practical sense: R. working with his group of sons and teaching them about cacao; A. teaching his girlfriend the names of wild plants; A. selectively appropriating his father's ideas about development; the legacy of figures such as Eduar Lancheros in the Community's collective identity. Structure and agency; the cultural practice of cacao production, and the practice of (re-)production of narratives.

Strengthening the Organic Narrative

Not all the Community members perceive the political significance of the relationship with Lush in the same way. There is typically a difference between the leaders of a community and the rest of its members. In the case of the Peace Community, this difference is heightened by the fact that many of the leaders in the Internal Council, like J.E., have travelled extensively throughout the USA and Europe giving talks and meeting a variety of people from the Community's complex support network. Most of the rest of the Community, in contrast, have never left Urabá. The leaders of the Peace Community, who change in role and prominence over time, have followed on from those new leaderships that emerged after the destruction of the Balsamar and UP leaders in the late-1990s. Those who travel, and manage the relationship with Lush and with the international NGOs, play a crucial role in spreading these narratives within the rest of the Community, in general assemblies, meetings, and through interaction in everyday life and work.

The organic narrative specifically is spread between members when the assemblies discuss issues of exportation, when the Internal Council calls meetings with producers to remind them about the commitments with the organic certification, and in the informal exchanges which take place around the cacao in the storage facility (Chap. 7). Although this

narrative has elements which pre-date the commercial agreement with Lush, I believe this relationship is helping to crystallise the organic narrative, intersecting with the pre-existing elements, such as the idea of a 'fair price', autonomy, and the preference for building strategic alliances with international actors.

Throughout the research period, I observed an effort from the Internal Council to increase awareness among the rest of the Community members about the significance they ascribe to this commercial relationship. In one focus group, apart from J.E.'s comments, the rest of the group's main thought about the relationship with Lush was the fact that they received a better price for their product. J.E. said that selling to Lush "contributes to raising awareness when they sell to the consumer, and they help in the struggle to defend human rights". I asked, "Do all the Community members understand that?" and J.E. said, "We share everything in the assemblies, but sometimes people don't have memory […] sometimes the tape gets erased a bit and they forget things", with his ironic smile, knowing that the Internal Council was trying but not quite succeeding to teach all the *campesinos* to acquire the more political narrative about organic trade (focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014). The narratives about why they perceive the relationship with Lush as valuable are relatively recent, and therefore only beginning to get established in everyday discourse. This provides a window into the way that new narratives become established.

Given the focus of my research on cacao, there were several moments in which my research activities contributed to this process of internal awareness-raising, though it was not something I directly sought. In another focus group, after an hour of asking them about their work with cacao, I asked them if there was anything they wanted to add. A.A. asked me what I thought of the agreement with Lush, and I replied that when I spoke about it with people in Bogotá and in the UK, they were frequently impressed and surprised at this unusual commercial relationship. A.A. reflected on this for a moment, and then said, "what we have to do is to fall in love with what we've got […] because we have achievements that not even the state has" (the radical narrative splicing in). He continued:

> We've got to look after [our organic farming project], fall in love with it […] we have to raise even more awareness among ourselves […] these kinds of spaces help us to realise. If I hadn't come [to the focus group discussion], I wouldn't have thought about all this. […] Realising that it is important what we are doing. (Focus group, Mulatos, July 2014)

His idea that 'we have to raise more awareness among ourselves' recalls the frequent emphasis that Community members put on being 'conscious' and 'reflecting'; and the acknowledgement that the direct commercial relationship with a major buyer who also contributed to the 'consciousness' of customers was an 'achievement' that they were beginning to appreciate more; in other words, it was a growing narrative.

I liked his phrase, 'we've got to fall in love with what we've got'. Some days later, I was walking to La Unión with G.G. and M. who were calling a meeting with the cacao producers there. I told them about A.A.'s phrase. When we arrived, I sat in on the meeting. G.G. arrived and announced that the Community had just shipped 25 tonnes of cacao to England, and they were preparing the next shipment. He said it was a great achievement, not only because of the economic income but because they were also keeping up their side of the agreements with Lush, which was important because "there are lots of people over there supporting us". He reminded the producers that there had been problems with shipments in the past (when some cacao had arrived rotten due to humidity), but that because of Lush's "commitment" the relationship had continued. Therefore, he said, that "we have to keep our promises, because we have managed to create something very special". Then, to my surprise, he said, "We have to fall in love more with this organic process". He glanced at me with an almost imperceptible smile, and continued talking.

He explained that the meeting was to "follow up on the organic process" and to programme the next internal inspection, because they wanted to start being more rigorous in the "organic monitoring" (Chap. 7). The organic certification is important, he said, because it means "producing without chemicals and not consuming chemicals", and "we have talked about it in England and it is very significant for them because the bananas from Apartadó arrive in Europe and they are full of chemicals". He emphasised the impact of the agreement on the better price in the region, the fact that the Community was buying organic cacao from its members, but also 'conventional' cacao from other *campesinos* in the region at a better price than the intermediaries in Apartadó, who had had to increase their prices to be able to compete with the Community. He said, "all this is a dream we had, and now we have achieved it thanks to [Lush] […] we've got to value all this" (field diary, July 2014).

Visible here is G.G.'s attempt as a leader to 'raise awareness' among the producers with various elements of the organic narrative. We have already

seen the role of leaders in narrative production, but here we also see the impact of the researcher's line of questioning, in the embedding of the phrase I had inadvertently passed from A.A. to G.G. Though my research never had the objective of contributing to the organic narrative, my presence and my thoughts undoubtedly have a certain impact on the Community; it is naïve to believe that a researcher can ever 'leave things untouched'. The above example of A.A. saying 'if I had never come to this space I wouldn't have thought about all this' is similar proof that a researcher's questioning can influence the strengthening of particular narratives. On the other hand, as with all external influences, the Community appropriates narrative elements selectively, depending on what resonates with their existing narratives. I also know that within their world, I am not that important. My minor influence over a few recent years does not compare to the deeply woven inter-subjectivity of their relationship with Father Giraldo, for example. But the unfolding of such processes is unpredictable, and I believe it is important to notice the tiny repercussions of the ethnographic relationship.

The recent flourishing of the organic narrative, rooted in pre-existing narratives from the days of Balsamar and the UP, with more recent historical roots such as the food blockades and the exportation of the baby banana, strengthened by the commercial relationship with Lush and by the insistence of the Community's leaders, potentially assisted by the ethnographer's questioning, all in conjuncture with the inextricable radical narrative, may continue to grow. This will depend on external factors such as the continuity of the relationship with Lush, and the success of the narrative in its everyday (re-)production among members.

"The People's Happiness at Being Organised"

The importance ascribed to 'being organised' and having an 'organisational process' goes back to the *campesino* culture of the settlers who founded San José de Apartadó and worked together to clear mountain paths, and to the days of the UP's *campesino* development project (Chap. 2). With the displacement of 1997, 'organisation' became necessary for survival; but the idea of 'organisation' developed into a core part of the Community's philosophy, as they drafted regulations, statutes, principles and 'organs' (Chap. 4). This is not unique in Colombia; and doubtless the ideals of the left-wing grassroots CIJP, influenced by Liberation Theology and Marxism (Chap. 3), contributed to this narrative. Today, the word 'organisation'

plays a central role in the Community's organic narrative. This section does not pretend to describe exhaustively the complex organisational structure of the Community; especially because this is in constant flux, as roles switch, leaders develop more or less influence, or specific work groups become more or less important. It gives a rough sketch of some organisational features, and focuses on the way the Community members perceive their 'organisation', and how this connects with the organic narrative.

Structure

The Community's highest decision-making authority is the general assembly, which meets periodically throughout the year. Then follows the Internal Council, elected every three years, made up of eight people, each with different roles and responsibilities, including the legal representative, the treasurer, the person in charge of the cacao storage facility and the buying and selling of cacao, the people who coordinate the community work days and the agendas for general assemblies, the person in charge of email, the one who writes the communiqués, and the one in charge of community mules. Some members might have more than one internal role, but the Internal Council in general is the point of contact with the outside world (with NGOs, with the state, with Lush), and usually only members of the Internal Council go on international speaking tours. Various committees fluctuate in how active they are at any one time, in charge of education, carpentry, health and sports, in particular the programming of inter-hamlet football tournaments which are an essential scenario of integration between member and non-member hamlets in San José.

Membership and Regulations

G.T. said:

> If someone wants to be part of the Community, once they know the Community's principles and the regulations, they decide freely if they want to be part of the Community or not […]. If they want to, they are at liberty, no one is forcing them. To struggle, being conscious that being part of the Community means they are a military target for the paramilitaries or any armed actor. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014).

As we have seen, there are non-members in the area of San José who contribute to some of the social processes of the Peace Community, such as denouncing human rights violations, but do not want to commit to all the principles, or to expose themselves to the risk the Community members run by making themselves so visible.

The principles that the Community agreed towards the end of 1997 (Chap. 4) are still in force but new ones have been added, such as "no to reparations" (Chap. 6), no to coca (this chapter), and no consumption of alcohol. The incorporation of new rules is part of the dynamic of change over time, in which the Community reads external events according to the interpretative frameworks of the radical and organic narratives, and reacts accordingly by creating new internal legislation.

The principle banning the consumption of alcohol was added in 1998, for several reasons. G.T. said that in a population with low income, many of their fundamental needs remain unsatisfied, such as access to healthcare, it was better that people did not spend the little money they had on alcohol. Also, being drunk in a conflict zone is asking for trouble, and it often led to problems and internal disputes (in the *campesino* culture in Urabá, heavy drinking is common). But breaking point was a fight at a party they organised to raise funds for their nascent organisation, and a man got killed. "That made us reflect about alcohol, and we said 'no'" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014).

If someone goes to the town of San José and gets drunk, they are sanctioned by the Internal Council with extra community work, but are not thrown out of the Community unless it continues to happen. But if someone breaks some of the other principles, such as growing coca or accepting reparations money (Chap. 6), the Assembly may take the decision that the person has to leave. G.T. said, "There are some [principles] that are very rigid, they have to be fulfilled. Not collaborating with any armed actor, that has no remedy, [they're] out" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). Leaving the Community means leaving the settlements and going to live elsewhere, because the Community's legitimacy depends on any settlement with their signs and logos being places where only their members live.

There is a training committee which gives workshops periodically to all members, old and new, about the regulations and the principles, which is part of the constant process of collectively reaffirming the Community's identity. M. said that the workshops are meant to generate debates, and ensure that people understand and internalise the

regulations, and see if it is necessary to update or change anything (field diary, July 2014).

Community Work and Work Groups

The principle of community work is one of the most important to the Community's collective identity. In the displacement in San José, they formed large groups of 50 or 100 people in order to seek protection in numbers. Today, two different figures exist. Firstly, the community work, a weekly exercise similar to what in other parts of Colombia are called *mingas* or *convites*, in which all the Community members work for one day on something communal—repairing the school's roof, clearing the mountain paths, or working in a 'community' cacao crop. G.T. said that community work was important for "integration":

> It's a good experience. All of us chatting, shouting, we take the piss out of our friends, our friends take the piss out of us, the day goes by quickly, you hardly feel it. We work deliciously. And you can see the work. Because together, in two or three days, you get a whole lot done. Alone, you get nothing done. Also, if you go to work alone and something happens to you, a snake bites you, your friends don't know. Alone, you can die. But in a group, your friends can take you down to Apartadó. Because we're organised. […] It's a way of being in solidarity with our neighbour. If he doesn't have and I have, well, we'll both have. And vice versa. That's our vision. (Interview, January 2015)

Protection—from snakes or from paramilitaries—combines with 'solidarity' and 'working deliciously', 'getting a lot done', and the 'vision' of a redistributionist economy; and this is all 'because we're organised'. The idea of 'organisation' is therefore a connecting narrative, bringing together diverse elements that are important to the Community.

Secondly, the work groups emerged from the initial experience of safety in numbers. They started off as big groups, but "as the organisation got stronger, smaller groups were organised, from two, three, four, five people", said G.T. (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). They are teams, each with a coordinator, which can be specialised, for example the health group; they can also be groups designated to cultivate specific cacao groves where they share the work and divide the profits in equal parts. At the time of research, there were 67 cacao producers across the Community settlements, and most, though not all, were part of 22 work

groups (M., focus group, San Josecito, April 2014). The groups mostly work cash crops, but might plant subsistence crops in among the cacao, which they divide equally, or, if they have too much for their own consumption, they might sell it and divide the money.

Solidarity Economics

The concept of 'solidarity' is "the foundation for a community", said B.G.:

> That's why community work is in the regulations. Because in that unity we have, we talk, we laugh, we tell each other what happened before, about the displacement, the youngsters who were little when that happened, they are going to start to ask, they will begin to realise, that my mum and my dad are here because they were forcibly displaced. (Interview, January 2015)

Working together is a moment of human interaction and contact, of sharing stories and reinforcing the Community's historical memory, joking, and at the same time, achieving something together. Through their community work, they create and believe themselves to be a 'community'. For J.E., community work is an "exercise" which "proves" that human beings can live without money. "The interests of capital", he said, cause "a degradation in humanity, because they produce a society with a concept of money and not of life". Community work "is a reality" which shows that "another way is possible" (interview, February 2013). This philosophy about 'another' (or an 'alternative') way of doing things, by living and working together communally, and redistributing resources equally and fairly, in a them/us contrast with 'capitalism' and its connotations of 'fast money', promotes a society with 'a concept of life': a concept of *the organic*.

Unlike the more recent narrative about Lush and the political significance of organic farming, almost all Community members share this philosophy about the importance of community work and work groups. R. said, "We are tired of the model in the country in which everyone works for me or for you, the idea is to seek a more alternative economy, more you and me together, more towards unity" (focus group, San Josecito, April 2014). This references his perception of the 'bad' multinationals and the 'dehumanisation' that stems from capitalism and the 'alternative' economy model the Community seeks to create.

J.E. said that community work is a way of "breaking with the system". Within "the system", one works only for money, and "we break with the idea that work is for money" (event in the University of Los Andes, March 2015). This "break" connects with the idea of rupture, no longer just with the Colombian state, but with the "system"—the conflation of the 'state-idea' with economic actors, and with violence. R. said that the work groups generate profits "for the good of the group":

> It's not that I work a cacao crop alone and all the money is mine. It's shared within the group, a more different economy, more collective, more communal. […] When a group gets together to work, and they spend days working together, they produce community within the group, a union within the group, an understanding, something beautiful, something that raises awareness about community as well. […] the majority of cacao groves are worked by groups. It's like an essence. It's perhaps an example for the country, you don't see that anywhere. (Focus group, San Josecito, April 2014)

The keywords 'different' and 'alternative' are connected with 'producing community', and 'raising awareness', founded on a 'collective economy'. And it is 'something beautiful'. Similarly, G.T. said, "internally we have lived that tranquillity, the people's happiness at being organised" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014). The idea of 'organisation' is again what articulates multiple elements, recalling the idea of the Community as a 'body with organs', like a 'living organism' (Chap. 1).

Individual and Collective Economies

Gudeman and Rivera (1990) demonstrate how in *campesino* domestic economics, capital is maintained and increased via animals, land and other goods. The Peace Community's domestic economics is coherent with this—individual families may increase capital by grazing other people's cattle on their land, or investing in new crops, for example, like any *campesinos* in Colombia. However, there is also a difference: the collective fund, which interacts with the individual economies.

The cacao is bought and sold using a collective fund, which functions as a cooperative. The Community buys the cacao from the producers and from the work groups using the community fund, and they sell to the buyers—Lush, GEPA, or the Medellín chocolate companies. Profits from

the community fund support the work groups with tools and seeds. This money is also used to buy and sell other produce, especially corn, and promote exchange and therefore value and money circulation, among both members and non-members (A., focus group, Arenas Altas, April 2014).

This 'exchange' between the individual and collective economies also contributes to the work groups who do not produce either cacao or subsistence crops. E. and U. belong to the carpentry group, and they do not have their own crops. With the community fund, carpentry machinery is bought, and the carpenters work by assignment, buying food with what they earn. In this way, the community fund stimulates work, which benefits the individual economies. Some orders for the carpentry group are community orders; for example, repairing a roof on a community building; others are paid by individuals who want to buy a table or chairs for their house. The community fund also helped to start up a little shop in the storage facility; and once established, the little business and its profits go to the family that runs it. Decisions about the priorities for the community fund are usually taken in general assembly.

There are also community-owned lands and goods, especially cacao crops, cows and mules. If there is an emergency and the Community needs money—a member is ill and needs medical fees, for example—a community pig could be sold, effectively liquidating the profit that was accumulating as the pig increased in weight. For important Community events, such as the annual commemoration of the Mulatos massacre, they might kill a community cow, to feed the guests. If a new work group is started, the Community gives them a cacao grove to cultivate.

There are two kinds of land titles: private and collective. The private lands were those people had before the Community existed, and which still belong to their original owners who live on it, but they might give parts of them over for community crops to be grown by work groups. Community-owned lands are plots they have bought with the community fund, or with support from international donations. At the time of research, they had around one thousand hectares registered in the name of the Community as a non-profit organisation. J.E. explained their desire to buy land was part of their redistributionist economy:

> The land we acquire is so that the people who don't have land can work, so long as they accept and comply with the Peace Community's norms; they just become Community members, they don't have to pay anything, and

they have somewhere to grow their food and build their house, we help them to build their house and sow their crops. (Interview, January 2015)

These lands belong to the Community, and people who do not own land can work it, but if they leave the Community, they stop working that land.

J.E. said that the Community has bought lands from "*campesinos* who don't want to return to the region, or people who want to sell it […] because we believe that they will be useful for people who don't have anywhere to live", but also "to conserve the environment and the struggle against the multinationals who want to come and exploit oil and coal". For that reason, they buy lands "in strategic places to confront the multinationals" (interview, January 2015). The solidarity economics converges here with the idea of protecting the environment and defending against the 'bad' multinationals, signalling the material dimension of what it means to create 'alternatives' in the them/us logic of the radical narrative.

Solidarity in War

The sense of collaboration and solidarity is part of a logic which extends to other areas of social life in the region, especially effects of war. G.T. said:

> When there are tense moments, when there have been massacres, the Community goes in a bloc, all of us. If they have taken someone, we all go, to the army, to whoever, and all together we reclaim them […] we won't move until they let them go. And we have had to do this on many occasions. When they have killed people and left the bodies, we go and we retrieve the bodies ourselves. (Event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014)

When there is a death, according the Jesús Emilio, "we have everything coordinated, people are used to it, we just get together and that's it, we organise the logistics to go to the place" (interview, January 2015). The 'logistics' means calling the representatives of different hamlets, coordinating different groups, arranging international accompaniment, catching the community mules and loading supplies and hammocks if they might be spending a night, writing a communiqué and ensuring their international network is informed of the situation—all of which requires, of course, multi-directional efforts of 'organisation'.

They have even collected bodies of guerrilla and paramilitaries killed in combat. J.E. said:

> A body is a body. The relatives of that person, even if they were one of the armed actors, are human. So it's the sense of humanity which goes further than solidarity. We have collected bodies of paramilitaries and bodies of guerrilla fighters who have died in combat to give them to their relatives […] because of that sense of humanity. That person in their life did terrible things. It is giving an example that despite the fact that many of them in their lifetimes did awful things against us and have assassinated Community members, we do not maintain any hatred against them. They are human beings who have been used by the system and that led them to become inhuman. (Interview, January 2015)

The idea that 'the system' is what turns people 'inhuman' and towards a life of violence recalls the 'rupture', and their 'neutrality'. The stubborn them/us relationship of the radical narrative is softened towards individuals in death, and they are recast as victims of a system which 'used' them. The striking distinction here is that between 'solidarity'—which they promote among themselves—and 'humanity'—which they extend to their enemies. If war is 'dehumanising', as J.E. says, then the Community seeks to do the opposite: to 'humanise'.

Education

At the time of research, an eternally-unsolved debate raged within the Community about their education model. Only one settlement (La Unión) receives visits from a teacher sent by the state education system. The other settlements organise their own teachers, who use the Community's model of 'alternative' education. These teachers are not certified by the state, so children do not receive any official certificates. Some parents support this; others would prefer the children to have certificates as a guarantee for their future, in case one day they decide to leave the Community and try to get a job in the outside world. An analysis of this education model would need to be framed within other community education models in Colombia; but relevant in the debate is their idea that state education is 'dehumanising'. J.E. said:

> A child goes to school within the official education of the system, they are teaching him to compete within this world of capital. To be a person of the

world, of importance, you have to have money. If you don't have money, you are not a respectable human being, you aren't worth anything. Within the alternative education we have been working on […] the vision is focussing on exactly what education is and should be for human beings. Education should not be dehumanising but humanising […] it should not be for money, but to serve others. (Interview, February 2013)

Again we see the dichotomies of them/us; state/Community; organic/official; alternative/system; solidarity economics/capitalism: dichotomies which are at the heart of their collective identity. The idea of the 'rupture' filters into and infuses many spaces beyond the specific scenario of the relationship with the government and the four points. The logics overlap and interact. Separating them in a schematic way, the radical versus the organic narrative, or chocolate and politics, is useful only up to a certain point.

Energy

The Community has made many attempts—with varying degrees of success—at installing systems of sustainable, 'alternative' energies like solar panels and biodigesters (anaerobic digesters for organic waste), in part to improve the fullness of their 'rupture' with the state (the radical narrative); in part to contribute to environmental conservation and increase their autonomy as a community (the organic narrative). These initiatives have largely been supported by the organisation Tamera, who have financed sustainable energy projects and given training in how to maintain them to some Community members. G.T. said:

The traditional energy that people consume is a damaging energy. For example, the Urrá Dam in Córdoba, they had to forcibly displace and kill people to make the dam. […] That energy cost lots of lives and displacement. While the solar energy is alternative, […] it's not harmful. And the gas [from the biodigester] too. It's something ecological, it doesn't damage nature nor people, we are protecting the environment. So we are looking increasingly towards the alternative. (Interview, January 2015)

The repudiation of environmental damage combines with the perception of companies as violators of human rights. The key connection at the heart of the organic narrative between the natural and the social environment has to do with an analysis of what causes violence—for example

Urrá, with both human and environmental impact—and how to look 'towards the alternative', which here means the attempt to be autonomous, to break from the 'dehumanising' 'system'.

*   *   *

The Community's narratives about food sovereignty, the contrast with the inorganic, and their perceptions of development and capitalism, have developed over many years in reaction to historical events, within the cultural and material context of their everyday practice of cacao production, and may be undergoing a process of strengthening as a result of the commercial relationship with Lush. These fuse with their narratives about 'organisation'. This 'connector narrative' invokes the deepest etymological sense of the word 'organic' as 'life'. In response to a context of violence, both environmental and social, the Community promotes life, through practices of organisation—work groups, council meetings, principles—and narratives about organisation—"the people's happiness at being organised". This last narrative element touches on ideals of solidarity, humanity and redistributionism. Thus, the organic narrative promotes an interpretative framework which is inextricably connected with the them/us of the radical narrative and its conflation of perpetrators, and which reads the context of violence which they have lived, and because of which they decided to declare themselves 'neutral', as part of a dehumanising system of global capitalism, and against which their resistance is to promote multidimensional 'alternatives'.

Notes

1. In a letter from CIJP to the Commander of the Seventeenth Brigade, 13 September 1999, they argue that it is inappropriate "to adopt measures of restriction to the entry of food supplies to the community". JGA 1999/130–133.
2. CIJP communiqué, 1 February 2002. JGA 2002/11–14.
3. Letter from the Community to President Andrés Pastrana, 17 April 2002. JGA 2002/92–95.
4. CIJP communiqué, 'Urgente: doce días de bloqueo', 22 April 2002. JGA 2002/99–100.
5. CIJP communiqués about the blockade, 23 and 24 April 2002. JGA 2002/101–103.

6. CIJP communiqué, 2 May 2002. JGA 2002/113–114.
7. 'San José: "ni se entra ni se sale"', *El Colombiano*, 12 May 2002. JGA 2002/174–175.
8. Luis Eduardo Guerra's last interview, 15 January 2005. https://www.you-tube.com/watch?v=xnCD3ksF0ZQ [accessed 27 July 2015].
9. For example, 'Por qué la necesidad de Urrá II', 26 June 2012, *El Meridiano de Córdoba*, http://elmeridianodecordoba.com.co/editorial/columnis-tas/item/6248-por-qu%C3%A9-la-necesidad-de-urr%C3%A1-ii [accessed 2 September 2015].
10. Community communiqué, 10 April 2012, 'Irresponsabilidad y extremo cinismo del Estado'. http://anterior.nasaacin.org/index.php/informativo-nasaacin/contexto-colombiano/3751-irresponsabilidad-y-extremo-cinismo-del-estado [accessed 21 July 2017].
11. For example, Community communiqué, 13 October 2014, 'Bombardeos, espionajes, control y creciente poderío paramilitar'. http://cdpsanjose.org/node/59 [accessed 26 July 2017].
12. Interview transcripts for 'Solidarity Economy' (2014 PBI UK non-public report, author's personal archive).
13. See Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 'Chiquita Lawsuits (re Colombia)', https://business-humanrights.org/en/chiquita-lawsuits-re-colombia#c9341 [accessed 10 September 2016], and Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 'Coca-Cola lawsuit (re Colombia)' https://busi-ness-humanrights.org/en/coca-cola-lawsuit-re-colombia [accessed 10 September 2016].

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Conclusion: An 'Alternative Community' as Positive Peace-Building?

Galtung (1969) proposes that any conceptualisation of 'peace' must stem from a definition of 'violence'. In the context of negotiations between warring parties, 'peace' as a goal privileges the end of combat hostilities—the absence of what Galtung terms 'direct violence'. However, if the definition of violence is limited to this narrow conception, and peace is defined as its absence, then, says Galtung, "too little is rejected when peace is held up as an ideal", because "highly unacceptable social orders would still be compatible with peace" (1969: 168). Thence follows the broadening of the definition of violence to include 'indirect' and 'structural' violence—which do not necessarily have clear subject-object relations, but are "built into the structure and show up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (1969: 171). In this way:

> An extended concept of violence leads to an extended concept of peace. Just as a coin has two sides, one side alone being only one aspect of the coin, not the complete coin, peace also has two sides: absence of personal violence, and absence of structural violence. We shall refer to them as negative peace and positive peace respectively. (1969: 183)

These twin concepts have been influential in the posterior development of the field of peace studies, mainly in the tonic of Galtung's foundational article: how to think about strategies for ending violence and attaining peace.

However, this book has used the terms in a slightly different way. Instead of the double-sided coin of conflict resolution versus peace-building, I suggest that positive and negative peace can be seen as an analytic continuum, which echoes the chocolate-politics continuum which frames this approach to the Peace Community's collective identity narrative.

In the first place, it is this continuum which has enabled a shift away from the frame typically used by academics and NGOs to approach the Peace Community: the gaze of negative peace, which represents the members as human rights 'defenders', who make demands for the cessation of 'direct' forms of violence such as massacres, forced displacement and death threats. Human rights discourse makes evaluative claims: 'the Peace Community is good'; 'those who persecute it are bad'. This is the mirror image of the opposing claims made by ex-President Uribe and the Colombian army. This book, instead, has approached the Community from a fundamentally anthropological position: trying to understand them in their own terms, by looking at what they say and what they do.

The reading I have constructed from the cultural 'text' of the cacao, the central material object of their everyday life, is of this continuum of chocolate and politics, which represents the Community not as passive sufferers and 'just victims', but active 'producers' of cacao, and 'creators' of community. I have argued that this shift in focus is comparable to an analytic movement from the gaze of negative peace to that of positive peace. I have not made the trite argument that 'the Peace Community exemplify positive peace-building'. Such a claim would abandon the anthropological endeavour, enforce etic categories on the Community members, and simply reproduce the logic of seeing the Community as a cipher for something else, making them merely a 'case study' from which to draw conclusions about broader concepts such as civil resistance, non-violence and non-participation.

I have used Galtung's terms to highlight this change in analytic gaze, but I have also hinted throughout the book that one could use them to characterise various logics internal to the Community's identity narratives. In Part I, I argued that the foundation of the Community in 1997 belonged to the logic of negative peace. Their concept of 'neutrality' was an urgent, temporary, humanitarian protection mechanism. But, through the process of 'organisation', this concept developed into a philosophy of life based on values which developed over time, such as economic solidarity, community work, historical memory and relationship to land. This was a mutation towards the longer-term, more idealistic logic of

positive peace, which continues to infuse the 'alternative community' collective identity narrative, formed by the coexistence of the radical and the organic narratives.

My conceptualisation of the Community's collective identity as an 'alternative community' is tentative, because it is not a term they use themselves. However, they frequently use the two words separately, and it integrates the concepts that are most significant for them: humanity, solidarity, consciousness, autonomy, self-sustainability, and the contrast they establish with concepts like capitalism, dehumanisation and the inorganic. I propose that this overarching identity logic has evolved from a grassroots analytical and lived process which corresponds fairly convincingly to the analytical agenda set out by Galtung: that a broad conception of peace stems from a broad conception of violence, and builds on it to propose 'alternatives' that aim at structural transformations to promote dignity and equality of life.

The Peace Community has experienced extreme direct violence, but their way of assimilating this violence has been to conceive of their victimisation as resulting from a 'system', even lifting the bodies of their assassins when they fall in combat and seeing them as mere instruments. The 'alternative community' idea grew from the initial conceptualisation of 'neutrality'. Not by chance the name changed in the early stages from 'neutral communities' to 'peace communities' (Chap. 3)—the conceptualisation the members have of 'peace' belongs to the long-term logic of positive peace-building. But before continuing in this vein of thought, we turn to the Community's use of these two words, 'community' and 'alternative'.

'Community' and 'Alternative'

The word 'community' is the essence of how the Peace Community defines themselves. They create and they believe themselves to be *community*, via multiple historical and current processes, in a permanent collective identity construction. One could analyse the idea of 'community' in many ways, and how the Peace Community's conception connects or diverges from academic concepts such as *communitas,* the meta-structural mode of human interaction, especially as distinct from social relationships that derive from common living in a geographical area (Turner 2008 [1969]). But the focus here is on 'community' as an emic category; that is how the Peace Community uses and conceptualises the word.

In Colombia the word 'community' is often associated with indigenous and afro-descendent ethnic communities which live together in geographically-delimited areas, and have collective identities which are connected to 'traditional' forms of living, especially regarding land use. The 1991 Constitution recognises that afro-descendent and indigenous communities have 'a special relationship to land' and traditions of communal living, and these populations are granted collective territory titles and special ethnic rights. These communities have often been the subject of human rights and development-based interventions. Activists and scholars, especially anthropologists, have played an active role in calling for these special rights in the 1991 Constitution and for inclusion within the national agenda with differential treatment (Jimeno 2007; Caviedes 2007). The word 'community', therefore, is infused with connotations of emancipatory politics in Colombia. This doubtless influenced the Peace Community, especially considering the inspiration they took from indigenous communities' early declarations of neutrality (Chap. 3).

Another element of influence is the discursive legacy of CIJP, Father Javier Giraldo and Eduar Lancheros, traceable in their early writing about the formation of the Peace Community, inspired by Liberation Theology and the concept of the 'Ecclesiastical Base Communities' (Lehmann 1990: 132–141). The CIJP discourse frames the concept of 'community' in terms of the *leitmotifs* of popular politics, autonomy, and an ideal of communal living which emancipates itself through community work.

These elements shape the Peace Community's own signification of 'community', which has evolved independently into a powerfully mobilising concept. G.G. opened the Christmas 2014 general assembly by saying, "We say we are a community because we work in solidarity as a community" (field diary, December 2014). When talking about their collective process, members usually say "the Community wants", "the Community thinks"; indicating both their commitment to a collective process, and their imagination of the Community as a totality, an 'organism' with 'organs' that 'work together in solidarity', reinforcing the centrality of everyday farming practices in the creation of the collective identity. For this reason, throughout this book I have opted to use the term 'Community' with capital C, rather than an acronym such as PCSJA, because it is the way in which they refer to themselves, as has been evident throughout many the text.

When asked what motivated him to become a leader, despite all the risks it entailed, G.G. replied, "More than anything else, that sense of

community, I felt it was really worth dying in the struggle for my community" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, October 2014). This word 'community', then, encapsulates a moral commitment to a process which transcends individual lives, in which it is worth being exposed to violent reprisals for denouncing human rights violations, because of a higher cause.

But that higher cause does not stop at speaking out about the injustices they have suffered in the context of the direct violence of the Colombian armed conflict. J.E. said:

> Living in community is a struggle against oneself. Because human beings have always been educated as individuals. From when a child starts school, even its parents promote that individualism in their children. So the first struggle is against oneself. How can I change my way of being. […] That communal life starts with each person reflecting: what do I want to live for, and how do I want to live, within a fair society, where there are no injustices? It is a daily construction in which one has to know every day, minute by minute and second by second, that one must construct community. (Interview, January 2015)

The concept of 'constructing community' is symbiotic with the Community's interpretation of the violence they have experienced as being part of a bigger 'system', in which perpetrators such as 'the state', 'the paramilitaries' and 'multinationals' conflate. J.E. said that their 'communal life' was an 'exercise' that sought to counter the structural violence of capitalism, because "the global economic model" promoted violence, and "in order to be able to build peace, you have to change all that. There cannot be a concentration of wealth" (interview, January 2015). This is not to say that *because* of their interpretation of violence, they *concluded* that the way to counter this problem was to 'construct community': the causality is not simultaneous. Interpretation and action reinforce each other.

The word 'alternative' is more slippery. In academic discourse it seems to jar; it has connotations of naïveté, utopianism and uncritical new-world activism. But I am interested in how the Community members themselves use the word. It appears in many quotes throughout the book, in both the radical and the organic narrative, and connects long-existing elements with 'imported' new elements. It is a word which signals 'other'. To be 'alternative', you have to be alternative *to something*.

In the meetings for the Community's early organisational process, Lancheros insisted constantly that "they had to find a way of BEING DIFFERENT from the victimisers". It was therefore necessary for them to analyse in what ways these "victimisers" produced death and war, and do the opposite. This 'being different' was seen as being "COMMUNAL, SOLIDARY AND NOT A SLAVE OF THE MARKET". It was the "COMMUNITY condition of the members of the Peace Community which was marking them out as 'different' from the victimisers" (Giraldo 2012: 59; capitals in original). The idea of 'community' was the expression of this 'alternativity', the antithesis of the violence of the 'system'.

That 'being increasingly alternative' resonates with the rupture with the state. The victim-drama of the Community's radical narrative has much in common with the narratives of other victims' groups in Colombia (Chap. 1). However, most of these groups are not in 'rupture' with the state, and they do participate in the democratic project in a critical and conflictive way, using existing legal mechanisms to access reparations and legal sentences. In the peace process, victims' organisations sent recommendations to the negotiating table, participated in forums, and held demonstrations. While the Peace Community sent Germán on the fourth victims' delegation, it was with a specific agenda (Chap. 6), and he did not continue to participate in follow-up meetings with other delegates. Not participating, being in rupture, means not being part of something. But it also means offering an alternative.

While they continue to demand the four points from the state, the Community also creates its own administrative sovereignty within its territory: their own education, their own rules and corresponding sanctions for members, their own organisational structure, their own commercial relationships with the outside world, their own economic system. This is an 'alternative' articulation structure to the JACs in San José de Apartadó, the legal administrative figure which all over Colombia connects rural communities with local government and institutions.

In the days of Balsamar and the UP, there was a JAC in the town of San José and in some of the township's hamlets. In the 1990s, most of the JAC leaders were killed (Chap. 2), but in recent years the town's JAC has risen again, and founded the Committee of and for human rights in San José de Apartadó, and the Association of *Campesinos* of San José de Apartadó (ACASA).[1] Relationships with the Community fluctuate (Chap. 1). Local cacao buyers struggle to compete with the

Community's prices thanks to Lush (though some people sell to the Community), sometimes the JAC ally with illegal actors against the Community, and they take advantage of the confusion with the names ('Community of San José de Apartadó' and 'Peace Community of San José de Apartadó') to strike up privileged discussions with state institutions. Many state officials do not realise there is a difference, they mistakenly believe that the Inter-American Court orders apply to all *campesinos* in the area, and of course they find it easier to talk to non-members because they are not in 'rupture'.

The word 'alternative', therefore, resonates through the radical narrative—it could be seen, perhaps, as the maximum development over time of the Community's conception of 'neutrality' (Chap. 3). But 'alternative' for the Community also refers to their farming methods, which go against the capitalist system which they see as dehumanising and as analogous to violence. G.T. said:

> We are increasingly autonomous. Having our crops, not having to depend on companies, on the multinationals, using our own seeds. [...] The seeds you can buy are transgenic, they are bad for the earth, bad for our health. And if we depend on them we will lose our culture, our own seeds from our territory which have been resistant during many years, more than 50 years. So the idea is to protect that part, the seeds, and be increasingly alternative. (Interview, January 2015)

The Community's conception of 'alternativity' becomes the crystallisation of the point where the radical and the organic narratives meet and flow into each other. It is about protection, nature, health, human rights, resistance and territory. It allows us to name the chocolate-politics continuum, the analytic framework, as a concrete emic-inspired identity narrative: they feel and think themselves to be an 'alternative community'. And the core motif of this identity narrative is the protection and promotion of 'life', in the broadest sense. B.G. said:

> All the products we sow here in the Community, every plant we sow, is sowing life in abundance. Here we construct and we sow cleanly, without any kind of chemical, thinking about the health of many people and of ourselves. That is the Community, constructing life, constructing alternative life for everyone. (Interview, January 2015)

Becoming 'Alternative': From Joining the Army to Calabash Bowls

A. was born and grew up with his mother in Dabeiba. When he was 12, he decided to go and meet his dad, J.E., for the first time. He visited San José for two weeks initially, and carried on visiting for short stays for several years. He met M. and they fell in love, so he started visiting for longer periods to be with her. He began to hear more about the Peace Community, and realised his dad was one of its leaders.

He learned that many of his own relatives had been assassinated, mostly by paramilitaries and the army. "Hearing those stories made me angry", he told me, "and led me to think that perhaps he ought to go into the guerrilla to seek revenge".

Previously, when he was young, he had thought about going into the army, "to protect lots of people" and serve society. He said:

> If I had chosen that road, I might even have come here to assassinate my father if I'd had to. I might have assassinated my family, my own blood. That is what the armed actors do. So when I came to the Community and they told me all this history, it made me change. I thought no, I'm lost. How am I going to go and protect humanity, when the reality is different, the reality is that I would be going to sow hatred and resentment in people. […] so I said to the Community, I want to join. (Interview, January 2015)

By spending more time in the Peace Community, he began to reflect, and understood that the violence against the *campesinos* had been carried out by all three armed actors, and that joining either side simply created more cycles of revenge. He decided that the best thing to do was to join the Peace Community, so he went to live permanently in San Josecito.

His discourse about his life has a clear before and after. "I had a reputation as a bad boy", he said, and drank alcohol and partied all the time, it was a "twenty-first century life". "But the Community told me off, so I stopped doing that. I changed". This change stemmed not only from the reflection about the relentless cycles of violence, but from the experience of working and living as a community. When he was visiting San Josecito, other Community members scolded him and told him he ought to help out in the work groups. So he began to pitch in. He said:

> I could see that people here esteemed the other as if they were a sibling or a parent, they all cared for each other. And where I came from, that didn't happen. […] There, each person thought about their own life. But here you

could feel the other's pain. [...] if someone was ill then everyone looked to see what they could do for them. (Interview, January 2015)

He found that it was the historical memory of the assassinations of members, and the experience of resistance in the face of adversity, which motivated Community members to continue in their struggle despite the risks:

> I began to ask people why they were here, if there's such a risk of being killed. They began to explain to me. They told me no, we are here because we don't want any more violence. [...] they have killed our siblings, parents, children. So with all this we feel lots of strength to resist. [...] we know that possibly tomorrow or the next day they will kill us. But there will be many people who will not leave this to oblivion, they will continue with the memory. The important thing for us is that this is not forgotten, that the world can see what armed actors do to the civilian population. (Interview, January 2015)

Just as the Community produces communiqués for 'history' and 'humanity' to judge, their entire existence is posited as an example, as a claim to truth and morality.

On a visit to his house, A. boils some water for me to drink and serves it to me in a cup made from a thick shoot of hollowed-out bamboo. He says, "I am increasingly alternative. I want to make bowls from the *totumos* [calabash] and stop using plastic plates. I want to be totally self-sufficient. It's a process".

The Community's values of non-violence, resistance, and grassroots peace-building are epitomised in the idea of the 'alternative'. For A., the alternative to joining the army or the guerrilla is making calabash bowls, and walking a path of trying to become increasingly self-sufficient.

Peace-Building Amid Violence

G.T. said, "The alternative fits with what peace means for us" (interview, January 2015). As this research was carried out in the context of the peace process, in my everyday conversations with people in Bogotá—government officials, academics, friends—when I said I was researching the Peace Community, I was told that 'once there is peace in Colombia, the Peace Community will no longer need to exist'. The perception these people had, of course, was that the Peace Community was an exercise of 'neutrality' in the limited sense of humanitarian protection.

In this logic, their view made sense: in the absence of an internal armed conflict—negative peace—it would be unnecessary to reserve spaces to protect the civilian population. I knew instinctively this was wrong, but given the frequency and insistence with which I heard the comment, I decided to ask Community members what they thought on my next visit. Their answers all point to the longer-term logic of positive peace.

B.A. said:

> The Peace Community is a life project. Whether or not there are armed actors. Because we are a self-sustainable project, so there is no logical reason that if there were no longer war then we should stop existing. We are in a process, we have regulations and values, if there were no war that doesn't mean we don't have a right to exist. Because we are a community of life […] our existence as such has other forms, it is not only defending ourselves from the armed actors. (Interview, January 2015)

Their 'existence' has 'other forms' which have to do with their 'process', their 'regulations', their 'values'. This 'logic' that even if the fighting stops, they still 'have a right to exist' is the internal logic that has developed over time, throughout the historical (re-)production of narratives and the establishment of a practical sense.

Similarly, G.T. said that the Community was a "system", a "custom", and "a culture we have created among ourselves"; it is "a wholesome life, like a family":

> For us, the Peace Community should not stop existing if the conflict ends. It's a life project that we have made. It's like a culture, the little ones are growing up with this mentality, of work groups, of community work. (Interview, January 2015)

Their 'system' is, of course, one they perceive as striving towards being the antithesis of the bad 'system' of capitalism. His use of the word 'culture' here suggests something that builds into the future, with the 'little ones' of the next generation who will maintain this 'mentality' of living peacefully with each other and with their natural environment.

J.E. said: "Look at everything we've achieved in the midst of the conflict. Imagine what we could achieve if we lived in peace" (field diary, January 2015). He said that the 'search' of the Community was "that some day we can really achieve peace for humanity", and that they want to

be "an example in the world, for society". This example was "not just discourse", he said, but "a life experience we are living daily, shoulder to shoulder, in community, children, youngsters, adults, mothers, the elderly […] a contribution for humanity, a contribution of existence […] our objective is the search to create a different world, a different way of living".[2] This ideal of the 'different way of living' encapsulates the idea of the 'alternative', and the everyday practice of it points to a conceptualisation of 'peace' as their communal life and values, versus the individualism of the capitalist world.

Just as Galtung arrives at the conception of positive peace from the extended definition of violence, the Peace Community has arrived at their collective identity narratives and practices through the experience of and reflection about the multi-dimensional forms of violence they have lived, felt and perceived. From the midst of war, they created life. In J.'s words: "We strive for something alternative. As we say, a life path which builds peace […]. In the Community, it is our life for our brother. Where there is death, we sow life" (event in Restaurante Lapingachos, May 2014).

In 2016, I launched my documentary film 'Chocolate of Peace', with my co-director Pablo Mejía Trujillo. Based on the same research as this book, the film depicts the story of the Community, narrated by the protagonists' testimonies, and its narrative thread is the production of organic chocolate. In the run-up to the peace referendum, I toured the country with the film, from the most upper-class schools of Bogotá, to the military university, to rural communities affected by coca cultivation, 'peace process' forums in intermediate cities, and collectives of school teachers in small towns.

After each screening, I facilitated a discussion to help the audience connect the empathetic experience of watching the film with the peace process and the six points of the Havana Accord. I invited them to leave with two messages: firstly, the importance of looking backwards to the past, and understanding the human experiences of war. We cannot empathise with eight million victims, because it is a statistic. We can only empathise with individual stories. In the film, B.G. talks about the assassination of her daughter, and cries. It would not matter whether the daughter had been killed by paramilitaries, by the army, by guerrilla, or if she was a soldier or guerrilla fighter herself who had fallen in combat: the pain of a mother who loses her daughter is the same. Only by understanding the human cost of war can we comprehend the urgency of putting an end to the violence.

This is particularly important in Colombia because of the gulf between the rural and the urban experiences of war. Many middle-class *bogotanos* today have never met a 'victim' of the conflict in person, though they might pass impoverished people begging on the streets with signs saying "I'm displaced" on their daily commute. Reconciliation starts by recognising the experience of the other, being concerned for their suffering, and committing to working to prevent such suffering from occurring ever again.

The second message, however, was that if we linger only on the horrors of the past, we condemn history to repeat itself. In order to become peacebuilders, we must cultivate hope, and project imaginatively into the future by taking action in the present. The values of the Peace Community, and their 'alternative community' collective identity narratives and practices, could inspire all Colombia in its ongoing debate as to what 'peace' might mean, and how to build it in everyday life through human relationships.

The question then follows, what does 'peace' mean to the Peace Community? It certainly includes negative peace, and the value of being able to go and work in remote cacao groves without being worried by overflying helicopters, or the possibility of landmines. It means tranquillity, being able to live without threats from paramilitaries, without heavily armed soldiers tramping through their crops, and it means seeing some form of justice for what they have suffered. But of course it goes far beyond that. It comprises values such as solidarity economics, a community work ethic, communal living, self-organisation, autonomy, and an 'organic' relationship with nature, as well as keeping alive a historical narrative to remember and immortalise the tragedies and injustices. It means being able to have dignity of life, and respect for the other, even if they have done you wrong, because we are all part of a shared humanity. It means analysing what causes violence, suffering and inequality, and taking small, everyday actions to redress that.

I suggested to the film audiences that many of these values were relevant and inspirational for Colombians from all walks of life. They did not have to go and become farmers and live communally in order to embrace the knowledge built up by the Peace Community over time and experience about what 'peace' might mean, and appropriate it. The two messages—empathy with historical suffering, and the cultivation of hope—are connected. Only through deep reflection on the injustices of the past and their roots, can we imagine transformative alternatives to foster life and dignity.

I also screened the film in Europe, and held discussions with audiences in Poland, England, Scotland, Germany, and other countries. I suggested to the audiences that these values, and this reflection about what 'peace' meant to the Peace Community, could also be relevant globally, in our increasingly uncertain world. Their experiences invite us to rethink our relationship with food, to value the efforts of those who produce it, their knowledge, struggles and ideas, and to build bridges between victims of all types of violence, and global civil society.

*   *   *

In Urabá, everything is magnified. The tropical storms, the burning sun, thigh-deep mud, giant flowers and leaves, and the complex worlds of the cacao groves, with their insects, bacteria, decomposing leaves, mossy branches and rotting husks. In January 1832, Charles Darwin arrived at the Cape Verde islands and saw tropical forest for the first time. In his diary, he wrote that it was "like giving to a blind man eyes", not only for "the gracefulness of their forms or the novel richness of their colours" but also "the numberless & confused associations that rush together on the mind!" (Darwin 1987: 25). If you were to draw a square on the ground in a cacao grove, you would find an ecosystem as complex as the Peace Community: full of species, processes, relationships, interdependencies, influences. Not to mention a fertile soil, so attractive to agri-business and the extractive sector. Similarly magnified are brutality and mistrust, love and solidarity. And, more than anything, the physical vulnerability of the human being, our profound corporeality in the world.

The Peace Community exists in one of the toughest contexts imaginable. They live in conditions of economic precariousness, marginalisation and exposure to nature, which can be so cruel to the human body in the tropics, far from the nearest hospital. Their historical wounds are relived in every visible army movement. Though crossfire has stopped since the peace process, at the time of writing, in the early phase of implementation of the Havana Accord, paramilitary structures continued in the region, taking over areas previously occupied by the FARC. Nationally, a spike in assassinations of local community leaders in the immediate post-agreement period is one of the most difficult challenges for the consolidation of the peace process.[3] Yet every day, the Community members go out to work in the cacao groves, machete in hand, carrying their packed lunch, and bring back cacao beans. Those who grow food in the midst of violence are the

unsung heroes of twenty-first-century global capitalism, creating life, where others try to take it away.

The wind lifts the smell of cacao from the drying platform on the roof, and wafts it down to the porch. It starts to rain, and the valley before us fills with mist. The freshness of the breeze intensifies the scent of the cacao. J.E. goes up to the drying platform to close it, and protect the cacao from the rain.

Notes

1. http://campesinosapartado.blogspot.com.co/ [accessed 12 September 2015].
2. Interview with Lush, November 2013, author's personal archive.
3. Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Colombia. 14 March 2017. A/HRC/34/3/Add.3. http://www.hchr.org.co/documentoseinformes/informes/altocomisionado/A_HRC_34_3_Add%203_AUV.pdf [accessed 26 July 2017].

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Index[1]

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.