ABSTRACT

Title of the dissertation: Reinsert Life Stories: A Description of the Colombian Ex-
                              Guerrillas' Life-Course From a Sociological Perspective.

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This dissertation describes the life histories of 42 former left-wing Colombian

guerrilla members of the M-19, ELP, and CRS. These reinserts' life course experiences

are investigated using a descriptive, life course approach and a qualitative methodology.

These life courses are studied in the form of personal life course trajectories that

are influenced by the individual (or his or her human agency) and by social circumstances

(linked lives, locations in time and place, and timing of lives).

Three stages in the reinserts' life course involving the key transitions into and out

of the movement are investigated. The first stage, acquiring a rebel identity, involves

leaving civilian life and joining a guerrilla movement. Becoming a member of the

insurgency is the first turning point in the reinserts' life course. The study identifies seven

factors that influence the subjects' decision to enter these groups: (1) family, (2) peers,

(3) conflict escalation, (4) generational imprint, (5) biographical availability, (6)

individual ideology, and (7) desire to improve economic and social status in the community.

The second stage consists of reinserts' adoption and maintenance of their guerrilla identity. Four factors that influenced subjects' staying in the group were: (1) heavy dependence on the group, (2) shared values, (3) clandestine behaviors, and (4) the influence of the group on the subjects' self-identity.

The third stage occurs when the subjects undergo the transformation from guerrilla to reinsert status. This involves first leaving the guerrilla movement and then abandoning the political party, AD-M19. This third stage involves a second turning point in the reinserts' life course where first military and then political activities are abandoned. Factors that influenced the subjects' decision to abandon political activities were: (1) the individual's perception that he or she did not matter to the group, (2) an increase in social obligations due to new roles in civilian society, (3) the stigma associated with being a reinsert, (4) political violence against reinserts, and (5) the stripping away of representative functions which had been carried out by the political party.

REINSERT LIFE STORIES: A DESCRIPTION OF THE COLOMBIAN EX-

GUERRILLAS' LIFE-COURSE FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

by

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DEDICATION

To my mother, who believed in me even when so many people were telling her that my entering a graduate program and obtaining a degree were impossible dreams.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The object of this study is to investigate, from a sociological perspective, and based on a descriptive method, the life-course of a group of people who participated in at least one of three former Colombian guerrilla groups: the M-19 or Movimiento 19 de Abril (the April 19th Movement), the EPL, or Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army) and the CRS, or Corriente de Renovación Socialista (Socialist Renovation Current).

The study focuses on the life-course trajectories of former guerrilla members, or "reinserts," looking at the factors that influenced them to join, stay, and depart from these groups. The socio-political dimension of the reinserts' life-histories is emphasized over other aspects, such as the military and legal dimensions.

Concepts such as life-course, life history, and socialization are used to examine the reinserts' life experiences before, during, and after their involvement with guerrilla organizations. While these concepts are used interchangeably in this study, it should be noted that some investigators may interpret the use of these terms in different or more narrow ways based on their own disciplinary approach.

The three former guerrilla movements included in this research were active from the mid-1960s and the early 1970s to the late 1980s and early 1990s. Each of the three groups had their unique characteristics; for instance, the EPL began as a radicalized faction of the Colombian Communist Party (PCC in Spanish). This group decided to engage in a revolutionary struggle inspired by Maoist revolutionary ideology, instead of continuing to participate in electoral politics as does the PCC. Early on, they had a strong influence on the peasant population of the northwest part of Colombia; as the movement

modernized it abandoned Maoist ideology for a more Marxist-Leninist one that stresses the importance of urban labor workers in the revolutionary struggle.

Contrary to the EPL, which maintained its structure throughout the whole revolutionary process and evolved from focusing on rural areas to trying to penetrate some urban sectors, the evolution of the CRS shows a historic growth through three different stages of the organization. CRS began as an urban radical political party formed by Marxist intellectuals, which was called MIR (Movimiento de Integración Revolucionaria). It had some influence in cities along the Atlantic coast. Due to the importance of having an armed branch for supporting their political struggle and gaining the same status as other left-wing groups, MIR members created Patria Libre (Free Homeland). As the MIR-Patria Libre, they had some local influence in Atlantic coast politics. However, after a few years of activity as a small independent guerrilla movement, they decided to join the ELN, the second largest guerrilla organization in Colombia, which had a strong rural presence in many areas of Colombia and whose ideology was characterized by its similarity to the ideals of the Cuban Revolution. However, after a few years, and due to political and military differences, they left the ELN and became the CRS, which ended up being reinserted into civilian society in the mid-1990s.

Very different from the rest of the guerrilla movements in Colombia, the M-19 appeared in the early 1970s as a reaction on the part of some urban middle-class sectors against the political elite, which had created a restricted democratic regime called the National Front, which denied any real political opportunities to the legal opposition parties. Instead of using a Marxist perspective, which blames the situation of the country

on the economic structure, they engaged in violent politics as a way of protesting what they saw as a restricted and corrupt democratic system. In fact, the fraudulent presidential campaign election in 1970 (see Appendix A) was the event that triggered the M-19 members' decision to become a guerrilla movement. Ideologically, the M-19 was identified in the minds of most of the public as a popular nationalist movement that revived a respect for Colombian traditions, culture and history as important values for the revolutionary struggle. For instance, instead of looking for foreign revolutionary role models and ideologies, the M-19 revered the figure and emulated the political thoughts of Simon Bolivar, the Colombian Founding Father. The M-19 evolved through different periods of violent confrontation with the Colombian political elite, which ended with the first governmental peace agreement with a guerrilla movement, in 1989, and the creation of a new constitution, which has in fact created a more open democratic regime in Colombia. More information about this period in Colombian history can be obtained by consulting the historical background section of Appendix A.

A central importance of the present study is that it offers a sociological view of the life-course process of members of subversive organizations. The somewhat unique situation of these subjects, having survived a civil conflict without obtaining a military victory, offers a very interesting opportunity to explore and better understand their life-courses.

The study is also important due to the characteristics that the subjects in this study exhibit which are similar to those of the current members of Colombian guerrilla movements. In fact, there were many situations where subjects decided to continue their fight in other currently active guerrilla groups such as the FARC (Colombian

Revolutionary Armed Forces) and the ELN (National Liberation Army) rather than entering, or staying in, the reinsertion process. This is important due to the hardening of current U.S. policy with respect to terrorism throughout the world. While the Colombian situation does not regularly appear in the daily news, currently the U.S. has more than 800 military advisors in Colombia and has spent on average 600 million dollars a year fighting Colombian guerrilla movements and their drug trafficker allies in what is called "Plan Colombia." This is in part due to the increased influence that Colombian guerrilla groups have in the production and transportation of illegal drugs to the U.S.

The existence of well-armed guerrilla groups also has distinctly negative effects on: (1) the process of economic development and integration of the region, since these groups target investors and see capitalists as their enemies, (2) the possibility of protecting the rain forest, since these groups help shield illegal drug cultivators who are increasingly destroying virgin jungle and biodiversity, (3) the likelihood of an increase in government spending on social programs, since the government has to fund a strong military force in order to stay in power, (4) political activities, since guerrilla movements have killed many local and national elected officials, and (5) the general well-being of the Colombian population, since guerrilla movements have increasingly adopted military tactics that indiscriminately affect the civilian population. For instance, recently the current guerrilla movements' tactics have incorporated the use of primitive catapults from which they launch gas tanks filled with shrapnel that indiscriminately blow up villages under attack, producing large number of civilian casualties.

Due to the dangers associated with conducting a micro-level study with current members of guerrilla movements, and the ethical and legal implications that this type of

study would have, the present investigation focuses on the life-course of ex-combatants, who have many characteristics similar to current guerrilla members. Because of the ideological and behavioral similarities between former and current guerrilla members, an important goal of this research is to increase knowledge of the subjects' life-course in order to improve programs directed toward them when these rebel organizations decide to end the military struggle. For instance, after reading the present study, policy makers may pay more attention to the role that families play in the process of reinsertion of the subjects.

Similar literature on the guerrilla movement is divided into two major camps: one is characterized by authors who to some degree are unfavorable toward the guerrilla movement and identify their members as terrorists, and the other is characterized by authors who to some degree favor the guerrilla movement and identify their members as freedom fighters. While the perspective of the present investigation is closer to the first perspective than to the second, the goal of this study is to remain as neutral as possible and give the subjects unbiased names such as guerrilla members, insurgents, or rebels. This is also the first use of the term "reinserts" in sociology to identify former guerrilla members or people who had similar life-course experiences. In Colombia, the word was originally introduced through the name of the Colombian government program that helps former guerrilla members in the resocialization process, "Programa para la Reinsercíon." The word is also used by some Colombian scholars doing research from anthropological and psychoanalytical perspectives (Uribe 1994 and Henao 1997). Regretfully, lately the word has been associated, outside academia, with negative stereotypes of this population. For this reason, some subjects prefer to be called "demobilized." It should be noted that

the use in this study of the term "reinsert," which sometimes is employed by the same subjects, does not involve any negative connotation, and is the result of the desire to employ the same terminology that other scholars, including some ex-guerrilla members, have used in their writing.

In the next chapter, I provide a comprehensive conceptual approach to the life-course perspective using literature from several sociological subfields as well as from History and Political Science. The literature will be organized using Giele and Elder's life course model (Giele and Elder 1998). It provides a theoretical framework for understanding the process of entering and leaving guerrilla movements and similar organizations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review. Using Giele and Elder's life course model

This chapter is organized on the basis of Giele and Elder's life course model (Giele and Elder 1998). This model was selected as a guideline for presenting the literature review because it allows framing the study of the Colombian reinserts through the use of several sociological approaches. Moreover, the model is particularly helpful because it also permits the incorporation and organization of a significant amount of literature on guerrilla movements and reinserts which is rich in empirical findings but is not originally framed within the boundaries of a sociological perspective.

A life course perspective is one in which adult development is examined as transitions into and out of key social roles. Although most research in this relatively new sociological tradition focuses on normative transitions surrounding central roles such as spouse, parent, and worker, the model is also fruitful for examining transitions into deviant roles. In the next pages, four key elements of the life course perspective will be briefly discussed, and then the model will be used in the construction of the review of the literature.

Four key elements in Giele and Elder's life course model

The life course model contains four key elements for studying the subjects' transitions in and out of the guerrilla movements. The order in which the elements are discussed does not imply the importance that each element has in the model.

A first element focuses on the subjects' historical and cultural background (or location in time and place). In this part of their investigation, Giele and Elder point out

the importance that people's social situation and cultural heritage have on their socialization processes. This section of the model is close to an anthropological approach to the study of social movements because it underlines the importance that socio-cultural situations have in the subjects' life-course. From a sociological perspective, literature which emphasizes this element is represented by Karl Mannheim's study of *Weltanschauung,* which is " … a rationalized conception of history [that] serves as a socially unifying factor for groups dispersed in space, and at the same time furnishes continuity to generations which continuously grow up into similar conditions" (Mannhein 1985:131). From this perspective, some studies of social movements revisit 1960s events, such as the worldwide student protests, the Vietnam war, and the Cuban revolution as episodes that provide the bases for a rationalized concept of history—a decline of the capitalist society— that has a strong influence in the creation of many guerrilla movements in Latin America. Applying this perspective to the study of the origin of the Colombian guerrilla movement, Lopez indicates that while Communist ideology was available to Colombians since 1930, the year when the Colombian Communist party was created, guerrilla groups adopted this ideology only after the triumph of the Cuban revolution in 1959 (Lopez 1994).

In Colombia, despite the fact that guerrilla organizations were active in the 1950s, the first Communist guerrilla movements were the "Fuerza Armada Revolucionaria Colombiana" (FARC), formed on July 20, 1964; the "Ejército de Liberación Nacional" (ELN), formed on January 7, 1965; and the "Ejército Popular de Liberación" (EPL), created on July 20, 1965. During the same period, most Latin American countries experienced a similar emerging of communist guerrilla groups. The concept of

generational imprint (or generational effect) is also used by authors such as Jorge Castañeda to differentiate a first wave of Latin American guerrilla movements that appeared in the 1960s from a second wave that originated in the 1970s. The first wave—such as the EPL— was characterized by its orthodox Marxist ideology, its strong influence in rural areas, and its focus on using violence to obtain military victories, while the second wave—such as the M-19—was characterized by its more moderate leftist-nationalistic ideology, its strong influence in urban areas, and its focus on using violence to advance its political agenda (Castañeda 1994).

A second element in Giele and Elder's life course model is the subjects' social integration (or "linked lives") [See figure 1 on next page]. From this sociological perspective, the model illustrates the importance that the subjects' associations, such as their friendships and family networks, have in the process of socialization. A typical example of a study that underlines the importance that social integration has on the subjects is Braungart and Braungart's research on the life-course of 13 right-wing activists from the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) movement and 13 left-wing activists from the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) movement in the 1960s. (Braungart and Braungart 1990)

Figure 1: GIELE AND ELDER'S LIFE COURSE MODEL

Four Key Elements of the Life Course Paradigm (Giele and Elder 1998:11)

Development of
the Individual
HUMAN
AGENCY

History and
Culture
LOCATION IN
TIME AND
PLACE

Social Relations

LINKED LIVES

Intersection of Age,
Period, and Cohort
TIMING

Different Trajectories
of the
LIFE COURSE
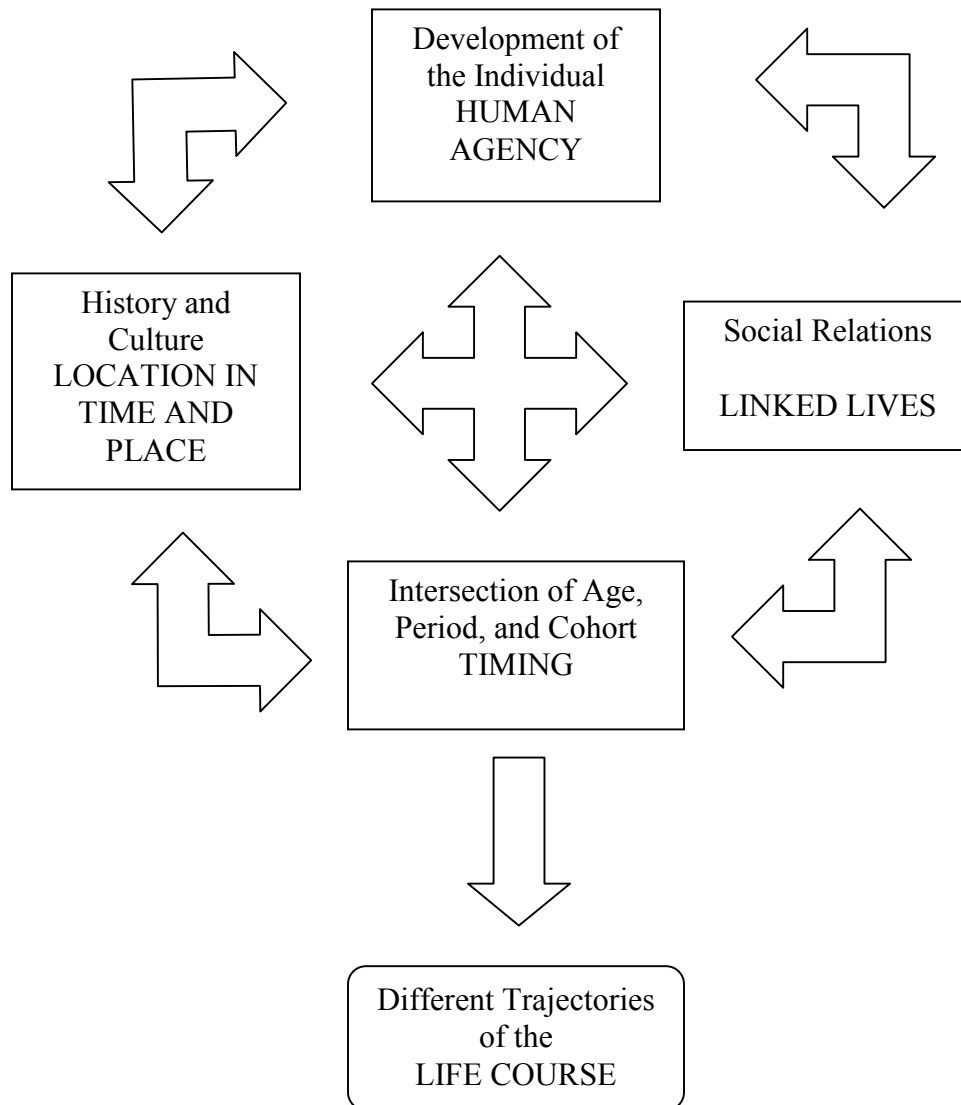
For instance, analyzing family influence on the selection of the social movement, the investigation shows that the number of left-wing activists whose families came from Jewish and/or Eastern European backgrounds was significantly larger than the number of right-wing activists in the study. Also, it was observed that parents of left-wing activists tended to work in the civil service sector, while right-wing activists' families had more diverse job backgrounds. In both groups, family discussions about ethics and politics were important aspects of the activists' learning process. However, Braungart and Braungart found a stronger ethical and political influence from the left-wing activists' families. The authors concluded that left wing activists tended to have political views more closely aligned with previous family generations. The study also found that the initial family influence is reinforced by other sources of social integration such as the school that the subjects attend and peers with whom they socialize. It was observed that the subjects' social networks explain the different interpretation that subjects give to world events such as the McCarthy anti-Communist hearings and the Korean War. Since the social integration (or linked lives) element of the model is a very important part of this study, a separate section of this literature review will offer a more comprehensive discussion of the role of the family in the life-course of the ex-guerrilla members.

A third element in Giele and Elder's model is the subjects' goal orientation (or human agency). This element emphasizes the importance that the subjects' psychological profile has for their participation in political activities. A typical piece of research that underlines the importance of human agency in political matters is Lasswell's study of political personality traits, which uses individual characteristics in order to explain the subjects' participation in power-oriented acts (Lasswell 1971). Despite research on the

topic, several studies which attempt to profile a terrorist personality have reached the

conclusion that there is no personality prototype for terrorists, and that future efforts

should be placed on the social networks and political motivations that influence people to

adopt terrorist behaviors (Della Porta 1998).

Shortcomings of the study of social movements from the personality perspective

were also identified by Snow and Oliver. They pointed out that,

> "Personality and psychological deficits have been largely abandoned as
> explanations of differential recruitment by scholars of crowds and movements
> since the 1970s because of the lack of empirical support and the tendency for such
> explanations to portray participants in disparaging terms" (Snow and Oliver
> 1995).

In spite of this generally poor assessment of the personality perspective for

studying social movements, Snow and Oliver believe that some topics such as "personal

efficacy" are important variables for understanding social movement participation. In this

dissertation, personal efficacy is related to Gary Marx's concept of escalation (Marx

2002). It was found that subjects engaged in violent protest behaviors as a result of the

lack of personal efficacy when participating in peaceful protests.

Other studies of social movements that can be classified as dealing with subjects'

goal orientation are those that address the individuals' motivations such as gaining

pleasure and avoiding pain as well as those dealing with the individuals' capability for

rationalizing their choices in order to decrease cost and increase gain when participating

in social movement activities. The first group of studies can be seen as related to social

learning theories while the second group employs rational choice theories (Chong 1991).

Despite the difference between these two theoretical approaches, the concept that

individuals engage in behavior for reasons of self-interest remains central to the analysis.

A final element in the life course model is the subjects' strategic adaptation (or "timing of lives"). According to Giele and Elder, "… the timing of life events can be understood as both passive and active adaptation for reaching individual or collective goals" (Giele and Elder 1998:10). The timing of events and transitions is critical because when it occurs in life may create differential effects. Elder (1999) showed how the timing of the Great Depression in early versus later adolescence was critical for subsequent educational attainment and thus achievements of all sorts. This part of the model focuses on explaining aspects of the transition process from one stage of a life-course to another. Research based on this element of the model focuses on explaining the mechanism of life-course transitions, as well as the timing of these transitions. Based on Giele and Elder's model, strategic adaptation is a key component because it includes factors from the other three elements to explain a change in a life-course trajectory. For instance, it takes into consideration, the historical period in which the subject is living (part of the subject's "location in time and space"), and the influence from cohorts (part of the subject's "linked lives") to explain continuities and changes in the subjects' life-course trajectory. Giele and Elder's model give more importance to the element of strategic adaptation than the other three elements because it not only combines with the other three elements to explain a life-course transition but also has an independent effect. This means that the process itself has an impact on the subject's life. For instance, the process of moving to another country, getting married, dying or joining a deviant organization has a central influence on the subjects' life-course and such transitions are often viewed as "turning points" in lives. The next section will present a review of the literature on the

subjects' transition process to guerrilla movements and other similar organizations, as well as to civilian society after leaving a guerrilla movement and like groups.

Before concluding this section, it is important to point out that beyond the four elements already described in Giele and Elder's model (subjects' historical and cultural background, social integration, goal orientation, and strategic adaptation), a crucial part of this model involves the mutual interactions between these elements. Consequently, the model not only deals with explaining events in the subjects' life-course trajectories but also it opens the opportunity for exploring possible interrelations between its four variables. Just looking at the combination of two elements, the model offers twelve categories into which research can be classified.

The possibility of combining more than one element from Giele and Elder's model offers the researcher an advantageous tool to classify many studies dealing with the life-courses of members of social movements. For instance, Luciak presents three key factors that explain the women's decision to participate in the former Salvadorian guerrilla movement FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front). She wrote,

> "With few exceptions, women linked up with the FMLN out of a sense of social justice, to escape the repression of the army and police forces, or because a family member had joined or was in the process of joining. Often women joined for a combination of these reasons." (Luciak 2001)

Looking at this conclusion, it is clear that the family members' influence on the subject's decision to join a guerrilla movement is part of the concept of social integration (or linked lives) in Giele and Elder's model. Less obvious is the subjects' decision to join a guerrilla movement due to government repression. This is because more than one element from the model can be used to explain the decision to enter a guerrilla

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movement. For instance, using the cultural background element of the model, it could be argued that subjects join guerrilla organizations because they are living in a historical period when conditions to do not favor non-violent opposition. From the goal orientation element of the model, the decision to enter a guerrilla movement could be explained by individual perception of the high cost (jailing, persecutions, and even death) of engaging in legal politics and by the decision to reduce the personal cost by becoming a member of an armed organization that can protect them. Based on the social integration element, the individuals' perception of being targeted by government forces is strongly influenced by their peer group.

Examples like Luciak's study where more than one element from Giele and Elder's model can be used to explain the subjects' decision to join the guerrilla movement. The researcher's own experience studying this topic indicates that the most comprehensive approach to developing a review of the literature is to focus on the element of strategic adaptation (or transitions). This element allows integrating the other three elements of the model and provides a closer look at the subjects' life-course trajectories.

Using strategic adaptation as a main element for organizing the review of the literature, the next section presents additional literature on two categories of adaptation. The first involves the subjects' transition from civilian life into organizations with totalistic characteristics such as cults and guerrilla movements and their adaptation to these organizations and the second category comprises the subjects' adaptation process from (transitions out of) these organizations back into civilian society.

Adaptation processes during the life-course of reinserts

Using as a model the life-course perspective, the present section provides a review of the literature on the individuals' adaptation when transitioning into and out of similar organizations. For expository purposes, this section begins with a description of the literature addressing subjects' transition into and adaptation to a group, and concludes with an account of the literature on subjects' transition out of and adaptation to a life-course outside these groups.

The study of people's life-course in guerrilla/terrorist organizations is extremely important due to the United States' policy of opposing some of these types of groups. Yet, there have been very few micro-sociological studies of groups that operate in Latin America. Consequently, this creates a challenge compiling a review of the literature on this topic.

As a result, it is necessary to adopt an eclectic approach to reviewing research, choosing from studies of social movements, deviance, and new religious movements. I will also include some publications that may not be considered sociological studies, but that provide useful empirical information and contribute to a better theoretical understanding of the reinserts' life-course.

It is important to point out that such an eclectic approach has been used in related studies. For instance, Martha Crenshaw's study of terrorist groups identifies and addresses similarities between some religious and terrorist group dynamics. She observed that, "In their intense commitment, separation from the outside world, and intolerance of

internal dissent, terrorist groups resemble religious sects or cults." (Crenshaw 2001:32) A similar eclectic approach is followed in this chapter.

Although the framework of this investigation is built on diverse sources, there are important common themes, which permeate the selected literature. For instance, most of the selected literature refers to situations where groups exercise a crucial influence on the individuals' life-course, as is the case with groups such as cults and radical political groups which in general are perceived to be if not deviant, at least out of the mainstream of society. In addition, most of these groups have a strong influence on their members' self-concept to the point that these groups could be viewed as greedy institutions since they,

> "… seek exclusive and undivided loyalty and they attempt to reduce the claims of competing roles and status positions on those they wish to encompass within their boundaries. Their demands on the person are omnivorous." (Coser 1974:4)

As is indicated in some of the reviewed literature and reflected by the data collected in this study, the subjects' life-course in the guerrilla movement also involves a process of elimination of competing roles and status. Very often guerrilla members are pressed by the group to abandon their family homes, their studies, their jobs, and change cities in order to engage in a clandestine life style and improve their performance in the group. This is particularly the case with guerrilla members with "professional" status. They are members who receive salaries and other benefits from the groups as compensation for being always available to carry out the group's activities.

In conclusion, while the guerrilla group, especially in urban areas, is not exactly a totalistic institution, as Goffman describes it when studying the asylum, there are many totalistic characteristics that are shared with this type of institution, such as the sense of

being a target of surveillance by the group, control of the subjects' schedule, and the influence that the group has on the subjects' self-perception (Goffman 1961). These characteristics can be found in other types of groups such as some religious and criminal organizations.

Transitions into and adaptation to clandestine groups

The issue of social adaptation, or social adjustment, could be viewed as one of the most interesting topics in the sociological study of society. Ogburn has portrayed this type of study as the investigation of cultural lags, which involves two levels of analysis (Ogburn 1970). The first level involves studying the subjects' adaptation to a culture, or a cultural shift, as well as the culture's adaptation to the subjects, and the second level, a more macro-sociological one, involves adaptation between different parts of the culture. Ogburn provides examples such as the influence of new material objects within the culture like inventions or the impact of environmental changes like deforestation on an individuals' adaptation to society.

The study of adaptation has especially been undertaken by structural functionalist sociologists such as David Easton, Talcott Parson and Gabriel Almond (Chilcote 1981). Their work has provided the foundation for several macro-level studies on the impact that modernization and development has on developing nations, including those in Latin America. These structural functionalist studies concentrate on topics such as the influence that a political-cultural shift has on the legitimization of political authorities or the influence that new political groups (such as labor unions, which appeared as a result of the industrialization process) have on the social demands on, and support for, the political

authorities. A typical application of this approach in the study of Latin American guerrilla movements appears in Wickham-Crowley's comparative study of the correlation between agrarian structure and revolutionary support in six countries. (Cuba, Venezuela, Guatemala, Bolivia and Peru). An important finding in this study is the existence of a strong positive correlation between a sharecropping economy and guerrilla activities. In the case of Colombia, the level of landlords' control and squatters' support for the guerrilla movement in some areas were also factors that influenced the guerrilla movement activities in some regions (Wickham-Crowley 1992). Wickham-Crowley concludes his study by calling for more micro-level investigations that supplement his findings on Latin American guerrilla movements. In this way, Wickham-Crowley echoed other social science researchers who have called for more micro-level investigations that enhance findings from macro-level studies (Buchanan 1969).

From a macro-level perspective, most studies addressing the Colombian situation have taken a conflict theory perspective. They have focused on the interaction between a government that protects privileged sectors of society and social organizations that fight for underprivileged groups. The preponderance of this type of work has contributed to the public perception that all sociologists are socialists.

A typical study from this perspective is Múnera's investigation of the evolution of Colombian social movements from 1968 to 1988 (Múnera 1998). According to Múnera, these two decades were characterized by the loss of the legitimacy of the Colombian political system. It was a period when the ruling class lost its emotional, symbolic, and ideological ties with the middle and lower classes. As a result of this change, the dominant class engaged in more coercive policies in order to maintain power; meanwhile

several social organizations—including left-wing parties, peasant cooperatives, labor unions, and students associations—underwent a radicalization process due to the increase of, and the failure to meet, their economic and social demands. For instance, describing the process of radicalization of the peasant organizations, Múnera says,

> The mechanisms of resistance and emancipation for dealing with the domination of the oligarchy involved the direct use of force, such as the seizure of lands, the occupation of government offices, and the organization of strikes. This was part of a peasant strategy in opposition to the government and the landlords. As was previously described in the history of the ANUC [National Peasants' Association], the state reacted without delay, [and] the peasant association was isolated by other institutions, while at the same time it became common for their members to be killed, tortured, and unlawfully imprisoned.

Múnera observes that this confrontation produces a process of radicalization within the peasant movement where the old moderate leaders with close ties to traditional parties were replaced by new radical leaders from the Marxist-Leninist and Trotskyist organizations with close associations with the guerrilla movements.

Eliminating the emphasis that the conflict approach makes on the clashes between the haves and have-nots, and analyzing the data from a more micro-level perspective, Gary Marx reaches a similar conclusion when studying the reasons that people engage in deviant behaviors in the United States (Marx 2002). From Marx's perspective, one ironic outcome of social control occurs when people engage in deviant behaviors as a result of escalation of violence during encounters with authorities. For instance, family disputes and peaceful marches have the potential to become more violent after police intervention unintentionally encourages rule-breaking. In fact, the increase of the level of social conflict by the authorities can be seen as a cause for some subjects' deviant behaviors, including creating and joining subversive groups. In the case of Colombia, various individuals, including labor union workers, university students and peasants, decided to

become guerrilla members as a way to receive some protection from a government policy of waging a dirty war against radical protesters. In this case, the subjects' perception of government repression against them was in parallel with other socializing aspects such as the subjects' peer group, culture, and political ideology. All these factors provide the subjects with ways to understand and select responses—from peaceful submission to aggressive confrontation—when government forces increase the level of violence. This is true of the origins of the FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces), which was formed as a self-defense peasant organization as a reaction to government armed forces attacks against the village of Marquetalia in 1964 (Leal 1989 and Anderson 1985).

Studying the justifications that legal social movements in Colombia assert for engaging in social protest, Archila indicates that five percent of the social protest in the 1980s and 10 percent in the 1990s was triggered by the assassination of union and political leaders (Archila 2003). In the rural areas, violation of human rights was the second most common cause of social protest, after the fight for land ownership. From 1986 to 1980, it also became the second most common cause of protest in the urban areas, after protests triggered by the poor quality of public services. Archila argues that the increase in the number of protests in favor of human rights is the result of the degradation of the civil conflict. Without elaborating on the concept of escalation or addressing the implications that this escalation has for guerrilla movement recruitment, Archila provides a description of protests by legal movements against violations of human rights that concurs with the finding in this investigation about an atmosphere of social struggle that ended up motivating subjects to join a guerrilla movement.

Another influential study that explores the process of adaptation from "normalcy" to a deviant life style is David Matza's investigation on becoming deviant (1969). Matza views the subject's adaptation to a deviant group as the result of a gradual process of socialization, which consists of three stages: (1) Affinity, (2) Affiliation, and (3) Signification. Affinity is a period when some elements of the deviant group's activities appeal to the individual. Affiliation is the second stage, which involves the subjects' interactions with deviants in the organization. The final stage, signification, occurs when an individual recognizes the possibility of being subject to external sanctions, and other possible negative social reactions, because of their involvement in deviant activities and/or membership in deviant groups. An extensive discussion of the data collected from the perspective of Matza's model will be offered in a separate section of the dissertation.

With respect to the Colombian situation, as is the case in many other Latin American countries, most empirical micro-level investigations on the guerrilla movements have been produced by journalists, historians, and other "experts" who in general collect their empirical data without following social science methodology standards and present their findings without a proper theoretical framework. Most of this work is concentrated on making news or presenting new facts rather than on building on previous publications in the fields of social science research. In general, the role of the "inexperienced experts," as Don Radler called some of the newly-minted experts on the region, should be addressed by a more detailed investigation based on the sociology of knowledge, which is outside of the scope of the present study (Radler 1962).

Despite the above-mentioned shortcomings of these investigations, the contribution of some of the studies has been important since these empirical

investigations have explored and described social issues that more formal social science research has not addressed. For example, despite the fact that the concept of guerrilla members' adaptation has not been developed as a research theme in these studies, there are several references to situations that illustrate members' facing an adaptation to the guerrilla organization, and others in which the guerrilla movement engaged in a process of adaptation to society.

For example, in the study of the process of individual adaptation to the guerrilla movement, historian Walter Broderick, in his biography of the ELN leader Camilo Torres, provides a good example of the difficulties that urban guerrilla members faced when joining rural units. He said,

> "The behavior of Fabio Vasquez [the leader of the ELN] was increasingly authoritarian and intolerant. He promoted divisions between the peasant guerrillas and those who came from the cities, and the latter, due to their lack of experience in a jungle environment, were the target of permanent jokes from the peasants; their clumsiness was viewed as a fault, or worse, as proof of their lack of desire [for the revolution]." (Broderick 2000:123)

Similarly, José Cuesta's autobiography of his experiences as a member of the M-19 points out the adaptation difficulties subjects faced on becoming members of these groups. For instance, he illustrates the loss of individual autonomy by presenting examples in which members were banned from dating people outside their organizations, even people who may have belonged to a very similar group. Talking about how joining a guerrilla movement involves the loss of personal freedom, he said,

> "The individual's private life, such as sexual behavior, became subordinated to the political aspects. These issues lost their status as private matters and became part of the public sphere within the group, and therefore subordinate to the security of the party or the guerrilla movement. There are many other individual aspects that work in the same way: a poet does not have total freedom for creativity. Creativity is regulated by the central committee or the unit commander and it is allowed or not depending on its usefulness. . . . Autonomy is transferred

from the individual to the collective of the party or movement. It involves suppressing personal doubts and eschewing the possibility of exteriorizing these doubts by questioning the collective actions. It also involves renouncing personal autonomy and self-control in order to subject oneself to an authoritarian structure." (Cuestas 2002)

The process of urban guerrilla members' adjustment to rural units is an important topic in the study of life experience in the guerrilla movements since this integration process illuminates many internal characteristics of these groups, such as the cleavage between urban and rural guerrilla members and the overall influence of peasant culture on the organization. References to the process of adaptation to rural situations can be found in many biographies and autobiographies of ex-guerrilla members. For instance, Villamizar's study on the life of Jaime Bateman, founder and former guerrilla leader of the M-19, provides Bateman's very vivid description of his first experience in a rural guerrilla unit. He said,

> "When I joined [a rural unit in] the FARC, the moon did not illuminate the mountain and I had not learned to see through the darkness. I needed to walk in the dark. I tripped, stepped in holes and mud, and became lost. I was driven to despair. … Then, peasants taught me that when I became lost, I simply had to stop and listen; in this way, I would be able to locate some peers. At the beginning, I felt that all of the jungle sounded the same. Little by little I began to differentiate the noise that a man makes when breaking a branch from the noise produced by animals; the noise that ten men produce when walking from the noise that five men produce, and from the noise that one man makes; the crying of the owl at night [from] the whistling produced in the night when someone is coming [and] the singing of a strange bird. I trained my eyes and ears to be able to walk through the darkness. At this point, I did not allow myself to be overcome by terror. I stopped confusing the sound of a waterfall with the noise that an enemy battalion makes." (Villamizar 2002:193)

In conclusion, most of the literature (biographies, journalistic accounts, etc.) that relates the subjects' experiences with adaptation to the Colombian guerrilla movement can be divided in two main themes: (1) adaptation to a clandestine life style controlled by

the guerrilla group when a member joins an urban guerrilla unit, and (2) adaptation to a peasant culture and a wild environment when an urban guerrilla member enters a rural guerrilla unit.

Nevertheless, these two categories are not exclusive. From a sociological perspective, an interesting exception is when guerrilla members from two or more groups join forces to engage in common objectives. In these situations, the totalistic characteristics of each guerrilla organization are usually in conflict with the need to cooperate with the other group. A good example of guerrilla members' adaptation to other guerrilla movements appears in Villarraga and Plazas' history of the EPL (Villarraga and Plazas 1996). Part of their study addresses the formation of the American Battalion, a guerrilla contingent led by the M-19 in which several other Latin American guerrilla groups including the EPL participated. In Villarra and Plazas' opinion, this experience had a positive influence on the process of modernization of the military aspect of EPL, but a negative effect on the troops due to the differences between the groups. Villarraga and Plazas' historical research includes an EPL member's testimony about the difficulties in adapting to the American Battalion. He said,

> "Within the M-19 it was difficult to integrate the two different ways of doing things. Our people were committed to and steeped in Marxist-Leninist beliefs, although some of them did not know what it really was about. … Everyday life was the most difficult part. Our people didn't accept that an M-19 commander punish them for an infraction. They pointed to EPL rules and regulations for dealing with these situations. Stealing increased, too. We also criticized their flexibility in their recruitment procedures. They even recruited pot smokers; in other words, they recruited everybody. These things damaged the group discipline and the consequences didn't take long to appear. We had a situation of massive desertion. Some people left with weapons and began working as professional killers in Medellin. From this perspective, the experience of joining forces was terrible." (Villarraga and Plazas 1995:189)

Looking at various situations of members' adaptation to guerrilla group joint

ventures is a helpful sociological tool to explore similarities and differences between

these groups and their members. All the reviewed literature on the M-19 indicates that in

fact this was a guerrilla movement with characteristics different from the other

Colombian subversive organizations (Beccassino 1989 and Restrepo 1988). For instance,

the EPL was viewed as a group strongly influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology and

internally organized based on a hierarchical life style, while the M-19 was described as a

more democratic-nationalist organization and internally organized based on a life style

closer to a Latino society. Evidently, these cultural differences between the guerrilla

organizations caused great problems in the process of adaptation and created a major

obstacle to the ideal of building a united guerrilla front to fight more effectively against

the government forces, a phenomenon that occurred in some Central American countries

during the 1980s.

Addressing the differences between the M-19 and other Colombian guerrilla

movements, Carlos Pizarro, a guerrilla member who began his revolutionary activities in

the FARC and continued there until he resigned from it to join the group that founded the

M-19, and who later became the most important leader of the M-19 during the reinsertion

process, said,

> "Initially, I fought for democratic values from the communist perspective in the
> FARC. But I am not communist, and truly, I have never viewed the world from a
> communist perspective. I always have been a lover of freedom, of democracy, and
> I hate the authoritarianism that is … employed in the construction of socialist
> societies, so I needed to follow my own [revolutionary] path. … The FARC
> continued their development while we began building the M-19 as an
> organization totally different from the rest of the left-wing organizations in
> Colombia. We felt that Colombians wanted something different, and I have the
> absolute belief that it is essential that similar organizations appear within the

revolutionary movements in other Latin American countries, not only in Colombia." (Beccassino 1989:64)

While there are no data available on the CRS members' process of adaptation to other guerrilla groups, it should be pointed out that the CRS as a guerrilla organization is the result of a different process of left-wing activists' adaptation to radical organizations. A large number of CRS members came from a small radical political party called MIR—Movimiento de Integración Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Integration Movement), which in 1984 developed a military branch called "Patria Libre" (Free Homeland). At this point, MIR members felt the necessity of forming an armed branch in order to be taken seriously and gain some respect from other radical political organizations.

Four years later, the still-small, MIR-Patria Libre united with the second most important guerrilla movement in Colombia, the ELN (National Liberation Army) and formed the UC-ELN (National Liberation Army-Camilist Union). The name Camilist was in honor of the revolutionary priest Camilo Torres who joined the ELN in the 1960s. The alliance between MIR-Patria Libre and the ELN only lasted until 1991, when most former members of the MIR-Patria Libre left the UC-ELN and created the CRS, which was reinserted into civilian society in 1994. At that point, they became the legal political party Socialismo Democrático (Democratic Socialism)[1]

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[1] The only published work on the CRS is a historical account of the organization produced by Restrepo and Rodriguez (2000). Regretfully, this analysis focuses on the rebel groups as a unit of analysis and provides very little information about members' experiences in the organization. While the process of members' adaptation from the MIR-Patria Libre (later on CRS) to the UC-ELN is not addressed, it can be observed that the same characteristics that make the union appealing to both sides were the ones that later on created the conditions for the separation. When the two guerrilla groups united to create the UC-ELN, the MIR-Patria Libre was a small military force with a few hundred members, little military experience and local influence in some regions of the Colombian Atlantic Coast. However, its most important asset was its strong Marxist-Leninist political cadre with vast experience in developing illegal political activities, such as infiltrating and radicalizing labor unions and peasant associations. On the other side of the merger, the ELN was the major partner, with thousands of combatants, vast military experience, and influence in many rural Colombian regions. From the beginning, the differing visions of how to conduct the conflict created problems of

Beyond the case of Colombia, other autobiographies provide important inside information about subjects' transition into clandestine organizations and adaptation strategies when joining and leaving them. For instance, Stein's autobiography of her participation in the Minneapolis political cult the "O" describes how new group members' individuality was undermined by the group with techniques such as separating new members from outside social networks, placing them in living conditions characterized by strict supervision and little privacy, and forcing new members to work in blue collar jobs in order to learn from the proletarian experience regardless of their level of education (Stein 2002). Stein observes two main difficulties in her process of adjustment. First, the great demands that the group placed on her, which resulted in her having a very busy schedule without time to engage in personal activity. The second adaptation problem was learning not to share her personal opinions with other group members. In her process of socialization into the group she encountered an organization with little receptivity to her personal views, suggestions, and complaints. She felt that expressing personal views and offering suggestions were perceived by other members as weaknesses in her commitment and ideological training.

One of the most important contributions to the study of the process of adaptation of new members into totalistic groups is found in the sociology of religion. A study typical of this field is Loftland and Stark's investigation of the individual conversion process when joining the Divine Precepts cult during the early 1960's. The researchers identify two important parts in this process, (1) predisposition, which refers to external

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adaptation between the two groups: the MIR-Patria Libre had a vision of a short-term, urban dynamic conflict oriented toward obtaining political goals, while the ELN had a vision of a long-term, passive rural resistance oriented toward reaching military goals. The difficulties of adjustment as well as external events such as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opportunities for reinsertion and for forming a legal political party generated the conditions for the separation of the two rebel movements and the formation of the CRS in 1991, which was reinserted in 1994.

factors that cause the individual to be attracted to the group and (2) situational

contingencies, which refers to the changes of emotional ties when individuals join this

group (Loftland and Stark 2003). Drawing from interviews with 21 former Divine

Precepts cult members, Loftland and Stark observed that joining the group was associated

with an increase of emotional bonds with group members and a decrease of similar bonds

with outsiders. The investigation states that at the moment of conversion the new

members identified group members as friends and had intense interactions with cult

members during their group activities. In other words, the authors found that joining the

cult involves an emotional and behavioral adaptation to the group's members and

activities. Moreover it is suggested that in the process of joining the group, progress in

one type of adaptation reinforces the other.

In a different social and political context, the same process of adjustment of

emotional bonds is described by Miguel Bonasso in his recounting of his life-course

experience in the Argentine guerrilla movement Montoneros (Bonasso 2000). This

recurrent characteristic of members' fostering internal, and neglecting external, emotional

bonds could be attributed to some totalistic characteristics of these organizations.

Despite the fact that guerrilla organizations are different from social movements

in many aspects, some elements found in studies of social movements can be applied to

the research of subversive groups. For instance, McAdams' study of activist involvement

in the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer project (1988) shows three factors that predict

who would sign up to participate in this high-risk activity. These were: the subjects'

ideology; the subjects' biographical availability, such has having time and not having

social obligations; and the subjects' social relations with other people enrolled in the

movement. However, when McAdams analyzed who actually participated in the Freedom Summer movement, he found that the most telling variable was the subjects' social relations with other activists. This finding underlines the importance of the subjects' reference groups in this type of investigation.

An interesting feature of social movement literature is the notion that these groups develop a collective identity that differs from but complements the individual identity. For instance Hoffer's study (1951) emphasizes the notion that social movements act as a tool used by their members to fulfill personal goals including self-transformation. In this context, members' personal attainments and improvements are validated by the members' successful participation in social movements. Elements such as members' concept of personal efficacy are strongly related to the social movement's activities and outcomes.

From a social psychological perspective, concepts such as schemata and scripts have been used to explain the influence that social movements have on their members' perception of their political and social surroundings (Abelson 1981). From this perspective, the social movement and its members each played an active part in the process of obtaining and evaluating important information. This approach is important for explaining changes within the social movement trajectories, such as members' selecting different social protest repertories and/or group goals.

Beyond the micro-level approach to studying social movements that is represented by several social psychological theories and is closely related to the level of analysis in this dissertation, there are other approaches to studying social movements that focus on other units of analysis. For instance, resource mobilization theory places its emphasis on social movement organization by looking at elements such as the

connections between the social movement and other social groups, the level of control that other social groups have on these movements, and the sources of support for these groups. This perspective underlines the fact that at any given time several social movement organizations are competing for limited resources, and that these resources are linked to the type of activities that these organizations engage in and the kind of outcomes they achieve (Zurcher and Snow 1981).

It is clear that despite differences in the topic of investigation, social movement literature offers very important insights into the construction of a theoretical approach for studying guerrilla/terrorist groups. Other areas in the discipline such as the sociology of emotions, that of small groups, and that of organizations also provide interesting ideas for building a comprehensive model for investigating rebel groups. However, since the goal of this dissertation is not to generate a complete theoretical framework for studying guerrilla/terrorist movements but to analyze the specific case of the Colombian reinserts from a life-course perspective, no further theoretical elaboration of the contribution of these areas to the construction of a sociological framework for the study of guerrilla/terrorism is necessary for present purposes.

Up to this point, most of the review of the literature has addressed the process of individuals' transitions into, and adaptation to deviant organizations. However, equally important for the present study is the process of subjects' transition in going from institutions with totalistic characteristics, such as a guerrilla movement, to civilian society. From the sociological perspective, studies focusing on the subjects' role exit provide a key contribution in this area.

Transitions into and Adaptation to Civilian Society

An important contribution to role exit literature is provided by SanGiovanni's study of the role exits of Catholic nuns who leave the sisterhood (SanGiovanni 1978). Using structured and non-structured, in-depth interviews with 20 former nuns, SanGiovanni identifies three stages in the role exit process from being a nun to becoming an ex-nun: (1) the relinquishment of one or more social roles, (2) a transitional phase of experimentation and initial accommodation, and (3) acquisition of new roles.

Other analytical concepts developed in SanGiovanni's study that are very helpful in understanding the reinserts' adaptation to civilian life are the process of upgrading their physical appearance and the existence and influence that passage lags have on the subjects new roles. The first involves SanGiovanni's observations of the ex-nuns' process of learning to use lay women's clothes, which is similar to the process that female reinserts underwent. The pressure that military organizations, particularly those with less technical orientation, exert over women to act like men has been extensively studied in sociology (Herbert 1998) and the situation of Colombian women who participate in different military organizations is not different from the one described by Herbert (Lara 2000). In this sense, reinsertion involves wearing women's clothing and adopting civilian physical and verbal behavior, such as walking in a feminine way, using makeup and avoiding the use of a commanding tone in normal conversations.

Another important work on the process of role exit is Ebaugh's study, based on 185 in-depth interviews with subjects from different professions. She identifies four stages in the passage from one role to another: (1) first doubts, (2) seeking alternatives, (3) the turning point, and (4) creating an ex-role. While Ebaugh did not include former

guerrilla members in the study, these four stages could be applied to the exploration of the process of adaptation to new roles in many situations, including the case of the reinserts.

Ebaugh also observes the existence of passage lags in the subjects' process of adaptation. She attributes this phenomenon to incongruities between the current self-definition of the individual and social expectations that still associate them with their past roles. Ebaugh illustrates this situation by referring to the case of a retired doctor whose former patients continue to seek advice from him. In the case of Colombia, social expectations toward reinserts are influenced by the current civil conflict. This generates an important source of stigmatization against reinserts.

In her description of her life-course in the Minneapolis political cult the "O", Stein also provides important information about the process of leaving the group and adapting to the outside society (Stein 2002). She describes the experience of departing from the group as one of undertaking a clandestine process within a clandestine organization. This process was framed by the fears of being discovered and punished, the sense of loneliness as a result of not being able to talk with others about her doubts about the movement, and the conflicting feelings of betrayal. With respect to this last point, she felt a clash of two emotions: her perception that by leaving the organization she was betraying other group members and her perception that by not fulfilling all its promises the group had betrayed her. After leaving the organization she continued experiencing an emotional conflict between the feeling that her years in the organization were worthwhile due to her life experiences and the feeling that the organization took advantage of her and made her waste many years of her life. Overall, Stein's autobiography is relevant in this

investigation since, despite the cultural and group differences from the Colombian situation, it presents very similar descriptions of the process of the members' adaptation when joining and departing from the group.

In the case of the Colombian reinserts, valuable information on personal experiences during the reinsertion process can be obtained from former guerrilla members' autobiographies. For instance, Vera Grave, former M-19 guerrilla commander, describes experiencing mixed feelings upon returning to civilian life (Grave 2000). On the one hand, she experienced a feeling of nostalgia that was triggered by remembering past experiences and friendships with comrades, as well as by the loss of the sense of existential reassurances provided by the guerrilla movement. On the other hand, she was glad to reunite with her family and recover her individual freedom after leaving the seclusion of her clandestine life. For her, the individual freedom of civilian life was translated into the enjoyment of everyday situations such as shopping in a mall or visiting friends without having to be concerned about being identified by government forces.

Grave's autobiography is also rich in sociological data that is helpful in identifying changes in social attitudes toward reinserts. Three important examples mentioned by Grave are: (1) The government forces changed their attitude from perceiving reinserts as enemies and hunting them down to considering them friends and protecting them. This new cooperation between former enemies was a key element in the adjustment in the reinserts' life. (2) The public manifested an ambiguous attitude toward the reinserts that oscillated between acceptance of and apprehension toward reinserts. For instance, she describes how the feeling of friendliness that many civilians expressed toward reinserts underwent a modification the day that Carlos Pizarro, leader of the AD-

M19, was killed in flight on a commercial airline during his presidential campaign. She relates that after learning about the assassination, she booked a fight from Barranquilla, a major Atlantic coast city where she was campaigning, to Bogota, but before taking the airplane she found out that the rest of passengers were afraid and did not want to fly with her. The association of reinserts with violent situations is part of the process of stigmatization, a phenomenon that was also observed during the present investigation. The third example mentioned by Grave's autobiography describes the loss of guerrilla members' mystic aura and charisma as a result of the reinsertion process. She points out that during the negotiation process, a lot of people visited them in the guerrilla camp. It was very common to witness the development of weekend romantic relationships between male guerrilla members and civilian females who were members of legal left-wing parties, or were doing journalist work or writing university term papers. She recalls how it became routine to see male guerrilla members bathing, carrying weapons, and wearing their best uniforms to impress the civilian ladies, and how the environs of the camp were prepared with bonfires, music, liquor, and other accoutrements that contributed to the romantic atmosphere. Grave points out that after reinsertion some male ex-guerrilla members were complaining that the same women who were romantically engaged with them at that time now would not even return a greeting when they bumped into them on the street. In this case, the loss of the mystic aura and charisma that surrounded guerrilla life was part of the adjustment into civilian society. Grave is quick to point out that the situation of female guerrilla members was different because most of them had stable relationships with other guerrilla members during the peace process.

Three studies on reinsertion of guerrilla members in Colombia

Reviewing studies on the specific topic of reinsertion in Colombia, it is possible to discern three major approaches. The first is a "soft" psychoanalytical perspective of which psychologists Maria Clemencia Castro and Carmen Lucia Diaz's study is representative (Castro & Diaz 1997). The authors use psychoanalytical theories to explain the relationships within a guerrilla movement and their influence on the reinsertion process.

The second research approach can be called "social psychological", and is employed by authors Enrique Florez and Ildefonso Henao (Florez 1997 & Henao 1997), both former members of Colombian guerrilla groups. The work of these authors is based on their experience, or participant observation, during their years in the guerrilla movement.

The third approach is the "cultural anthropological perspective," typified by the work of anthropologist Maria Victoria Uribe (Uribe 1994). Her study does not use any theoretical approach and is based on interviews with, and observations of, reinserts from guerrilla movements. Using this information she formulates some empirical categories to study the dynamics that the reinserts faced during their reinsertion process.

Because these three approaches are closely related points of reference for this dissertation, a more detailed discussion of these studies will be presented in the following pages.

In the psychoanalytical approach, Castro and Diaz investigate the reinsertion process using the psychoanalytical concepts of Freud, Lacan, and Pommier. They view reinsertion as an emotionally conflictive adaptation that involves the loss of self-identity,

personal ideals, and previous frames of reference that strongly influenced the reinserts'

social relationships after leaving the guerrilla movement. They observe that the

separation from the guerrilla movement led the reinserts to reflect on the meaning of past

social objects that they had left behind when they first joined the guerrilla movement, and

reconsider the meaning of their guerrilla experiences. From this perspective, the

reinsertion process created a new frame of reference, enabling the individuals to

reevaluate their entire life course. The data in Castro and Diaz's investigation was

collected during psychoanalytical interviews with their subjects, and some of their

findings are derived from concepts such as the subjects' unconscious motivations and the

guerrilla groups as substitute father figures for their members.

From a social psychological approach, Enrique Florez (Florez 1997) presents a

participant observation study based on his experiences as a former leader of the Partido

Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), another former guerrilla movement in

Colombia. He identifies key elements in the process of leaving the guerrilla movement,

such as the identity change that occurs when guerrilla members relinquish or destroy their

weapons. Florez argues that this situation is important because many guerrilla members

viewed their weapons as tools of power necessary to protect their lives and to relate to

society. Putting down their weapons was also a source of stress due to the initial deep

distrust of the government's armed forces that most guerrilla members felt.

In his study, Florez divided the process of reinsertion into three stages: negotiation,

peace agreement, and returning to civilian life. The first stage is characterized by

elements of insecurity, frustration, and uncertainty among the former guerrilla members.

Some guerrilla members did not know if the negotiation was real or just a tactic by the government to obtain favorable public opinion, as well as military strength.

During the second stage, when a peace agreement is reached, the role of guerrilla leaders was very important in order to diminish the feelings of insecurity, frustration, and uncertainty that many guerrilla members felt at this time. The third stage is reinsertion into civilian life, which is characterized by the return of feelings of insecurity, frustration, and uncertainty among the former guerrilla members. These feelings were reinforced by perceptions of political mistakes made by other former members as well as assassinations of some former guerrilla leaders.

Studying the reinsertion process, Florez identifies a change of perception of society in general on the part of former members of guerrilla movements. This appeared when the guerrilla members lost their anonymity and openly began interacting with other members of society. In this situation, societal expectations pressured the former guerrillas to support a peace agreement. This pressure came not only from their family and friends, but also from journalists, politicians, union leaders, and other prominent national and international figures. The change of perception of society is also attributed to the increase of information from sources other than the guerrilla organization. This was a change from a limited, unilateral, controlled source of information while they were members of the guerrilla movement, to a more diverse information environment during the peace talks.

Another social psychological contribution to the study of reinserts is offered by Ildefonso Henao (Henao 1997). He also based his study on data collected during his participation in the EPL. In his analysis, he identifies several topics that he feels should be studied from a social psychological perspective. For instance, he considers the loss of

leadership by the guerrilla commanders when entering into civilian society, and its repercussions, to be of importance. Henao is especially puzzled by the difficulties that the former guerrilla commanders faced upon reinsertion despite the many opportunities and resources available to them for becoming strong political leaders. His study offers situations in which "ordinary" guerrilla members emerged as leaders in civilian life while former guerrilla leaders could not adapt their leadership skills to civilian life.

Henao explains the phenomenon of the reversal of leadership as the result of the guerrilla movement's putting too much emphasis on military skills and not enough on intellectual abilities, political competence, and ideological knowledge. Henao attributes the collapse of some guerrilla organizations to the shift of priorities on their part; they became so concerned with their continued existence as organizations—hence the disproportionate attention paid to military capability—that their true purpose, to create a revolution, was compromised.

A final line of investigation for studying the Colombian reinsert is the cultural anthropological approach advanced by Maria Victoria Uribe (Uribe 1994). In her research, she points out that one of the motivational factors that made the guerrilla members join the movement in the first place was the desire to be part of a group with a common cause. However, this motivation was transformed into feelings of loneliness and frustration when the subversive movement ended.

A main contribution of Uribe's analysis is the study of the objective and subjective obstacles that EPL reinserts encountered when adapting to civilian life. Five objective obstacles are presented in her research: (1) a high level of mutual distrust among former guerrillas, (2) lack of political avenues to express their dissent and

nonconformity, (3) abandonment of former guerrillas by the guerrilla leadership, (4) civilian intolerance of political participation by former EPL members, and (5) the murder of the reinserts, often motivated by revenge.

Uribe also mentions five subjective obstacles that the reinserts faced in civilian life: (1) difficulty in adapting to the social and political systems that they had previously repudiated, (2) perceptions of a high level of disorganization on the part of guerrilla group leaders before the demobilization and during the subsequent reinsertion processes, (3) trouble in finding work in civilian society, (4) loss of strong authority figures and leadership that they had become accustomed to during their time in the guerrilla movement, and (5) the sense that within their new political party, Esperanza, Paz, y Libertad, their presence was not taken seriously.

Working from the same cultural anthropological approach, Beatriz Toro (Toro 1994) researches women's involvement in the guerrilla movement and the effect that being female has on their reinsertion experiences. She collected her data through interviews with women from four former guerrilla organizations, and concluded that women in a guerrilla organization had to sacrifice their femininity, and more specifically, their maternity, in order to be members of the organization, a type of organization that, according to Toro, demanded from them aggressive and rough actions. Toro says that guerrilla life involves a re-socialization process in which women must repress their femininity, but not necessarily their sexuality.

She also points out that guerrilla movements in Colombia act as primary groups that have socialization functions and have an authoritarian structure with elements of submission and conformism—similar to a family environment. A guerrilla movement

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teaches political-military values and behavior that are related to the different stages of military conflict, and require adhesion to these rules. The reinsertion process involves not only a new socio-political relationship among the former members of the guerrilla group, but also a new process of individual socialization into civilian society. These studies are important, but can be improved on through an examination based on a conflict-based life course perspective.

In summary, the present section which underlines the process of adaptation upon joining and leaving the organizations, which in most cases have totalistic characteristics and place extraordinary demands on their members is an eclectic collection of studies that can be organized in two groups. The first group consists of similar, mostly sociological, investigations that, in spite of not addressing the topic of the Colombian reinserts, provide some theoretical-conceptual as well as methodological enlightenment for the present research. This literature also provides a framework for the development of the present study and for future investigation of reinsertion processes outside of the Colombian situation.

The second set of literature in this section involves a selection of empirical research built around topics related to ex-guerrilla members from different academic perspectives. The lack of a strong, fully-developed sociological discipline in Colombia helps to explain why most of the research on this topic came from sources outside of sociology.

Adhering to Giele and Elder's model for life-course studies, the next section will more fully address the topic of "linked lives," or the influence on the subjects' life-course

exerted by subjects' families. This part of the model is accorded special weight because of its particular relevance for the study.

"Linked lives." The influence of the subjects' families in the political socialization process during their life course

In this section the issue of what Giele and Elder call social integration (or linked lives) is addressed. These are social structures that integrate individuals through living similar experiences, obeying common norms, and sharing like expectations. For instance, Giele (1995) studies the effect that agents of social integration such as family, religion, and educational networks have on the development of feminist leaders.

Using a life course model as a reference for organizing the review of the literature, the present section will focus on the effect that family has on the reinserts' life-course process as well as on similar life course processes.

Family as an agent of socialization

In the case of Colombia, the family has an important role in the process of socialization leading to violent political behavior. This could be attributed to two main factors: first, the civilian war has lasted many decades, and as a result several generations of the same family have created a family tradition around their participation in irregular armies. It is very common to find in Colombian literature some accounts in which subjects track their interest in joining the guerrilla movement to the influence of their parents and siblings, as well as the inspiration provided by ancestors who brought honor to the family by participating in previous conflicts.

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Second, it appears that the influence that family has on joining the guerrilla movement becomes more significant when the recruits are children or young teenagers. In a current study, journalist Guillermo Gonzales pointed out that between 7,000 and 10,000 minors are members of insurgent groups in Colombia (Gonzales 2002). From the eleven interviews included in Gonzales' book, it was learned that some of the guerrilla members joined these organizations at the age of seven. Very often, they were motivated to enter these groups by direct family influence (such as family members' links with these groups) and/or indirect family influence (such as lack of economic resources to support the children.) According to the United Nation report on the impact of Armed Conflict on children, cases of child-soldiers are widespread in many developing countries' civil wars (United Nations 1996).

Since the use of child-soldiers is not an existing American phenomenon and for ethical reasons child-solders were excluded from this dissertation, this topic will not be discussed further. However, it seems that including literature on child socialization, especially that related to child abuse as well as family and peer socialization, will be important in future studies for addressing the increasing number of children being recruited by these groups.

Most current research on family influence on political socialization using American subjects addresses the impact that parents have on their teenagers for the adoption of nonviolent political attitudes and behaviors such as identifying with a political party and voting. Although the subjects in the dissertation undertook violent political behavior, some findings from research based on American subjects is helpful for understanding the current investigation. For instance, the permanent relevance that

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parents have on the subjects' political attitudes is a central finding in Niemi and Jennings'

(1991) life-course research. Investigating the children's change of political attitudes in

the course of seventeen years, from teenagers to adulthood, the researchers observe that

parental partisanship has an important constant influence on the children's political

attitudes despite that fact that the children increase their political sophistication by

becoming better informed on political issues and developing a more complex ideological

framework to evaluate political information (Niemi and Jennings, 1991).

A similar finding on parents' enduring influence on their children's partisanship

was a result of Charles Franklin's research (Franklin 1984). He concurs with Niemi and

Jennings' findings that parents' party identification has some influence on their children's

partisanship but believes this influence decreases as children mature and are exposed to

other political experiences and information.

This line of research also found differences in the political socialization process

between youngsters and adults. For instance, Sears and Valentino (1997) found that while

the two age groups receive the same influence from advertisements during a political

campaign, adults showed more stable attitudes. Explaining this difference, Sears and

Valentino identify this phenomenon as political attitude crystallization. For the authors,

this is a life-course stage where political attitudes are stable and consistent over time and

have the power to influence the evaluation of new information in order to make it

consistent with the individuals' current political attitudes. For Sears and Valentino,

crystallization is a key element in the study of political socialization. They point out that

"…individuals should be regarded as well socialized if they have well-informed,

crystallized attitudes toward the important political objects of the day" (Sears and Valentino, 1997:46).

Studying the peer and network influence in the socialization process among women who attended Bennington College in 1930s and 1940s, Alwin, Cohen and Newcomb also found a crystallization of their liberal political attitudes that they formed during their college years (Alwin, Cohen, and Newcomb 1991). Although these women were raised in conservative families, the political influence of the liberal college was permanent throughout their life-courses. In this study, the key element is not the agent of political socialization (family, school, media, etc.) but the timing of the socialization. It was found that political socialization during the late teenage and early adult years tends to have more relevance in the rest of the life-course than political socialization at other stages of life. This study is relevant for this dissertation since a large number of subjects entered the guerrilla groups during their late teenage and early adult years.

In the study of Colombian society, as is the case with studies of other people in Latin America, it is more difficult to separate family political influence on their children from the influence of other institutions (college, religion, etc.) than in the U.S. because in many cases Latin American children live with their family until they get married.

For the particular situation of Colombia, the guerrilla movement should be added into the list of social institutions that have some influence on the political socialization of many youngsters. This is particularly the case in some marginal regions where even some governmental functions are performed by guerrilla organizations. Studying the relationship between peasants and guerrilla groups in regions dominated by these groups, Restrepo said,

"For these people [the peasants] the guerrilla movement has a welcome, familiar presence and helping them was the only way of breaking the daily routine. The driver of the boat, the television smuggler who conceals televisions in bunches of bananas, the fish cooker, the truck owner, [and] the man who rents mules … [collaborated with the guerrillas]. Not only did they know the guerrilla members, but also, in many instances, they had family links with them. This natural tendency to support the guerrilla movement does not mean that the peasant does not move between two sources of fear: the soldiers and paramilitaries who often kill or torture them because they are viewed as subversive collaborators, and sometimes the guerrilla organization when they are accused of being informers, deserters or traitors, transgressions that the FARC punishes with the death penalty." (Restrepo 1998: 71-72)

Studying the relationship among state, society, and peasants, Jaramillo reaches a similar conclusion. He also found that an important reason for peasant support for the rural guerrilla movement was the peasants' need to have some form of authority in their regions. Jaramillo found that the guerrilla groups are a substitute for the state in police and judicial functions, for instance protecting civilians from common criminals and serving as judges during community disputes (Jaramillo 1988).

In urban areas dominated by the government, the relationship between family and the guerrilla movement is significantly more clandestine. While there are no studies on this type of relationship, several biographies and other journalistic accounts describe situations where guerrilla members received support from their families. For instance, Peralta and Patiño's compilation of seventeen ex-combatants' life histories includes references to situations were guerrilla members were helped by their families (Peralta and Patiño 2004). For instance, they present the case of Pablo's family that helped him search and hid EPL material after the news that his brother Fredy, also an EPL member, was captured or killed during a bank robbery, which occasioned concerns on Pablo's part about the strong likelihood of a police search of their home.

While Peralta and Patiño did not offer an analysis of this data, from a perspective of the sociology of deviance, this phenomenon is an example of a subterranean tradition, where the families secretly support values and behaviors that are openly condemned (Heitzeg 1996). In the case of Colombia, the subterranean tradition of accepting the guerrilla movement is not limited to the family but is extended to other social groups such as labor unions, students organizations, peasant cooperatives, and legal left-wing political parties from which new guerrilla members are recruited. Also, it is important to state that the subterranean tradition of accepting the guerrilla movement is not only key in explaining the recruitment process but is also an important element for understanding why people stay in these rebel organizations. Even families who do not agree with the subjects' activities prefer to maintain silence about these illegal activities in order to avoid sanctions from the groups in conflict, such as being subjects of repression from police forces or retaliation by an illegal group.

The investigation of the relationship between ex-guerrilla members and their families during their time in the subversive group has some legal repercussions since only the reinserts were covered by the government amnesty. As a result, official reports on the social psychological aspects of reinserts indicate that at the moment of joining the guerrilla movement, the subjects break their ties with their family, schools and place of work (Restrepo 1994). This finding is contradictory to most independent research, which points out that in many cases guerrilla members entered these organizations as a way to continue their family political traditions (Della Porta 1998).

In the process of returning to civilian society, the family and civilian peers have an important role in the resocialization process. Leon Valencia, a CRS reinsert, indicates

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that leaving the guerrilla movement was a process of conflict between two loyalties: one

was loyalty toward the past that included memories of the death of comrades and loss

dreams of a better social future and the other was present-day loyalties: the families,

friends, and the personal projects whose enjoyment was postponed during the

participation in the guerrilla movement (Valencia 1996).

The importance of and relationship between the process of recovering their

individual identity and returning to their family is also emphasized by reinsert Dario

Mejia's evaluation of ex-guerrilla experiences in the process of leaving the guerrilla

movement when he says,

> "Recovering the individuality that had been daily assaulted by the guerrilla
> commanders and by daily life within the military conflict entails the ex-members'
> rescuing their 'I' as a part of the process of reinsertion. Little by little, very
> slowly, people recover their personalities and their self-esteem, begin rebuilding
> their lives, and return to their family, an important step that provides them self-
> confidence and security." (Mejia 1995)

Some psychological literature addresses the negative impact that the lack of a

family structure has on the process of resocialization. This is especially the case of the

underage reinserts who have lost all their relatives during the military conflict. A report

on the youngsters' social reintegration into society said,

> "The loss of parents and other close relatives leaves a scar for their whole lives
> and can have a powerful effect on their development. Extreme and sometimes
> lengthy exposure to the armed conflict can have an impact on the normal
> evolution of their identity. As a result, many teenagers—especially those who
> have very painful experiences—are unable to think about their future; they have
> very pessimistic views of their lives, suffer from acute depression, or in the worst
> cases, commit suicide. It is possible that they neither want nor ask adults for help.
> In addition, the death or disappearance of their parents left them lacking [parental]
> guidance, role models, and economic support." (Diaz 1997:106)

Other autobiographical literature (Vera 2000) and studies on reinsertion (Castro

2001) have underlined the importance that family has in the process of individual, social

and economic resocialization in civilian society. In these cases the family provides the individual with resources to rebuild their self-identities, with social links within society, and in some cases with economic means to begin a productive life in civilian society.

<u>Reflections on the development of the life-course model used in the dissertation</u>

The life-course model used as a guide for the presentation of this dissertation should be placed in the historical context of the evolution of studies of socialization. Early studies of socialization were organized from psychological perspectives that focus on the natural development of children, where age was the dominant variable for explaining the children's acquisition of cultural norms as well as the formation and evolution of their social relationships with others in society. This developmental perspective used in explaining a large range of socialization processes including those related to political socialization. From this context political socialization was viewed as a "process of initiation into politics. [During this process] political awareness and involvement gradually grow as children are exposed to political events and actors, some of which they experience directly, … and through the mass media." (Greenstein 1969:5) Greenstein himself uses psychoanalytical concepts such as "latency years" to identify and explain the beginning of the development of political attitudes around the ages of nine to thirteen.

Reviewing this tendency, Sears and Levy said,

"The lasting influence of such early attitudes was largely assumed rather than tested directly, perhaps sustained by the then-widespread conviction, derived from psychoanalytic and learning theories, that 'great oaks from little acorns grow.' This assumption soon encountered robust criticism, … along with considerable research." (Sears and Levy 2003:61)

These early psychological models of socialization were brought into question by investigators in several disciplines (e.g. Political Science, Sociology, and History). Evidence has been found in these fields that the process of socialization was a life-long process and is influenced by several other factors beyond the aging process. Even in studies of the political socialization of children and adolescents, it was found that other societal factors have an influence equal to or greater than aging. For instance, Rempel's study on the political socialization of children in Nazi Germany (Rempel 1989) indicates that the overwhelming power of the German regime negated the influence of any social group that may have opposed the children's participation in political and war activities.

A major sociological contribution to understanding the process of socialization was made by Parsons' structural functionalist model, which contains four basic variables of analysis: latent maintenance, integration, goal attainment, and adaptation. This approach has been extensively used in many areas of social science research including the study of social movements. In this particular area, a work which was influential for the present study is Giele's retrospective study of the women's temperance and suffrage movements in the U.S. (Giele 1995). In this investigation, Giele identifies pattern maintenance (location in time and space) as the tendency of social movements to engage in activities that coincide with the values of the larger society. For instance, she found that most temperance leaders were women who belonged to protestant churches with strong views against alcohol consumption. This ideological motivation appears to be more important than their personal experience with an alcoholic spouse, since, according to Giele, only one of the 98 leaders included in the study had a husband well-known for his drinking problems.

Giele's (1995) analysis also includes the concept of goal attainment (human agency) to describe the ways that women's movements framed and undertook actions that advanced the causes of their organizations. Studying the strategy and tactics of the suffrage reform, Giele emphasizes the women's movement's efforts to define the denial of women's right to vote as a public problem and the movement's decision to broaden their support base by appealing to more liberal and educated voters who may have had some doubts about the women's organizations due to their past history in the temperance movement.

A third factor in Giele's model is integration (linked lives). She observes how social movements integrate ideologies, or pattern maintenance, along with the attainment of goals, which are expressions of grievances on the part of the social groups, into society. In this case, the integration takes place as a way of resolving role strains, such as that which could happen in the case of women who extensively participate in economic activities outside their homes but are denied the right of equal participation in politics. In her study, Giele cites several authors who question the revolutionary nature of the suffrage movement by indicating that the suffrage movement was not very effective in extending equal rights for women for the first forty years of the existence of the movement, until the women's movements of the 1960s.

A final element in Parsons' general model and in Giele's life course model is adaptation (timing and transition). Studying women's changing roles from 1920 to 1990 Giele found that the women's social movements assisted women in their process of adaptation to modern society in various ways. For instance, by increasing of their level of education, gaining more access to paid jobs, and modifying their family structures by

having fewer children and opting more often for divorce, women have been able to adapt to new demands in society. In this sense, social movements aid women in the process of adaptation to new social situations.

While Giele's analysis investigation offered a careful, well-crafted review of the temperance and women's suffrage movements in the U.S., her collaborative theoretical work with Glen Elder in designing a model for life-course research was an improvement on her work for two main reasons (Giele and Elder 1998). First, it opened the possibility of carrying out a more micro-level analysis of the life-course process, and second, it brought social psychological concepts into the model. For instance, with Giele and Elder's approach, key concepts of micro-level life course studies, such as turning points and trajectories, became central.

It can be said that Giele and Elder's model presents a transition between a model strongly influenced by the structural functionalist approach used in Giele's study of the women's movements and a more flexible social psychological model proposed by Elder et al. in the Handbook of Life Course (Elder, Kirkpatrick, and Crosnoe 2003). This is why the four elements in Giele and Elder's model are introduced using two alternative terms: location in time and place (or pattern maintenance), cultural background, linked lives or social integration, human agency or individual goal orientation, and timing lives or strategic adaptation.

The present dissertation falls within this life-course model by emphasizing the micro-level aspect of the reinserts' life-course experiences. In addition, it allows for enriching the model by including in the analysis concepts from the sociology of deviance such as stigmatization and ex-roles. While the goal of this investigation is not to test and

evaluate Giele and Elder's approach, the use of the model in this study provides conceptual guidance and allows the model itself to be evaluated and perhaps continued improvement of it. Up to this point in the development of the model, some of its most important advantages has been its flexibility, which allows it to be applied to different types of life-course studies, its power for studying the interrelation between different types of variables (historical, personal, relationships, etc), and its malleability, which allows other perspectives to be incorporated. For instance, contrary to Parsons' model, Giele and Elder's life-course approach permits incorporating a conflict perspective into the analysis.

This model offers a very helpful approach to the study of the life course transitions of the reinserts, since it places special attention on key elements in the ex-combatants' life, such as their adaptation to the guerrilla movement and later to civilian society, as well as their stay in the guerrilla movement and the later course of their life in civilian society.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The inductive and descriptive nature of the investigation

This investigation is predominately inductive. It "… begins with concrete, specific observations and seeks to identify general principles governing what is being observed." (Wiggins et al. 1994:18) As such, an important goal of this study is to explore and describe the life-course of former guerrillas, using interviews conducted with 42 ex-guerrilla members of three former Colombian guerrilla organizations (M-19, EPL, and CRS) as a main source of information.

The richness of this research lies in the description of the reinserts' life-course and in the comparison of their experiences in the guerrilla movements. There is no intention to formulate or test causal models or to test inferences about the reinserts as a whole, or about the three former guerrilla groups included in the study. The descriptions given in this text do not indicate, with statistically measurable accuracy, why the differences or patterns exist.

A descriptive investigation is often understood as being an enterprise which "… focuses on relatively few dimensions of a well-defined entity and measures these dimensions systematically and precisely, usually with detailed numerical description" (Singleton, and et. 1988:90). Following a life course perspective, the three general dimensions studied in this investigation focus on key transitions: (1) the reinserts' lives before entering the guerrilla movement, (2) the reinserts' lives during the time they were in the guerrilla movement, and (3) the reinserts' lives as they leave the guerrilla movement. Based on these three dimensions, the author formulates three general questions that form a guideline around which data about the subjects' life experience is

presented: (1) Why do subjects join the guerrilla movement? (2) Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement? and (3) Why do members leave the group?

The results from the investigation are supported by presenting the subjects' narrations of their personal life-course experiences as well as, whenever possible, tables summarizing all the subjects' experiences on a particular topic in the investigation. Since discussing some results with tables and other results without tables could give rise to some concerns, it is important to explain that tables are included when the data was drawn from one or two closely related questions. However, when information about a topic was collected from several questions, the construction of tables that accurately represent the subjects' answers became more apt to lead to confusion. For instance, when subjects were asked about the influence of peers on entering the guerrilla movements, several subjects said that they joined the group of their own will without the influence of others. Probably some of these answers were triggered by the subjects' eagerness to state that they were not duped into these organizations by others. However, throughout the interview, as topics were developed and memories were recalled, some of these same subjects mentioned making contacts, developing friendships and being inspired by people in the guerrilla group as reasons for joining them. With respect to this particular point, the accumulated information was compelling enough to reach the conclusion that these organizations, due to their secret nature, relied significantly on peer socialization for contacting and recruiting new members.

Within the framework of sociologist Theodore N. Greenstein's view on descriptive studies, these investigations are "concerned with the identifying and labeling of phenomena. A good parallel in the biological sciences is the taxonomic classification

system of all living organisms into phyla, species, and so forth." (Greenstein 2001:4-5) In the case of the present investigation, the descriptive nature appears in the identification of the individuals' narratives about their transitions, specifically their reasons for joining, staying, and leaving the group as well as in the labeling of new concepts, such as "reinserts," for identifying formal guerrilla/terrorist member.

Selection of a methodology for the study

The data for this investigation was collected using in-depth interviews. These interviews were conducted by following an open-ended, structured questionnaire, with subjects selected by means of a snowball sampling procedure. The first individuals contacted and interviewed were former guerrilla members who were either Colombian government employees, NGO employees or university workers. They were asked to provide additional contacts with other former guerrillas, with a view to increasing the pool of interviewees. The snowball sampling continued until fourteen (14) subjects from each of the three former guerrilla groups were interviewed. Since this investigation includes interviews with subjects who in many cases are still afraid of possible retaliation against them, snowball selection facilitated obtaining some of the interviews, since subjects learned about the experience of previous interviewees. It is also important to indicate that the author began contacting subjects in 1995, a factor that in some situations provided reassurance about the academic purpose of the interviews.

The use of structured and open-ended questions

In the course of the structured interviews performed in this study, all subjects were asked the same questions, in the same order, so that information could be obtained which would allow the researcher to compare members within the study group. For instance, by asking all interviewees about the influence of religion on their decision to join these groups, the author was able to find that in almost all cases religion does not have a direct effect on the decision to join any of the three guerrilla movements.

Despite the well-known disadvantages of open-ended questions, such as " . . . the cost and difficulty of adequately coding responses" (Judd et al. 1991:239), these questions are used in order to build up a more complete and less constrained database of the subjects' biographical accounts. Open-ended questions are an excellent tool for learning the full range of beliefs, feelings, and motives in the subjects' life-course. While having open-ended questions increases the codification work for each answer, it also provides a wealth of information that is useful for obtaining a more complete picture of the reinserts' life-course experiences.

In conclusion, the use of open-ended questions in these structured interviews permits a balance between a comparative analysis commonly done with closed ended questions and the free flow of information from subjects, something which is characteristic of more unstructured interviews. This procedure for collecting the data is especially helpful when results are drawn from only one or two similar questions. In this way, it is possible to present a very concrete comparison between groups that could be presented by tables summarizing the data.

Data for the investigation

       Data in this investigation is derived from a sample of forty-two (42) former members of Colombian guerrilla groups. In 2003, they participated in structured, face-to-face, in-depth interviews, conducted in Spanish, that lasted approximately two hours. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis by the author. All the interviews included in the study were completed. Only two interviews were conducted in more than one session, and only two potential interviewees declined to participate in the study.

       The questionnaire originally consisted of ninety-six (96) questions, divided into three long sections. The first section, with twenty-three (23) questions, addressed the issue of the reinserts' lives before transitioning into a guerrilla movement. The second section, with thirty-five (35) questions, focused on the subjects' experiences as members of guerrilla groups, and the third section, with thirty-eight (38) questions, explored their experiences leaving the guerrilla movement and as they transitioned into the civilian role. After the first few interviews, one question in the first section and two questions in the second section were added to the questionnaire, in order to make sure that interviewees addressed two important topics: the influence that romantic relationships had on joining a guerrilla movement, and the possible influence that clandestineness had on their self-concept. As a result, most interviewees were asked ninety-nine (99) questions. Overall, it is common to do in-depth, or intensive interviews, which take longer than survey research interviews, according to several methodologists. (Singleton and et. 1988). It is also important to point out that the final number of questions was produced after a careful selection process, which began with a first draft containing more than 400 possible questions.

Questions related to sensitive issues such as the subjects' combat activities as well as the finances of the guerrilla organizations were avoided; therefore this study does not delve into these topics.

Analysis of the data

After the data was collected and transcribed in Spanish, the answers to each question in the study were read and analyzed by two different persons, the researcher and a research assistant. The possible categories into which answers could be classified were discussed prior to this reading. These categories were developed on the basis of three elements: (1) the theoretical framework of the dissertation that was used for drawing up the questions, (2) the first reading of the text, when the researcher was transcribing the tapes, and (3) general social knowledge of Colombian culture and history. The analysis and classification of the data were done one question at a time, and independently, both by the researcher and by his assistant. Once concluded, the researcher's and the assistant's classifications were compared and discussed. Then, a reconciliation process between the two analyses took place. New categories were also introduced during this process, and old ones expanded so that the classification would reflect the data more accurately. The process of analyzing the answers took around five hours for each question, on average.

Overall, questions with numerical answers, such as question # 7 ("How old were you when you joined the guerrilla movement?") were easy to classify, while questions with elaborate answers, such as question # 24 ("Would you describe your experience as a member of a guerrilla movement?"), required more time due to the wide range of responses. As a part of the analysis of each question, possible quotes that illustrated the

main classification categories were selected. Quotes were also selected on the basis of their ability to illustrate the subjects' interpretations of their life-course events.

Following a suggestion from the dissertation committee, a second wave of data analysis took place. On this occasion, instead of concentrating on developing categories and comparing subjects question by question, focus was placed on reading the complete interviews in order to develop major sociological themes. This new approach for analyzing the data was very helpful because it permitted the researcher to observe and integrate information from several questions. For instance, it allowed a better perspective of the influence that ideology has on the different stages of the subjects' life-course.

Anonymity of the subjects in the text

In order to keep the identity of the subjects confidential, their real names were replaced by code names. When interviewees were quoted, they were identified by a code name followed by the name of the guerrilla movement that they belonged to at the moment of reinsertion, for instance Carlos M-19 or Maria CRS. After the quote, the code name and the number of the question from which the quote is taken appears, for instance Carlos 86 or Maria 45. Information that would allow the reader to identify the subjects' real identity was not included. While some information, such as a quote discussing having several romantic partners, could appear to the reader to be very specific, the particular characteristics of these groups made these situations very common among its members. For example, having several romantic partners during their life-course in the movement was very common. This was not only because many subjects entered these organizations during the peak of their sexually active years and spent many years in the

movement, but also because the movements encourage people to date other members. In rural units members had little exposure to outsiders without whom it would have been possible to maintain a romantic relationship, while in urban areas maintaining a romantic relationship with an outsider was very taxing due to the clandestine nature of the guerrilla activities. In general, romantic relationships with outsiders were very unstable. These relationships usually ended up in the group member's decision to leave the group or in the romantic partner's involvement, to some degree, in some group activities.

Reason to use a snowball sample over a probabilistic sample

There are four reasons that a snowball, rather than a probabilistic sample, was use. First, there was no dependable database of the entire reinserted population, or of the three groups in the study, which would have allowed the investigator to draw a probabilistic sample in order to conduct a survey study. During the preliminary stage of this investigation, the researcher learned that, as a result of the peace agreement with the clandestine groups, the government received a list of names and identity card numbers of the groups' members so that the judicial proceedings against them could be stopped, and also so that the amnesty process could be begun. These lists contained the names of 900 subjects from the M-19, 2082 from the EPL, and 698 from the CRS.

A further investigation of these lists revealed that some guerrillas had not included their names on the lists, and that some identification numbers were not authentic. Given the failure of some members to include their real names on these lists— they were afraid to disclose their true identity—and the absence of a reliable source for verifying their data (even the providers of these lists, the former organizations, often did

not have their real names and identification numbers), the lists were unreliable for purposes of drawing a probabilistic sample that would accurately reflect the reinsert population. It was learned during the course of the study that, in fact, some members used their assumed names even when getting married, giving surnames to their children, and registering for college.

Additionally, when these lists were being compiled by the guerrilla movement on behalf of the government, most guerrilla members did not have to, or were unwilling to, provide a permanent address or a telephone number where they could be reached. This was especially the case with rural guerrilla members who had lived in improvised guerrilla camps in the wilderness for many years until the guerrilla movement signed a peace agreement.

Demographic information about the reinsert population did not increase significantly after reinsertion. After the signing of the peace agreements, guerrilla movements immediately went through a process of fragmentation. On the day of the peace ceremony, the whole structure of the organization was dismantled, leaving each member to provide for him/herself with no help from the group.

The uncontrolled break-up of the guerrilla organizations resulted in some members' continuing with their illegal activities in other guerrilla or paramilitary groups, or in criminal organizations. Other reinserts severed all contact with former comrades and set out on a civilian life without disclosing their past. Another important group of reinserts died or were killed after giving up the fight. Government figures from the mid-1990s put the reinsert death figure at around 470, while more recent independent

assessments suggested that more than one thousand reinserts died, most of them by violent means.

The group of reinserts that could legally be contacted for this study is made up of subjects who have kept in touch to some extent with reinsert organizations, or who have recently participated in government programs. Some members of this group spoke of extreme economic hardships, such as living without a telephone or permanent residence. Other subjects preferred not to talk about their past, for psychological reasons. These cases would provide an additional challenge for the construction of a probabilistic sample. In the best-case scenario, it is estimated that fewer than 736 of the total reinsert population of 3,680 (20 percent) originally identified to the government by the guerrilla organizations at the time of the peace agreement could constitute a population to be sampled, if all known lists of reinserts were consolidated.

A second reason that a snowball sample was used is that even if a reliable database of the reinserted population had been available, the cost of conducting such a probabilistic survey would have been extremely high, due to the fact that many subjects live outside Bogotá. Some have even moved to other countries.

A third reason that a snowball sample was used is that in this particular type of study, where many subjects were still worried about possible retaliation for their previous involvement in a guerrilla movement, snowball sampling created an element of trust, because new subjects were referred by other close ex-members who had already participated in the study. Further elements that helped to maintain the level of trust were the author's previous research about the reinserted population starting in the mid-1990s (Florez-Morris 1996) and the fact that personal information about the author was made

available to all the interviewees, which allowed them to do a background check before participating in the study.

Also, in order to keep up the level of trust during the interview, the questionnaire did not include any specific references to criminal behavior or acts of war during the subjects' time in the guerrilla movement. In addition, the interviews were conducted at places mutually agreed upon by the interviewer and the interviewee. Most of these places were either offices where the interviewees worked, reinsert organizations, private homes, or local coffee shops. All the interviews were conducted in Bogotá or its outskirts. Furthermore all interviews were private, with no third person to act as a witness. Due to the ELN's current active status as a subversive organization in Colombia, the element of trust took on even greater importance for its former members, the CRS reinserts, during the interviews. Some ex-CRS guerrilla members still feared possible retaliation by their one-time comrades who, in some cases, perceived them as traitors. Other ex-CRS members believed they were targeted by right-wing organizations, which saw them as the political avant-garde of the ELN, doing political work on behalf of the guerrilla movement in geographical regions where the ELN did not have a strong military presence.

Finally, the experience of other investigators doing similar work with members or former members of totalistic institutions was an important factor when the methodology for this study was being selected. For example, Thomas Robbins had this to say about the study of cult converts and ex-converts in the US: "Probabilistic samples of the members of a particular movement, or of ex-members either of a particular group or of cults in general, are nearly impossible to draw." (Robbins, Thomas 1988:15) The review of the

literature in this text includes studies by several researchers who were aware of the limitations of conducting such investigations, and as a result opted to design non-probabilistic studies using methods other than survey research to collect the data.

Research design and quality of the data

The particular focus of the study, the life course of the former guerrillas, could most easily be examined with retrospective narratives. For instance, a study using a prospective design, where measurements are made before and during the subjects' membership of these groups, would be extremely difficult to produce. Some of the most obvious reasons are: (1) there are no ways of identifying the few thousand future guerrilla members from a large population—more than forty million, in the case of Colombia; (2) guerrilla organizations are, by nature, secretive; their existence depends on maintaining their clandestinity and withholding information from outsiders, and even while in these organizations, for security reasons, most members have only partial information about the group; (3) conducting research on current guerrilla movements is work that is usually done by the police and/or other intelligence organizations; directly observing these groups as well as collecting and holding the resulting valuable military information would turn the investigator into a participant in the conflict; (4) a matter which is related to the previous point is the collecting and holding of information about people and organizations that are engaged in violent activities which result in thousands of deaths a year would create a major moral and legal dilemma.

While minor in comparison, other drawbacks of a prospective design that should be mentioned are the cost of the study, the mortality rate of the subjects (which very

likely would be high due to their engagement in combat), and the time that it would take to conclude the study. Obviously, a prospective study that includes the reinsertion stage would have to be postponed until a guerrilla movement signed a peace agreement with the government. After more than 40 years of military struggle between the government and some Colombian guerrilla movements, there is still no a clear indication of when another group will reinsert into civilian life, or if they ever will. Speculation about these groups breaking up due to the collapse of the Soviet Union and other communist block allies was proved wrong. The guerrilla movements' ability to substitute internal sources of revenue, such as illegal drug money and ransom for hostages, for the aid they used to receive from communist countries has not only sustained but even strengthened these groups economically.

Since there were so many limitations on a prospective study for this particular topic, it was opted to use a retrospective study design where, as the name would indicate, the data is collected by looking back on the life-course of the subjects. The investigation is thus not based on factual information about past events, but on the subjects' interpretation of these events at the time of the interview.

It was observed throughout the interviews that some subjects' recollections were characterized by: (1) poor memory, (not remembering or mixing up information [e.g. about dates]); (2) memory selectivity (remembering only certain aspects of their experience); for instance, a romantic relationship as a motivating factor for joining a guerrilla movement was not mentioned by most interviewees until a question addressing the topic was added to the questionnaire; (3) impression management (emphasizing the positive aspects of their participation in the movement while under-reporting their

personal failures); here, some interviewees even expressed their displeasure upon listening to or reading other members' heroic accounts; (4) exposure to other interpretations, such as that of psychoanalysts, since some subjects were psychoanalyzed after leaving the organization. One interviewee even stated that part of the "drive" to join the movement was the result of an "unconscious" need to substitute for an absent father figure, while on other occasions, accounts of how they experienced the peace process were influenced by peace process and negotiation literature that subjects had read after leaving the guerrilla movement; irrespective of the accuracy of these interpretations, they still highlight some aspects of the subjects' life-course experience; and (5) political correctness, taken in this case to mean a favorable opinion of the democratic electoral system and private ownership, and a censure of the use of violence as a means to power.

Obviously, these five recurrent hindrances are not limited to retrospective studies using in-depth interviews. In fact, characteristics inherent in the in-depth interview, such as the considerable length of the conversation with the subjects and the substantial number of questions included, provide the interviewee and the interviewer with more opportunities to communicate, evaluate, and even correct information than a survey research with closed-ended questions does. For instance, an in-depth interview allows the subject to answer complex questions by responding from different perspectives. It is not surprising that readers unfamiliar with this type of qualitative technique might become overwhelmed by the amount of information that in-depth interviews sometimes provide on a particular topic. One of the researcher's main tasks was therefore to channel subjects' answers into the simplest categories possible.

Another important consideration when selecting a retrospective approach was the relevance that the relationship with the former guerrilla movement had to the subjects' lives. In many cases, members had had a permanent and active relationship with these organizations for a decade or more. It was therefore not surprising that they had vivid memories and strong attitudes and beliefs regarding their participation in these groups, as well as their return to civilian society.

Retrospective studies like this one are based on the individuals' interpretations of past events, and not on the collection of historical "facts", so basing the quality of the data on reliability, which "refers to the stability or consistency of a measurement operation [and validity, which] . . . refers to whether we're really measuring the concept that we intended to measure" (Greenstein 2001:66) becomes a serious problem for most researchers. Analyzing retrospective measurement in life-course studies, Scott and Alwin concluded that, "When issues of both reliability and validity are considered in relation to retrospective reports, it is little wonder that the two concepts often are confused because they are, in fact, confounded in most empirical data" (Scott and Alwin 1998:123).

Focusing on political studies, Johnson and Joslyn identified validity as the "… correspondence between the measure and the concept it is thought to measure" (Johnson, Janet and Richard Joslyn 1986:66). One of their measures of validity is called content validity, and "… involves determining the full domain or meaning of a particular concept and then making sure that measures of all portions of this domain are included in the measurement technique." (Johnson, Janet and Richard Joslyn, 1986:67) For this project, the use of in-depth interviews with forty-two (42) different subjects provided an extensive set of individual views on many of the issues addressed. For instance, questions

31 ("As a member of the movement, how much attention, or lack of attention, did you receive from the organization?") and question # 32 ("Would you give an example that illustrates the level of attention, or lack of attention, that you received from the organization?") provided the researcher with an extensive selection of perspectives about the subjects' views on the concept of attention. The content validity of this study is demonstrated at the beginning of the questionnaire, through comprehensive questions regarding social influences on the decision to join a guerrilla movement. The concept of social influence was addressed by including the influence of the family, economic status, religion, and even popular culture, such as songs and books, in the analysis.

Difficulty in the wording of questions

Almost all questions were easily understood by the subjects. One exception was question # 37a ("Other reinserts have said that becoming clandestine had several levels. They describe the process in which they became increasingly immersed to the point in where they became "strangers" even to themselves. One former guerrilla mentioned that he felt that when he looked at himself in a mirror, he saw a stranger. Did you have similar experiences?"), which explores the relationships between living a clandestine life as a guerrilla member and the effects of this on the self, the rest of the questions were easily understood by the interviewees. When subjects had problems understanding this particular question, the question was repeated by the interviewer. It was felt that the difficulties in understanding this question were compensated by the information it led to of reinserts' experiences while living clandestinely.

<u>The use of loaded words while conducting the interview</u>

While the questions in the study were drawn up using the most neutral terms possible (words were selected on the basis of reading similar previous investigations), a few subjects expressed concern about the use of two terms in the questionnaire: first, a few interviewees stated that they prefered to be called "demobilized" (as with soldiers who had stopped fighting) instead of "reinserts" (as with outsiders who returned to society). They said the term "demobilized" portrayed them as people who had made an active decision to leave the war, whereas the term "reinserts" portrayed them as passive subjects who had reentered civilian society with the help of the state. A second term that a few interviewees felt was badly chosen was "surrendered the weapons." They said that they had put down their weapons, but they had not surrendered them.

One reason for objecting to these two terms was the interviewees' determination not to be seen as underachievers. They saw themselves as ex-members of former insurgent groups which had negotiated peace agreements with the government on fair terms. One of these agreements led to important political changes in Colombia such as the drafting of a new constitution in 1991. The researcher agrees with the subjects' assessment of their role in this case.

While the use of these two terms did not present obstacles with respect to completing the interviews or the flow of the conversations, it would be advisable for these two terms to be replaced in future investigations of this topic. In general, using the most neutral vocabulary possible facilitates the research. To see this principle in effect, one only need look at the evolution of the sociology of religion, which is marked by the

renaming of one of its object of study. This is the change of name from the study of sects and cults to the new more neutral name of new religious movements.

Framing the current study as a life history study

In addition to the results presented in this dissertation, which are focused on the topic of subjects' transitions into and out of the rebel political organizations, the current investigation had a broader scope which could be classified as a life history study which, "according to Elder, . . . is 'a lifetime chronology of events and activities that typically and variably combine data records on education, work life, family, and residence.'" (Scott, Jacqueline and Duane Alwin, 1998:100)

This investigation is structured according to Scott and Alwin's classification of life history data, which can be broken down into three categories. The first category, event histories, includes the specifics of past events, such as the time of occurrence, as well as their sequence and duration. With respect to event histories, this study includes questions about the timing of subjects' past events, such as question # 7 ("how old were you when you joined the guerrilla movement?"), the duration of past events, such as question # 23 ("How much time passed [weeks, months, years, etc.] from the time that the guerilla activities began to appeal to you to the moment that you joined a guerrilla movement?"), and the subjects' sequencing of past events, such as question # 19 ("Would you describe, in general, the recruitment process of your guerrilla group?").

The second category, accumulation of experiences, which is an important part of the study, involves past experiences, achievements, interests, values, and attitudes. An example of a question in this category is question # 61 ("Could you narrate some of your

experiences during the first weeks after leaving the guerrilla movement?"). The study also addresses the reinserts' present experiences and attitudes. An example of questions addressing the current situation is question # 74 ("To what degree do the reinserts that are currently in politics represent your political ideals and views of the country?").

The third category, evaluation/interpretation of experiences, entails the assessment of past situations and present conditions in the life-course. Question # 33 ("How much did the organization depend, or not depend, on your work for it?") required the subject to evaluate his/her past relationships with the guerrilla organization in terms of dependency. Another example of questions specific to this category is question # 83 ("In general, what is the situation of the demobilized combatants in Colombia?"). This question investigated the subjects' assessment of the current condition of the reinserted population.

It is important to note that Scott and Alwin's typology of life history data also includes looking at the subjects' future expectations of events and experiences. While this was the least developed part of the present study, question # 96 ("Would you describe how you see your life in five years?") addresses reinserts' future expectations.

The fact that the current chapter presents discussions about data that was not included in the result section is due to the goal of providing the reader with a proper perspective of the broad nature of the methodology and data collection. This broad perspective also helps the reader to have an accurate view of the potential that the data has for drawing other sets of results and for serving as a baseline for further research on the topic.

Conclusion

Despite the extraordinary research tools that modern social scientists have for performing sociological investigations, the study of Colombian reinserts provides several important challenges that preclude the possibility of applying several methods of investigation. First, the secret nature of these groups kept the researcher and even former members from learning about some of the groups' past activities. For this reason, it is very difficult to provide a complete picture of some aspects of the members' experience in these organizations. For instance, the subjects' involvement in violent and criminal actions is considered an important experience in the subjects' life-course but it is not addressed by this investigation due to the difficulties of the topic.

Second, the ongoing violence in Colombia, with reinserts continuing to be targeted by violent groups, also created an important constraint on the investigation. For instance the death of the reinserts creates problems of high mortality rate and made reinserts less willing to participate and disclose information about their past.

Finally, the most important challenge in conducting this investigation was the underdevelopment of social science in Colombia. The weakness of local social science research is manifested in several ways. For instance, it leads to situations where important events such as the reinsertion of several important guerrilla groups were not accompanied by survey research interviews at the moment of leaving the group and throughout their life-course in civilian society. It is also manifested by the lack of funds to conduct research on important topics such the guerrilla reinsertion, as well as the strong influence that current events have on the selection of research topics. This last

point made the development of a research program which would span several decades very difficult.

Developing this research project outside the United States, in a developing country, offers the possibility to witness the strong influence that the social context has on the selection and use of research techniques. For instance, the lack of government resources to maintain a data bank on reinserts as well as the fact that many reinserts do not maintain permanent addresses and telephones made the use of survey research in this kind of study very difficult. On the other hand, the absence of other studies using sociological social psychology to research the life-course of group members in Colombia makes this study a reference point for future sociological work among the few scholars in the country. From a theoretical and conceptual perspective, this work offers a new empirical contribution to a Colombian sociological academic environment that has been strongly influenced, if not dominated, by macro-level sociological studies framed by the conflict theory perspective.

Chapter 4: Results

The present chapter will discuss findings on three research questions focused around life course transitions: (1) why do subjects join the guerrilla movement? (2) Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement? and (3) Why do members leave the group?

Part I: "Why do subjects join the guerrilla movement?"

In this section, the author addresses the research question "Why do subjects join the guerrilla movement?" Seven factors will be presented that influence an individual's decision to join these groups. The first two factors, family (1) and peers (2), follow from the principle of "linked lives" or social integration emphasizing the importance of others in the transition process. The second two factors, conflict escalation (3) and generational imprint (4), emphasize the importance of historical time, and the final three factors, biographical availability (5), individual ideology (6), and subjects' desire to improve their economic and social status in the community (7) reflect agency. Each of these factors has a direct influence on what Giele and Elder define as the subjects' strategies of adaptation to their life stage, the fourth factor in these authors' life-course model.

For each factor, the author will include relevant quotes, and whenever possible, the answers given by the 42 interviewees will be summarized in tables.

(1) Family influence on the process of joining a guerrilla movement

The study indicates that an important number the interviewees (more than 50%) felt that the family had a large influence on the process of joining a guerrilla movement. The data in the table below indicates the number of subjects who felt that their family had some influence on their joining these organizations.

Table 1 : Subjects' perception of family influence on entering a guerrilla movement

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Subjects describing some family influence	7 50%	9 64%	8 57%	24 57.1%
Subjects stating no family influence	7 50%	5 36%	6 43%	18 42.9%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

Table 1 shows that 50% of the M-19 subjects, 64% of EPL subjects, and 57% of CRS subjects referred to family influence.

The influence of the family occurs in three situations: (1) In situations where previous generations had a tradition of participating in guerrilla movements, and family members are pushed to follow this tradition; (2) When a family crisis influenced some of its members and led them to change their political attitude in favor of the guerrilla movement; (3) When a guerrilla member influenced other family members to join the group.

As a result of the civil conflict that has lasted more than half a century, there have been cases where more than one generation of a family has participated in the war. For instance, Cesar (EPL) explained that he has a guerrilla lineage. He explained his guerrilla heritage by describing his father's involvement as a young man with General Mariachi's guerrilla movement during the conflict between the Liberal and Conservative parties. Due to the pro-guerrilla family environment, Cesar (EPL) stated,

> "I always knew that my destiny was to become a guerrilla member, with the goal of effecting [social] change, so that peasants could realize their goals and would be able to trade their products for a fair price" (Cesar 1).

Bruno (CRS) offers another example of where the family past influenced his decision to join the guerrilla movement. He said,

> "I grew up in a Liberal [party] environment, with close ties to the history and traditions of the [liberal party's] guerilla movement on the plain" (Bruno 1).

He explained that his family's strong links with the Liberal party made them a target for political persecution and violence during the liberal-conservative civilian conflict. This level of violence also influenced his political socialization in the family since he grew up hearing his family's recollections of heroic guerrilla members and 'unscrupulous' government forces.

Growing up in a family where previous generations had participated in a guerrilla movement has the effect of normalizing the decision to enter this deviant career. Referring to the lack of family opposition to this career choice, Martha (EPL) said,

> "I lived with my mother, and I remember her always being interested in left-wing organizations. When she was at university, she was involved in these groups, and as a child I witnessed her involvement. It was not something weird, but something that was part of normal life, that existed and happened. Everybody [in the family] understood when I joined it [the guerrilla group]. The day I joined, my mother and [everybody] at home learned about it" (Martha 1).

The second type of family influence on the decision to join a guerrilla group occurs as a result of a family crisis that influences some of its members and leads them to change their political attitude in favor of the guerrilla movement. This was the case with Juana (M-19); she explained that,

> "My family is very religious and conservative; however, they had a bad political experience. My mother trusted in the Conservative party politicians a lot. We were a large family and there was a time when we were in need, because my father went bankrupt. This caused us economic problems for some years. Because of this situation, my mother wrote to Berta Hernandez de Ospina [former first lady and former head of an important Conservative party faction] telling her about the family's problems, but she never received an answer. I was around 10 years

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old, and I clearly remember that this situation was a key factor [in my political formation]. My mother said, 'these people didn't care.' This event discredited the Conservative party within my family" (Juana 8).

Juana (M-19) also pointed out that witnessing her father managing difficult family affairs had an important influence on her political views. For instance, she remembered that her parents provided everything for the young children, whereas they asked the older ones to make some sacrifices such as using library copies of textbooks instead of buying their own copies or helping the family by working at part-time jobs. According to Juana (M-19),

> "[These situations] helped me a lot to understand things in politics; for instance, I learned that equality does not mean buying the same thing for everybody, but helping first the ones who were at a disadvantage." (Juana 8)

This study also found cases where first-generation guerrilla members influenced other family members from the same generation. These were cases where there is a family influence but it is not based on a family tradition. For instance, Hugo (CRS) said he was influenced by his brother in the decision to join the movement. He added,

> "I had a brother, a little older than myself, who was a member of the ELN. He didn't live at home, but sporadically visited us during vacations. . . . While I didn't enter the organization through him, he was a well-read person with a lot of influence on the family affairs. . . . I was the youngest of eleven siblings. The last three became involved in the student movement and participated in protests, with the complicity of the family. Then, the other two left the movement and I stayed with my older brother who was killed while he was in the ELN. We were never together in the organization. He was in one structure [of the organization] and I was in another." (Hugo 8)

The study also found situations where a member's involvement in the guerrilla movement influenced his parents to become passive or even active guerrilla movement collaborators. For instance, Maria (M-19) described the enthusiastic support for the guerrilla group in her family; she said,

"When I joined the M-19, my father opened the house to all active members in the area. Everybody came to our home, and that connected the whole family, my father and my brother, to the organization. I had little brothers who were aware of the situation, but my sister and I were the only two militants in the group. There was a moment when for security reasons we [my sister and I] were not able to go home, but other members of the movement continued receiving shelter from my family." (Maria 8)

As the examples above show, the study found that in many cases, guerrilla members provided their families with stimulus to become part of a subterranean tradition where some insurgent values and behavior are tolerated, if not encouraged, by family members. For instance, in the case described by Jairo (CRS), he explained how the initial family resistance to his subversive activities was replaced by acceptance. He said,

"I never met my father, but I lived with my mother, and [after joining the guerrilla movement] I explained my situation and my way of seeing things to her. I explained that I was fighting to improve the lives of the underprivileged in this country. At the beginning, she was angry with me, especially after I was arrested a couple of times. But then, she understood and helped me a lot. She met my friends and knew about my activities. She helped me a lot in my work for the underprivileged in this country, for their happiness and well-being. My siblings also helped me. They had a lot of information about my situation but they never joined the organization. They went into a profession instead of taking part in such craziness. I joined into the left-wing revolutionary movement in Colombia by myself." (Jairo 8)

(2) Peer influence on the transition into a guerrilla movement

This investigation also shows that peers had an important influence on the process of joining a guerrilla movement. Two types of peers were identified in this study. The first type were peers with similar demographic characteristics and who had easy access to the possible recruits because they shared activities and concerns with them. For instance, these were peers at work, at school, and in political organizations that had experiences similar to those of the subjects.

The second type of peer were those who did not share most demographic characteristics with the subjects; for instance, they were older or better educated on political issues, but were considered peers since they hung around with the subjects and shared many activities with them. In some cases, this type of peer was viewed as a revolutionary role model by the subjects.

One example of the first type of peer was Daniel (CRS), who explained the influence of other high school students like himself, saying,

> "I was influenced by other students in high school. I studied at a public school where many left-wing organizations were competing to recruit members and gain influence in the student movement. They were always bringing information material and trying to recruit us into their organizations. I would say that there were two students who were very important to me in my recruitment process." (Daniel 9)

Similarly, Helena (EPL) pointed out that friends from high school had a strong influence on her decision to join the guerrilla movement. Remembering who recruited her into the movement, she said,

> "Some friends, friends with whom I did homework at school. Some of them were close to finishing high school and were involved in political organizations. They took the lead in teaching us about politics and leadership. It was like a network of people who had a strong influence on each other." (Helena 9)

The strong influence that peers had on the process of joining the guerrilla movement could be partially explained by a cohort effect where many young people were motivated by similar political events, issues, and public figures. Talking about the generational influence on his peers, Lucas (M-19) said,

> "When I joined the guerrilla movement, we took as a role model Camilo Torres' work in favor of underprivileged sectors of society. There was a time when we became conscious of the situation and decided to work in order to change society instead of going to parties. All my friends thought this way. We were inspired by the examples of Che and the war in Vietnam. If you have to blame someone for joining a guerrilla movement, you need to blame many people. I lived in Bogotá,

in a neighborhood where people were not forcibly recruited into guerrilla groups; on the contrary, you looked for opportunities to join and do things [in the guerrilla movement]. Because I was close to this revolutionary process, I knew people from the Anapo Socialista who made it easier for me to join the M-19." (Lucas 9)

Similarly, in the case of Hugo (CSR), he recalled the strong influence that friends from the student movement had on his decision to join a guerrilla movement. Answering a question about who influenced him to join the guerrilla movement, he said,

"[I was influenced by] friends and comrades [from the student movement] who were engaged in political and social activities with me. We were a group of friends who were involved in the student movement, attended social gatherings, participated in talks, and exchanged books. It was a group of friends, or as Jaime Bateman [an important M-19 guerrilla leader] called it, 'a chain of affection.' This relationship was essential in the process of joining the guerrilla group." (Hugo 9)

As mentioned above, the researcher also found that some subjects were influenced by an older, better educated, and more experienced group of peers. For instance, thinking about the peers that influenced her, Indalecio (CRS) said,

"There were four people that I met when I was 14 or 15 and who became my heroes. There was a person who is currently working as an advisor to congress. At that time, he had the reputation of being a good student. He was able to write hundreds of pages on Lenin or Marx. He was around 24 years old and had connections with the Nicaraguans, the Chileans, and with the PRT [Workers' Revolutionary Party –another Colombian guerrilla movement]. Another guy who had a strong influence on me was related to Camilo Lejo. He was the son of a famous lawyer. He dropped out from the National University and got involved in military activities [with a guerrilla movement]. He practiced Karate, knew about medicine, and was well versed in the topics of the First and Second World Wars as well as general literature. He was the handsome intellectual of the group. Another was a shy but very intelligent guy. He wrote and studied Greek and Latin. They influenced me because I associated these clever men with the revolutionary fight. Looking back, I recognize that they were very intelligent. I still talk with them. One lives in Sweden; another is directing an institute and has published some books. . . . I have to say that their influence was due to their personal characteristics. They represent the typical revolutionaries of that period. I think we had a very distinctive profile."(Indalecio 9)

A key finding in this investigation is that most recruits were involved in socio-politically active groups before joining a guerrilla movement. From the guerrilla

perspective, recruiting people who were already members of such organizations

decreased the likelihood of covert government agents being recruited. From the group

point of view, it was observed that peers from these pre-guerrilla socio-political activities

had a strong influence when it came to motivating members to learn about and establish

contacts with subversive organizations. For one thing, making contact with a guerrilla

organization as part of a group rather than as an individual appears to decrease some

possible apprehensions that these meetings could give rise to. This was the case with

Bruno (CRS), who said

> "I began taking part in radical politics in a group called 'Liga Socialista.' This
> was a group formed by some students and intellectuals. We believed in the need
> to defeat the government through violent means. But this political project didn't
> work. Then, I had the opportunity to meet an ELN member who was in prison. I
> met him on a day he was allowed to leave jail to attend his brother's funeral. At
> the funeral ceremony, I talked to him and I became interested in learning more
> about the ELN. Then, a group of four or five friends decided to begin looking for
> the ELN, and finally we made contact. . . . The first time we met [active] ELN
> members, I felt a mixture of fear and enthusiasm, but we wanted to do things. We
> started getting involved with great conviction and happiness. I remember that this
> first meeting had a halo of mystery, too. We felt as if we were starting out on the
> path that had no return, and it was true— afterwards some of us died or went into
> exile." (Bruno 2)

The investigation also found that the influence from peers was important not only

during the process of contacting and joining the guerrilla organization but also during the

initial period in these groups, mainly since in the initial stages, when recruits begin to

take part in the movements' activities, they have less information about the organization

and so have less trouble leaving the group.

The study reveals several cases where newcomers found peers who were

members of other social networks interested in social issues. For instance, if recruits were

members of a legal left-wing party, peasant association, or student movement, it was

common that after joining the organization, they would find acquaintances from these social settings. Two reasons can be put forward to explain this phenomenon: firstly, they had shared interests and experiences with other peers, and secondly, they were in the same pool of possible candidates that the guerrilla movements were recruiting from.

In conclusion, it was observed that encountering peers from other social settings who the subjects already knew, and sometimes admired, was an important element that validated the newcomers' decision to join these organizations. For example, talking about the influence of a friend from a teaching union, Juana (M-19) said,

> "When I joined the guerrilla movement my first assignment was to meet a person at a gas station. I arrived there and waited with the classified section of a newspaper in my hands. This was the identification mark that I was told to have. Then, I saw a member of the teachers' union that I knew. He was walking towards me. He was a very prestigious person, the editor of a teachers' union newspaper and a well-known government employee in the education sector. Of course, when I saw him coming towards me, I got nervous. I didn't know what to do, so I decided to hide behind a truck, and look the other way in order to avoid eye contact. Then, I felt someone touching my shoulders. I turned around and it was him. I learned that he was my guerrilla contact. I was very happy because I knew him from my work and he was someone I trusted. I learned many things about clandestinity from him." (Juana 5)

(3) Conflict escalation as influence on the transition into a guerrilla movement

It was also found that some subjects joined guerrilla movements as a result of the escalation of social conflict in the society. This finding is similar to Gary Marx' view on escalation as a reason for becoming a deviant (Marx 2002). Several subjects' answers indicate that joining a guerrilla organization occurred as a result of an escalation of the social struggle and that their decision to join was motivated by two situations: (1) When subjects perceive that peaceful means of social protest are useless and decide to resort to violent means in order to advance their political agenda, and (2) when subjects perceive

that their political involvement is creating a greater risk for them and their families than if they were in the guerrilla movement.

In general, the two situations described above, lack of positive government response to peace protests and heavy negative government response in the form of police repression, were cited by some subjects who joined the guerrilla movement as a cause of escalation. For instance, Juana (M-19) said,

> "The social protests we organized didn't have positive outcomes. Sometimes we were paid salaries that were already owed to us, but this money was only enough to do some shopping; it was not a real solution. Also, the level of conflict was very high. Some protesters were always killed in every strike. Students died, teachers were jailed, and several people were beaten [by the police] at each meeting. We went to every protest aware that we could be chased by the police. We were always prepared to run from them. We knew the level of conflict was very high and felt we were at a disadvantage. The government forces always showed up with guns, truncheons, and tear gas equipment, while we were unarmed. I always ended up feeling angry when I saw police beating up my comrades. I saw when police beat up my brother. They broke his glasses. I felt frustrated at not being able to defend him. I felt we needed to carry weapons to defend our rights. I was very motivated to enter the [guerrilla] movement because I did not feel that unarmed protests produced any positive outcome." (Juana 2)

An individual's decision to join a guerrilla movement, as a result of conflict escalation may happen after a long period of involvement in legal protests. Many interviewees' descriptions of their legal protest activities before joining the guerrilla movement show a process where the possibilities for remaining in these legal activities gradually narrowed. This process continued until they reached a point where joining the guerrilla movement became the only option if they were to continue their political struggle. For example, Jorge (EPL) described this process by saying,

> "First I was unable to continue my college studies due to security problems. As a result, I hid out for a while until I was hired by a multinational company. I joined its labor union and became its president. It developed into a very important labor union in the country. A situation arose where we requested some improvements to

the company, but these were not accepted. The negotiations with the company failed and we went on strike. I ended up being expelled from the company. It was around 1985 or 1986, when many labor union members were being murdered. Well, that situation is still going on today. After I was fired from the multinational company, people began following me in order to kill me. Because I already had some contacts with the EPL, I talked with them and they said I had three alternatives: leave the country, allow myself to be killed, or join the guerrilla movement, which meant entering a clandestine life. I chose the last option, and I began fighting with the guerrilla movement." (Jorge 2)

While in most cases the subjects pointed out that the escalation process is the result of government security services using excessive force, there were situations where this escalation was caused by other violent groups in the Colombian conflict. This is perfectly logical in the case of Colombia, where the monopoly of power is challenged by many non-government groups such as paramilitary organizations, guerrilla movements, and drug barons. For example, Diego (EPL) recalled his experience of becoming a guerrilla member as a process that ranged from the time he began doing social work in a poor neighborhood to the time that a group of vigilantes tried to kill him. This attempt on his life triggered his decision to join a guerrilla organization in order to have some protection from other armed groups in his community. Diego (EPL) explained the process of joining the guerrilla group by saying,

"They [the people I did community work for] lived in a poor community near some middle and upper class neighborhoods. Because of this location, they were always exposed to social differences. They saw rich kids with motorcycles, new bicycles, and the latest sneakers. This created a lot of envy and as a result, they stole these things. It was very difficult for me seeing this situation. Also because you saw how they began to use drugs, and to carry knives to assault people with. They lived in a state of permanent war. I remember that we were in an area surrounded by fifteen crack houses within a three-block perimeter. At one point, a group of vigilantes began killing the guys [that I worked with], to 'clean' the neighborhood. This was despite the fact that they never stole things in the neighborhood, they always stole in other places, and sold the stolen goods in the neighborhood at very fair prices. At one point I was involved in a shooting, where eight guys that I worked with were killed by vigilantes. This was very painful and

I felt that my life was threatened. It was at this point that I decided to join the guerrilla movement." (Diego 2)

Another interesting finding with respect to joining a guerrilla movement due to conflict escalation is that some subjects explain entering these groups as having been a decision that offered their families some safety. They explained that joining a guerrilla group was safer than being in legal left-wing politics, since by joining a clandestine organization they were able to change their names and locations, and gain group support and expertise for their risky activities while keeping their families safe. This was the situation with Betty (EPL), who was partially motivated to leave legal politics and join a guerrilla movement by the desire to protect her family from repression by government security forces. She said,

> "On May 1, I invited my mother to attend a speech that I was giving at a political rally. My mother didn't know about my relationship with any political organization, but she was used to attending the basketball games that I played as a member of the school team. She was at the rally in a local park, when a couple of men that she described as undercover police asked people in the crowd about my name and whereabouts. They asked eight people, including my mother. Of course, she said she didn't know me and that she was just passing by. When I learned of this incident, I realized that I was risking not only my life, but also the lives of other people in my family." (Betty 18)

It was observed from a study of the life-courses of several interviewees who joined the guerrilla movement as a result of conflict escalation that some of these subjects joined the insurgent groups many years after experiencing the escalation events. This was particularly the case with subjects who suffered from government repression when they were children and joined guerrilla groups when they were teenagers or young adults. For these subjects, experiencing government repression triggered emotions and behavior that later on in life were channeled into joining a guerrilla movement. For example, Jairo (CRS) recalled how excessive use of police force at a student protest had generated a

negative attitude towards the government that led to his early engagement in left-wing

actions, and later on, in guerrilla activities. He said,

> "During my first year in middle school, in the middle of September, I was in a
> school where other students were organizing a strike in front of the school
> building. Despite the fact that I did not leave the school to join them, the police
> burst into the school, broke windows, destroyed the library, and practically
> trashed everything else. They accused me of being involved in the strike and
> detained me. The way the police treated me made me feel very angry. As a result
> of this event, I began to study Marxism and became interested in joining
> organizations with left-wing ideologies." (Jairo 3)

(4) Generational imprinting as a reason to join a guerrilla movement

Generational imprinting can be defined as the effects produced by a group of

events that have the greatest impact, and are more memorable, to a particular generation.

Similar to the findings in this study, other research on socialization has found that this

type of event, such as the Great Depression or the Vietnam War has a stronger influence

on when the subjects in the late adolescent and early adult years (Wiggings, Wiggings,

and Zanden 1994), in what Scott and Zac call the reminiscence peak (Scott and Zac

1993). For the subjects included in this study, such memorable social events include the

Cuban Revolution, anti-colonialist wars of independence in third world countries, and

student protests around the world. In Latin America this generational imprinting lasted

through the late 1970s with the triumph of the Nicaraguan Revolution.

Talking about the influence that this era had on her decision to join the guerrilla

movement Gabriela (EPL) said,

> "There was a strong revolutionary atmosphere at that time in Colombia and in the
> world. Those were the times of Che Guevara, protest music, and social
> mobilization against the Vietnam war around the world. . . . At that time, many
> college students were expelled [from the Colombian public university] as a result
> of their protests against the visit of some U.S. officials to Colombia. These
> students left the university to join peasant associations, and began spreading the

idea within these associations the idea that the only solution to the problems in the country was revolution." (Gabriela 2)

The generational imprint influence on the decision to join a guerrilla movement is also found among members of the M-19 and the CRS. For instance, Gladis (CRS) recalled the influence that political events, such as foreign revolutions, and cultural expressions, such as theater and protest music, had on her decision to join the guerrilla movement. She said,

> "Due to student protests, the public university I was enrolled at stopped functioning for the whole academic year. Then, I had time to study theater off-campus. I took my studies very seriously because I saw theater as a way to carrying out the revolution, as a way to create social conscience. It was probably the influence of 1970s theories that makes theater a tool for revolution. These theories were revitalized by the Sandinista revolution, which was the closest insurgent model that we had at that time. During this period, Latin American music was also very popular. There were many protest songs that called for social struggle. We played them with drums and flutes at street performances. We really believed we were going to have a revolution like in Nicaragua. We were also very involved in social work. We went into poor neighborhoods with great enthusiasm. When the university re-opened, I enrolled on communication theory course, and other courses in communication so I could use this knowledge in my social work. A number of political events at this time influenced the current situation in the country. The left-wing parties were in a strong position against the trilateral commission, and president Belisario Betancur began peace talks [which later failed] with some guerrilla groups. There were also a lot of events in grassroots organizations. Once I attended an event at a place that had a good library, so I began borrowing books about popular culture from this organization. Soon a girl who worked there gave me some documents to read. I thought those documents were from the MIR [a legal left-wing movement]. Later, I was told that they were from the ELN. This was how I made my first contacts with the guerrilla organization." (Gladis 1)

Likewise, thinking about the influence that the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions had on her decision to join the guerrilla movement, Olga (M-19) said,

> "I joined the guerrilla movement inspired by the recent triumph of the Nicaraguan revolution and by the example of the Cuban one. These were important historical points of reference for me. I think these events helped validate my decision to join the revolutionary fight, where the goal was to change things in the country. . . .

The historical reference of the Sandinista revolution was very important, because you believed that if revolution was possible in Nicaragua, then it was possible elsewhere. You thought these social struggles could be won if the ordinary people became aware of their situation. Of course, we did not notice that the Nicaraguan revolution took fifty years of war and involved many deaths. While we were willing to risk our lives, we didn't appreciate the magnitude of doing a revolution. After all, I think the magic of being young is being willing to even gamble your life for an ideal." (Olga 2)

While each of the factors that influenced subjects when they joined the guerrilla movement is presented on its own, it is important to note that reciprocal influences exist between them: the influence that peers have on the decision to attend protest events where confrontation with the police is very likely and the reciprocal influence that attending violent protest events has on peer selection, for example.

When looking at these possible interrelations, the author found a strong connection between the influences that the individual ideology and the generational imprint have on the subjects' decision to join a guerrilla movement. For instance, when subjects were asked about readings that influenced their decision to join the guerrilla movement, they answered by mentioning publications that were classified into four categories. Three categories related to political ideology, while the fourth related to generational imprint.

The author found that the types of reading within the political ideology category were (1) legal international Communist propaganda, such as texts written by Marx, Lenin, Mao, and Che Guevara; (2) clandestine publications produced by the guerrilla movement, such as the newspapers *Insurrección* (Insurrection) published by the ELN and *Revolución* (Revolution) published by the EPL; and (3) legal left-wing publications produced in Colombia, such as the moderate left-wing magazine *Alternativa* (Alternative) and the relatively-radical communist party newspaper *La Voz* (The Voice).

The fourth category of publications, Popular Books, was closer to generational imprint than to the political ideology category as a reason for joining the guerrilla movement. Examples of these publications were Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls," German Castro Caicedo's "Colombia Amarga," (Sour Colombia), and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Hojarasca," (Leaf Storm). In general, this category, Popular Books, did not have a clear political purpose, a feature that made most of these publications accessible even in Latin American countries ruled by dictatorships. These books were read by a wide variety of publics with differing ideological views. They offer a prose that is easy to read, and descriptions of social events that are usually closely related to the subjects' everyday life. They differ in this sense from the reading of left-wing pamphlets and Marxist political philosophy texts. In general, Popular Books were able to transmit the rebel spirit of the generation without, in most cases, making a concrete ideological statement in favor of a particular revolution.

The table below shows the classification of the subjects' answers to the types of readings that influenced their decision to join a guerrilla movement. Some subjects' answers were placed in more than one category, as they were influenced by more than one type of reading.

Table 2: Percentage of subjects reporting various reading materials as important

The data refers to answers to the question, "Do you remember [books, newspapers, etc.] that influenced your decision to join the guerrilla movement? If yes, would you discuss them?"

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Legal international Communist propaganda publications	7 50%	9 64.3%	11 78.6%	27 64.3%
Popular books	6 42.9%	4 28.5%	5 35.7%	15 35.7%
Clandestine publications produced by guerrilla movements	3 21.4%	6 42.9%	5 35.7%	14 33.3%
Legal left-wing publications produced in Colombia	4 28.5%	3 21.4%	6 42.9%	13 31%
Did not read and/or was not influenced by printed material	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	0 0%	3 7.1%

(Note: Some of the subjects' answers were classified in more than one category. In this table the percentages that are reported in each cell reflect the percentage of the subjects from the specific guerrilla group who mentioned each type of publication as an influence for joining the guerrilla group. The last column shows the percentage of the subjects from the three groups who mentioned each type of publication as an influence for joining the group).

The above table shows that most subjects were influenced by some type of reading material. The large number of subjects who were able and willing to read novels and political texts provides some indication of the intellectual level of guerrilla recruits during this period. The idea that many subjects joined the guerrilla movement after having attained a good cultural and intellectual level is reinforced by the description of the readings that influenced them.

It was also found that M-19 subjects, who were considered to be members of a moderate, socialist guerrilla movement, cited more popular books, while ELP and CRS subjects, who belong to more orthodox Marxist guerrilla movements, more often mentioned legal literature and clandestine Communist propaganda. This finding provides

some evidence that there is an important difference in the socialization process in these organizations. The type of literature that M-19 subjects recalled is related to the movement's idea of reviving elements of popular and nationalist culture, while the type of literature that EPL and CRS subjects remembered reflects the strong importance that these organizations gave to receiving Marxist ideological training. M-19 members appeared to favor literature meant for leisure readings, while EPL and CRS members were reading books that would be required in a college-level course on Marxist theory.

Parallel results were observed in the subjects' description of the type of music that influenced them. M-19 subjects appeared to listen to more popular music like Vallenatos (most of which do not have a direct revolutionary message) and Trova Cubana, which consisted of popular protest music. This type of music typifies what the general public listens to and is readily available in record stores and on many Colombian radio stations. On the other hand, while EPL and CRS subjects occasionally mentioned some popular music, they more frequently referred to clandestine songs with stronger political military messages, like the "*La Lora Revolucionaria*" (The Revolutionary Parrot). Unlike the Vallenatos and Trova Cubana music that M-19 members mentioned, this hardcore guerrilla music is not broadcast on officially permitted radio and television stations, and it is therefore only known by people who were familiar with the guerrilla subculture.

In conclusion, the study found that EPL and CRS members used fewer mainstream cultural manifestations and preferred to build their subculture around less accessible texts such as Marxist readings and clandestine guerrilla music, while M-19 members built their subculture around more typical cultural expressions, in line with their nationalist views of the revolution. These differences in the group subcultures had an

impact on the process of selecting new members. Recruits highly influenced by a strong Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology preferred to join more orthodox revolutionary organizations such as the EPL and the CRS, while recruits more influenced by the rebel spirit of the generation preferred to join a more liberal group, like the M-19.

(5) Biographical availability as a reason to join a guerrilla movement

Data from the study also provides some evidence that members joined the guerrilla movement because of their biographical availability for entering these groups. The term "biographical availability" is used in McAdams studies on social movements (McAdams 1988). It means that subjects join a protest group because they have the resources (e.g. time) and do not have the constraints (e.g. family and job obligations) that prevent them from doing so. The concept of biographical availability became relevant during the subjects' description of their lives before joining these organizations. For example, Indalecio CRS said,

> "I had a normal life. I was a youngster in the neighborhood. I attended high school, played soccer and basketball, flew kites. It was a beautiful childhood, playing on the unpaved streets of … [a town on the Caribbean coast]. I spent most of my childhood and adolescent years on the street while I was also trying to fulfill my school obligations." (Indalecio 1)

Several biographies of reinsert leaders provide extensive evidence of the subjects biographical availability in the years previous to entering left-wing organizations; for instance, Villamizar's biography of Jaime Bateman, M-19 leader, pointed out that Bateman spent his years prior to developing his interest in politics in typical juvenile activities such as attending school and playing on the beach, He said,

> "Between school classes, he went to the Bellavista beach and to the "Gringo" fields with his brother and other friends; these experiences help him learn what

the loyalty meant to them. … He loved the sea ever since he was a child, especially when observing its blueness looking out over the bay. He enjoyed looking at the sea and hearing its sounds at nightfall. He learned to respect the sea by staring at it. He learned about its subterranean currents, its tides, and its sea life" (Villamizar 2002:39)

Similar descriptions of biographical availability before joining the guerrilla movement can be found in other historical accounts, such as Grave's autobiography of her early years studying anthropology at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogota (Grave 2000).

Overall, many subjects described their lives before joining the guerrilla movements as "normal." They usually included in these descriptions common, everyday events such as attending school, engaging in leisure activities with peers, doing some chores at home, and working in temporary jobs, such as street vendor or crop harvester. They also mentioned being inclined to take part in communal activities sponsored by local lawful groups, such as student associations, cooperatives, unions, religious groups, and the local activities of left-wing political parties. In general, having the biographical availability to be involved in these groups increased the likelihood of their becoming visible to guerrilla recruiters.

(6) Individual ideology (mostly their sense of social injustice) as a reason to join a guerrilla movement

Several interviewees indicated that an important factor in joining the guerrilla movement was their political views, especially those related to situations of social injustice in the country. It is important to mention that unlike the other reasons for joining these groups that are given in this investigation, individual ideology is a factor that the

guerrilla movement reinforced with its propaganda and political training. As a result, the

author believes that the rationale of fighting against social injustice was reinforced, and in

some cases, created after the member joined the guerrilla organization. It is nevertheless

an important factor stated by many reinserts during the interview. For instance, Carlos

(M-19) mentioned joining the guerrilla movement as a reaction to the social injustice

experienced by his Native American community. He said,

> "In the rural areas we felt the exploitation [from the middlemen.] Our peasant
> population was abandoned by the state. We didn't get any education and our
> working conditions were very bad. We received very little money from the
> middlemen when we harvested our crops of corn, cassava, and plantain. It was
> almost a slave life. The state didn't offer us any protection, and we were totally
> without educational programs." (Carlos 2)

Perception of social injustice as a reason to join the guerrilla movement was also

present among many urban recruits. For instance, in the case of Ema (M-19), her

concerns about social issues motivated her to join a group with strong links to the rebel

organizations. She describes her process of joining the rebel organization in the following

way:

> "I was always very sensitive to social problems. I was touched by abandoned
> children on the streets, by people's poverty, and by homelessness. I always
> wondered about the reasons why these things existed. At college I found an
> environment where students were very involved in community programs. I joined
> a group called 'Empujemos'[Let's Push]. I was attracted to it because I felt that
> there was a strong sense of brotherhood and friendliness among its members. I
> was also attracted to this group because they provided avenues for doing
> community work. For instance, we offered women and workers legal advice about
> family and labor rights. At one point, I was more involved in the community work
> than in my classes. My commitment to community work attracted the attention of
> the M-19, and they asked me to join the group. Later I learned that ninety-five
> percent of the people from 'Empujemos' were M-19 members. I was also invited
> to join the ELN and the FARC, but I was already a member of the M-19." (Ema
> 2)

Other subjects learned about situations of social injustice in their daily life. In the case of Betty (EPL), for instance her decision to join a rebel movement was strongly influenced by the situations of social injustice that some of her classmates experienced. She said,

> "Ideological reasons influenced my decision to join the guerrilla movement. This meant contrasting the idea of an ideal country with reality. It was finding people whose personal situation excluded them from having a better future, despite the fact that they had some access to some institutions [like school]. For instance, I remember being upset when two classmates who were 11 and 12 were removed from the school [by their parents] because they started menstruating. Their family told them that they should stop studying and begin doing housework, washing, sweeping, learning to cook, and other household jobs. These situations really impressed me. I was also troubled to see 14-year old kids in primary school as a result of a huge school drop-out rate due to their families' economic problems. I saw eight and nine-year old kids who were absent from school for two weeks because they had to replace their sick parents at work. These situations impressed me a lot, and I felt the need to do something about them. I think my main motivation for joining the guerrilla movement was witnessing these situations. [At that point,] I felt the desire to work for some social justice." (Betty 2)

Being exposed to political ideology in the form of books, magazines, theater performances, and protest-music concerts also influenced some subjects in their decision to become more open toward left-wing politics, including the guerrilla movement platform. For instance, Jairo (CRS) recalled the moment that triggered his interest in left-wing politics when he said,

> "My decision to join the guerrilla movement can be traced back to a situation that doesn't sound real, but let me tell you about it. During high school, I had the opportunity to attend a theater performance during a visit to Bogota. The performance was about the way that big landowners took advantage of poor peasants. I was impressed by this play because it was a carbon copy of the situation in my village, on the Atlantic coast. There we had a situation where big landowners had a lot of power over the inhabitants of the village. This situation filled me with anger and thoughts of revenge, and I began reading Marxist literature in the school library. Today I can say that attending this theater performance divided my life into two parts. On occasions, I regret having attended this play." (Jairo 2)

Having a left-wing ideology, and especially being interested in social issues, was a common feature among many Latin American youngsters during the study period. The generational imprint influenced the subjects' decision to join the guerrilla movement in conjunction with the individual ideology

(7) Desire to improve economic and social status as a reason to join a guerrilla movement

Another reason to join the guerrilla movement was the subjects' desire to improve their social and economic status in the community. This human agency (in Giele and Elder's terms) was a significant factor for recruits from poor peasant backgrounds, people who lived in situations of extreme social and economic marginality who decided to join the guerrilla movement as a way to improve their standard of living. Unlike a previous category where members joined the guerrilla movement motivated by ideological reasons related to social injustice, many members in this category joined the guerrilla movement motivated by actual experiences of social injustice or marginality.

The guerrilla movement seemed to this underprivileged group to be a social organization that was capable of offering some economic security in the form of food, housing and medical attention, as well as some improvement in their social status as a result of being part of an organization that was respected, if not feared, by sectors of the civilian population.

It should be noted that among many sectors of Colombian society, joining a guerrilla movement for personal gain is viewed as being more socially undesirable than joining for altruistic motives. Because of the social undesirability of this type of answer,

interviewees mentioned this factor by referring to experiences of other guerrilla members.

For instance, Gabriel (EPL), talking about other members' experiences, pointed out that

in Putumayo province, becoming a guerrilla member was one of the few career choices

available to youngsters. He said,

> "Some people joined the guerrilla movement because it was the best career option
> they had. If you were in Guzman county in Putumayo Province, for instance,
> someone who finished high school would have trouble finding a job, because
> there were no jobs in the private or public sectors. Then the person only had four
> options: growing coca, joining a paramilitary group, joining a guerrilla
> movement, or migrating to Bogota. This last option was very difficult, because
> people can hardly use their agricultural skills in a city, and also, most agricultural
> jobs did not allow the worker to have a decent living standard." (Gabriel 22)

> Talking about how becoming a guerrilla has more social status in peasant

communities than working on the family land, Helena (EPL) said,

> "In many rural areas, carrying a weapon gave you more social prestige than
> working a crop, especially if you were working on your family land without a
> salary. To these people the idea of joining a guerrilla movement was very
> appealing." (Helena 22)

> An interesting finding from this study is that one of the social groups most

inclined to enter the guerrilla organization in order to improve their social status were

young female peasants. Interviewees report several situations where romantic

relationships were formed between male guerrillas and local female peasants. These

relationships or "linked lives" in the life course model, almost always ended up with the

females joining the insurgent groups. As described by Camilo (CRS), there were

situations when this was a very popular recruitment tool. He said,

> "On a visit to a guerrilla front in the Uraba region, I was surprised by the number
> of female teenagers in the unit. There were many 14, 15 and 16 years old females.
> When I began asking about their reasons for joining the guerrilla movement, I
> learned that some had joined because their boyfriends were in the movement,
> others mentioned cousins and the thrill of the experience. I learned from these
> answers that we had problems with our recruitment policies. I also learned of

cases where females performed very difficult tasks just because their boyfriends were doing similar activities, and they did not like to be considered less than them." (Camilo 22)

Several former guerrilla commanders included in the study felt that people who joined a guerrilla movement because they were attracted by the social status and other individual characteristics of another guerrilla member were in the long-run a potential problem, since the dynamics of the conflict made it very difficult for a romantic relationship to last. From their adult perspective, they could see that the war environment was too harsh for people to endure for romantic and/or social status reasons alone. They added that this type of recruit usually worried them, because they had a high rate of desertion, especially after they experienced romantic disappointment with a guerrilla partner or became tired of the routine in the guerrilla unit.

Stated motives for joining the guerrilla movement

This investigation offers an excellent opportunity for observing an interesting difference between the seven main factors for joining the guerrilla movement which were deduced from an analysis of the data and were described in this section and the salient motives adduced by the subjects in answer to the question, "What were your motives for joining the guerrilla movement?" and "Did you have any other reason (s) for joining the guerrilla movement?" Answers to these two questions are given in the table below.

The difference between the seven main factors and the salient motives underlines the importance of using in-depth interviews in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the subjects' life course experience.

Some of the differences between the seven main factors and the answers can be explained by the fact that some topics, such as joining the guerrilla movement to improve social and economic status, and joining as a result of the escalation of the conflict became more relevant in later parts of the interviews. Likewise other answers, such as joining for religious reasons, became less relevant as the interviews progressed. At best, religion ended up being an indirect factor that influenced some subjects' peer group selection and sense of social injustice. In other words, some subjects' religiosity influenced them to join church committees in order to help the community and uphold moral values related to social justice. In some cases, joining these groups and holding these values facilitate the members' decision to enter a guerrilla movement. There were only two subjects who clearly stated that they joined a guerrilla group for religious reasons, while several subjects addressed these issues by pointing out their dislike for the Church due to the Catholic church's connections with the government elite and the anti-violence rhetoric of the Protestant churches in Colombia. They also backed up their answers by mentioning the Marxist criticism of religion as a tool of the elite that generates a false consciousness of equality among the proletarians.

The data in the table also differs from the author's presentation of the findings in this section, because subjects were not aware of and/or willing to identify any other factor, such as biographical availability, as reasons for joining a guerrilla movement.

Finally, some of the salient reasons given in these two questions are closely related to social desirability. For instance, it is considered socially desirable, and in some cases is even cause for admiration, when coming upon subjects who are willing to sacrifice themselves and enter a guerrilla movement on account of their concerns about

social injustice in society or because they are pursuing noble political ideals. On the contrary, adult subjects who claim to have joined these groups because of their parents' influence, or those who say they entered these groups in order to improve their personal economic and social situations, may not receive the same social acceptance.

Table 3: Subjects' perception of their motives for joining the guerrilla movement

The data refers to answers to the questions, "What were your motives for joining a guerrilla movement? and "Did you have any other reason(s) for joining the guerrilla movement?" (Note: some of the subjects' answers several reasons, therefore they were classified in more than one category. The percentage in each cell reflects the amount of subjects in a specific group who mentioned a particular motive for joining the guerrilla movement. For instance, eight of 14, or 57.1%, of the M-19 subjects mentioned experience in similar left-wing organizations as a motive for joining a guerrilla movement. Looking at the total column it can be observed that six of 42 or 14.3% of all the subjects claimed to be motivated to enter these organizations in order to improve their social and economic status.

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Concern about social injustice	11 78.6%	13 92.9%	9 64.3%	33 78.6%
Communist and nationalist ideologies	9 64.3%	4 28.5%	10 71.4%	23 54.8
Experience in similar left-wing organizations	8 57.1%	7 50%	7 50%	22 52.4%
Generational imprint (revolutionary climate)	6 42.9%	4 28.5%	7 50%	17 40.5%
Media/political propaganda influence	6 42.9%	2 14.3%	8 57.1%	16 38.1%
Escalation/ excessive repression	2 14.3%	4 28.5%	4 28.5%	10 23.8%
Peer influence	4 28.5%	0 0%	4 28.5%	8 19%
Family influence	2 14.3%	3 21.4%	3 21.4%	8 19%
Improving social and economic status	3 21.4%	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	6 14.3%
Previous criminal activities	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	5 11.9%
Religion	0 0%	1 7.1%	2 14.3%	3 7.1%

Part II: Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement?

Not everybody who enters a guerrilla movement stays in it.

The literature of the Colombian guerrilla movement offers several accounts of people who joined guerrilla organizations only to learn that those groups were not for them, and decided to abandon or desert those organizations. Similar situations arise in other social settings, such as educational, religious, and even leisure institutions like private country clubs, where subjects lose interest in continuing their membership after having in many cases put a lot of effort into joining them.

Results from the present study provide relevant insights into the question, "Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement?" The first interesting finding was that despite the dangers associated with insurgent activities, most subjects in the investigation had a long life course in these groups. The time that subjects spent as members of a guerrilla movement ranged from 3 to 23 years. The following table summarizes the answers to question # 28, "How long were you a member of the guerrilla movement?"

Table 4: Time that subjects spend in the guerrilla movement

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total/ percentage
From 3 to 9 years	6	5	4	15
	42.9%	35%	28.5%	35.7%
More than 9 and less than 18 years	8	7	6	21
	57.1%	50%	42.9%	50%
Between 18 and 23 years	0	2	4	6
	0%	14.3%	28.5%	14.3%
Total	14	14	14	42
Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Note: Dividing the data into three categories provides a view of the participant's longevity in their organizations. The organization of the data reflects subjects' perception with respect to the time that members spend in the movement. In general, members with

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nine or less years in the group were viewed as novices, while people who had spent more than 18 years were usually assigned less active roles in the organization. Similar perception of the participant's longevity can be found in other organizations with totalistic characteristics, such as religious groups. For instance, the ex-nuns included in Ebaugh's study ranged from 1 and 28 years, with an average of 9 years, in the religious order (Ebaugh 1988). In this study the range is between 3 and 23 years, and the average is 12 years for EPL subjects, 10 years for M-19 subjects, and 14 years for CRS subjects. Regretfully, this data does not represent the whole reinsert population, in part because more senior officials from the EPL and CRS than from the M-19 participated in this study.)

The results given in the above table show that most subjects stay in the guerrilla movement for more than a decade. Unlike other socio-political movements where subjects stay for a summer or during college, members spend a significant part of their adult lives in these subversive organizations.

The following part of this section presents four related answers to the research question, "Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement?" First, it was found that subjects stay in the guerrilla movement because they depend very greatly on it. The author will present some factors that influence subjects' dependence on the movement, such as their status in the group and the members' environment. Second, it was found that subjects stay in the movement due to a set of values that is shared by all the members of the organization. Third, staying in the movement can also be attributed to a set of clandestine behaviors that separate the subjects from people outside the movement and reinforce the subjects' decision to stay in the movement. Finally, subjects stay in the

movement because of the influence that the group has on its members' self-identity. The author includes some relevant quotes from respondents in the discussion of the factors that explain why subjects stay in the movement.

(1) High level of dependence on the organization as a factor that explains why subjects stay in the guerrilla movement

The research shows that most interviewees felt they were very dependent on the organization. The following table summarizes the answers to the question "During your life in the movement how much did you depend on the organization?"

Table 5: Subjects perception of dependence on the organization

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Very dependent	11 78.6%	10 71.4%	11 78.6%	32 76.2%
Somewhat dependent	1 7.1%	3 21.4%	3 21.4%	7 16.7%
Not dependent	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	0 0%	3 7.1%
Total/percentage	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

In the above table, subjects who said they were very dependent on the organization were classified as *very dependent*, while subjects who said they were dependent in some things and independent in others were classified as *somewhat dependent*. For example, this category was made up of subjects who lived in the city and were economically independent of the group, but felt that they depended on it in many other aspects such as security, political guidance, military activities, and social relationships. Finally, subjects who said they were not dependent on the organization

were classified as *not dependent*. Undoubtedly, the data from this question provide some evidence of the perception that the subjects have about some totalistic characteristics of the guerrilla movements.

It should be noticed from the table above that only three subjects claimed to be independent of the group while they were members of it. This finding was interesting, since it was expected that more subjects would claim not to be dependent on the movement. The researcher had this expectation since giving the answer of being totally dependent would confirm the negative stereotype that exists in society about members and former members of these organizations. This negative stereotype involves the idea that guerrilla members are so dependent on the guerrilla structure that they cannot solve their basic problems for themselves, but need the assistance of a paternalistic organization to help them in all aspects. For instance, some sectors of Colombian public opinion attribute the reinserts' demands of the Colombian government to the paternalistic values that were learned in the guerrilla movement. Also, success in the process of reinsertion is commonly measured by the former members' degree of independence and lack of contact with other reinserts, as well as by the former members' lack of "need" to participate in government programs aimed to help this population. The image of a successful reinsert is an "individual" who has broken all economic, social, and even political dependence on the former group as well as on government programs directed toward them. Reinserts who became successful business entrepreneurs or who have entered higher professions are the typical "poster boys" of the reinsertion programs, while those who still depend on others are stigmatized by society. This is the case with Adelmo Bomba, whose success in producing and exporting asparagus was reported in the

most influential Colombian Newspaper, *El Tiempo*, under the title, "From Guerrilla

Members to Exporters" (Navas 2000). The magazine *Bitacora*, published by the

Colombian government, also offered several articles describing "successful" cases of

reinserts who left their guerrilla organizations to fund lucrative businesses.

Reflecting on the state of being totally dependent on the guerrilla organization,

Gladis (CRS) said,

> " . . . as an individual, I depended on the organization for everything; the
> organization was my life; . . .In the organization I was close to the people that I
> love the most, my best friends, and my dreams, my past, and my future were
> bound up in the organization. It was the lens through which I saw the world. In
> my case, seeing the negotiation and reinsertion process made me mourn because it
> meant losing the security that the organization provided . . . " (Gladis 35)

Indalecio (CRS) pointed out how this dependence on the organization not only

permeated all the individuals' activities, but also how its constant presence had an effect

on how members saw themselves. He said,

> "Our clothes came from the guerrilla movement, the house we lived in belonged
> to the movement, the weapons we used came from the movement, the girlfriends
> we had were members of the movement. Everything, everything (laughing), if we
> were sick, we went to a guerrilla doctor; when we went to a movie we paid with
> money from the movement; even our personalities were molded by the guerrilla
> movement. . . . Even doing evil was something we learned from the guerrilla
> movement." (Indalecio 36)

The study found that becoming dependent on a guerrilla movement involved a

spiral process in which members gave up previous roles and did not pursue new ones

outside the guerrilla movement. This was the result of them being involved in greedy

institutions (Coser 1974) that place many demands on them. An example of this process

of increased dependency on the organization is given by Ignasio (EPL), who said,

> "I ended up depending on the organization for everything. I left the academic
> world and everything else that was not related to the organization. . . . I didn't

have personal contacts other than with members of the [guerrilla] group. I didn't have a wife or children. All my children were born after reinsertion." (Ignasio 36)

An interesting finding in the study is that among urban guerrilla members, having a professional status increases the level of dependency on the guerrilla movement, and therefore increases the likelihood of staying in the movement. Becoming a professional in a guerrilla movement involves receiving a salary and a gaining higher status in the group, as well as more obligations, and this in turn means working full-time for the organization and being more willing to take part in operations and to relocate to other areas of the country. Reflecting on the dependency on the organization due to her professional status, Maria (M-19) said,

> "After I left home, I became totally dependent on the organization. I depended on it politically, militarily, and economically. Despite living in the city [where it was possible to have a civilian job], I was employed full-time by the military branch of the organization. I was doing things for the organization twenty-four hours a day. Very often, I slept in collaborators' homes, or in one of the movement's houses. All the activities, like training or practice activities, were centered around the goals of the movement. I did nothing but work for the movement." *(Maria 35)*

Camilo (CRS) also pointed out how reaching a professional level in a guerrilla organization was a key factor in becoming more dependent on it. He said,

> "The only thing I regret from my guerrilla experience was becoming a professional. Before that, I was a political and social leader, and with this work I was able to support myself. But with professionalization, it was no longer possible for me to continue this work. Despite receiving money as a professional, you are at a disadvantage because you become like an employee of the organization; you enter a situation where your life is managed by a boss." (Camilo 31)

When talking about their dependency on the movement, several interviewees jumped ahead on the interview questionnaire (which was arranged chronologically) and accepted that being so dependent on the guerrilla organization has a negative effect on the reinsertion process. This was the case with Bruno (CRS), who said,

"I depended on the movement for everything, because I left everything for the movement, including my work. When I left jail [as a result of the peace agreement], I owned only the clothes that I had when I was arrested. After 18 years of depending on the movement for everything, I had nothing." (Bruno 36)

In the same way, interviewees who had a non-professional status in the movement said that this helped them in the reinsertion process because by being non-professional, they had the opportunity to keep jobs, continue their studies, and engage in other social activities with people outside the organization. The report of this finding will be expanded on in a later section.

As stated above, the practice of relocating members, which is more common among professional than among non-professional ones, is a tool which reinforces members' dependency on the organization. The increased dependency on the movement occurs as a result of the member being separated from his or her previous, non-guerrilla contacts and familiar surroundings. Sending members to new places makes them more dependent on the social network of the organization, and generally decreases the likelihood of their abandoning the group even during difficult situations, such as the one described by Luis (EPL):

"The organization controlled me as it pleased. They sent me wherever they [the leaders] wanted and I never protested. They ordered me to go to a certain place and carry out operations, and I never complained. I depended on the organization for money because I didn't have any other source of income. I remember I was sent to Bogota without money and I ended up sleeping in a labor union office using some posters as blankets, because I didn't have money to pay for a room." (Luis 36)

The finding that having a professional status in a guerrilla movement increases the likelihood of the members staying in the organization applies mostly to urban guerrilla units, where there is a clear difference between professional and non-professional members. This difference in status does not appear in rural units, on the other hand,

where members live a nomadic life—a life of permanent relocation. Members of rural

units spend most of their time in secluded areas away from government troops and large

civilian concentrations. They do not receive salaries, and any appropriated goods (cattle,

ransom money, etc.) that they obtain go to the organizations. In turn, the organizations

meet all their needs. Expressing how dependent rural members are on the organization,

Cesar (EPL) said,

> "The guerrilla movements had something called the co-operative shop. The people in charge made sure members received their boots, pants, underclothes, soup, food, and equipment. Members were only concerned with keeping their weapons and being ready to fight. You therefore depended totally on the organization." (Cesar 36)

> In rural units, dependence on the group is not only related to material things but

also to non-material elements such as the exchange of ideas with non-members.

Comparing the level of dependence in urban units with that in rural units, Gladis (CRS)

said,

> "We reached a situation where due to the ignorance and intellectual orthodoxy of the group, we shut down any external intellectual pursuit. This was especially the case in rural units. There you didn't have the opportunity to read or to hear news. It was the ignorance of the jungle. You could only exchange ideas with other members who thought like you; there wasn't anybody else to talk to. The lack of access to or the exchanging of ideas with other people made you close-minded, and also you missed this human experience. One difference between urban and rural units is that in the city, members have access to other people [outside the movement], but in rural units your whole time is spent in it. . . . I lived in a rural unit for three years. It was a very closed and strict unit. There were 100 members with no contact with other people for three years." (Gladis 24)

> While it was possible that rural guerrilla units would sometimes encounter non-

guerrilla members, the likelihood of these civilians voluntarily contradicting armed

guerrillas in an intellectual debate is very low. The situation was different in urban areas

where guerrilla members maintained their clandestine identity and could pass off as sympathizers of legal left-wing organizations.

In line with the findings in the literature of total institutions, such as Goffman's study on asylums (Goffman 1961), this study finds that the dynamic of becoming dependent on the guerrilla movement includes a process where characteristics of the members' previous identity—such as the style of dress— are stripped away, as well one of submitting members to a strict schedule controlled by the group, a schedule that removes a large part of the individual's autonomy. Describing these elements in the process of joining a rural guerrilla unit, Fanny (M-19) said,

> "When you arrive in the wilds, the first thing the organization does is provide you with a uniform and boots. Civilian clothing is not suitable for the wilds because the weather is harsh and because civilian shoes are not appropriate for walking. So, if you don't have experience in the rural guerrilla world, you will be lost in it. We are told when to eat, go to sleep and wake up, how to eat and clean. You even need to be taught how to pack your backpack so you can carry all your equipment comfortably, so you depend on the organization for everything. . . . During combat you depend on everybody. If a person makes a mistake, the result could be a lot a people getting killed."(Fanny 36)

It was learned from the interviews that some members disliked being so dependent on the guerrilla movement; after all, most of them had, or claimed to have had, a revolutionary spirit that was incompatible with the rules of a highly structured organization. They nevertheless stayed in the organization as a personal sacrifice to achieve higher goals, such as building a strong revolutionary organization that was capable of making important social changes in the country. For instance, Diego (EPL) said,

> "My dream was to change the current situation in the country, [to create a place where] everybody has equal opportunities, a utopian and impossible dream. But I depended on the organization in order to achieve this goal. I depended a lot

because I believed that with the organization I could achieve my goals." (Diego 36)

As this quote shows, people stay in the movements not only because they are dependent on the organization but also because they have a set of ideals that foster their decision to be in these groups.

(2) Ideals and values as a factor that explains why subjects stay in the guerrilla movement

Not only joining guerrilla movements but also staying in these organizations is partially explained by the ideals and values that their members held. Four important concepts, or sets of concepts, were found to be connected to members' decisions to stay in the guerrilla movement: (1) brotherhood, (2) self-sacrifice, (3) political ideals and values, such as concern for the nation and its people, and (4) military ideals and values, such as obedience and discipline.

Answers to the question, "During your experience in the guerrilla movement, how applicable was the altruistic ideal of 'one for all, and all for one'?" enabled the investigator to study the degree of brotherhood and self-sacrifice that was experienced within the group. The data shows that 24 subjects, or 57 percent of interviewees, said that this altruistic ideal always applied, 14 subjects, or 33 percent of interviewees, said that sometimes this applied, and only 4 subjects, or less than 10 percent of interviewees, said that it never applied. These answers reinforced the author's belief that members' concepts of brotherhood and self-sacrifice for the good of the group were important values that influenced their commitment to the organization. The following table includes the coded data from this question

Table 6: Membership perception of brotherhood and self-sacrifice for the group.

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Always applied	7 50%	5 35.7%	12 85.7%	24 57.1%
Sometimes applied	6 42.9%	7 50%	1 7.1%	14 33.3%
Never applied	1 7.1%	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	4 9.5%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

For Cesar (EPL), the concept of brotherhood was an important motivation for staying in the guerrilla movement, especially in difficult situations. He pointed out that brotherhood was a widespread value among the rank-and-file of the group, saying,

> It was always present, especially in the lower ranks, among all combatants, from the commander [of a unit] down to the lower-ranking members. Above commander level, things start to change. But in the guerrilla movement there is a lot of brotherhood; there were situations where there were between thirty and forty men in a unit and we had to share the little food we had: a piece of panela [a sugar loaf] and a can of sausages for everybody. In these situations, we drank a lot of water to fill our stomachs, and then we ate a small piece of panela and sausage. That was lunch. It happened many times. (Cesar 39)

For many interviewees, the element of brotherhood predominated in small units, and among people who were involved in military activities. Bruno (CRS) explained that if you compared people engaged in military activities with those involved in political propaganda, the members of the military unit developed higher levels of solidarity because they had to trust each other with their lives.

Other interviewees agreed that their war experience was a key factor in reinforcing their feelings of brotherhood toward other comrades. For example, Cesar (EPL) said,

"There were comrades who risked their lives for others during a battle; wounded comrades were rescued by fellow soldiers without any concern for their own lives. It sounds like a movie, but it was real. This happens when you begin seeing one another as brothers, not as soldiers—as a sibling that you have to protect." (Cesar 40)

The concept of brotherhood in these organizations is important, because members believed that their own well-being was tied up with the well-being of others. They also felt that making a mistake or not showing up for an activity would jeopardize other members. Talking about the origins of this strong sense of brotherhood among many guerrilla members, Ivan (M-19) said,

"I think we had many common hopes and dreams and there is the idea that each member depends on the rest of the group, not just for material things but in order to accomplish our goals. . . . In the heat of battle, you knew that if you stopped doing something, the rest of the group could be affected; for instance, if I fell asleep while on guard, the rest could die." (Ivan 39)

Feelings of brotherhood and solidarity were also reinforced by everyday interactions among members. It was typical that subjects introduced other members as if they were family or close friends. For instance, Indalecio (CRS) said,

"You ended up introducing other members of the guerrilla movement to nephews, nieces, and children as uncles, and when they were female, as aunts. So everybody felt integrated into the community, into a [political] project. The children didn't care, but little by little they were introduced to it." (Indalecio 39)

While the feeling of brotherhood, of perceiving other guerrilla members as part of the family, was an important motivator for staying in these groups, it was not the only one. In many adverse situations, members stayed in the organization because they believed that their own sacrifice for higher causes was a worthy one. Making a connection between the concepts of brotherhood and self-sacrifice for the group, Gladis (CRS) said,

"When you were fighting, sometimes you needed to hold off the enemy attack while other members escaped. You put your life in jeopardy for others. It happened to me many times when I was protecting the leadership of the movement. . . . In everyday life, sometimes a comrade's hammock got broken so you needed to share your hammock, despite the fact that the other person was not your friend or lover. During times when food was scarce, everybody ate equal portions. On long walks, males helped females by carrying their backpacks. And when we were fighting, we never left the wounded or dead behind. In jail everybody tries to help each other. There are many more examples. We lived like siblings. I loved my comrades in that way. They were my family." (Gladis 39)

When talking about self-sacrifice for the organization, many interviewees brought up examples of members who suffered torture and were killed without disclosing information about the organization. For instance, Ignasio (EPL) said,

" I shared an apartment with other members. One day I found my roommates' dead bodies [in the apartment]. They had been dismembered by government forces. I picked up their bodies and despite the fact that I lived with them, I was sure that they hadn't told on me. They knew my whereabouts. After this, I didn't change my routine because I was sure they had died before disclosing any secrets. They died to preserve the organization, and I was part of it." (Ignasio 40)

In reference to self-sacrifice, and from the perspective of a guerrilla commander, Gabriela (EPL) said,

"Everybody was willing to die for the organization, for the cause; during an operation, sometimes a person had to finish a risky job alone. Many people died under torture without disclosing organization secrets. This was coherent with the logic within the group. Of course, as a commander you always second guessed your orders because you don't want people dying." (Gabriela 40)

These interviews indicate that the concept of martyrdom was an important cultural feature of the guerrilla movement. Worship of guerrilla role models like Sandino, Che Guevara and Camilo Torres, in the Latin American case, was transmitted in the movement's songs, printed material, and oral history. These role models who died fighting for their cause reinforce the members' idea that self-sacrifice is worthy.

While offering up your life is the most dramatic example of self-sacrifice, some interviewees referred to other examples of this, such as giving up their food money and their salaries, leaving the comfort of their family homes, and living in a jungle environment. Also, from a female perspective, Fanny (M-19) said,

> "I think people sacrifice everything. Joining the M-19 meant saying goodbye to your father, mother, and siblings— to everybody. . . . As a woman you didn't think about having your own family and children. There were very few women who had children while in the movement. Being in the guerrilla group did not mean that you didn't want to be a mother, that you didn't want to experience motherhood, but the movement, the country, and the goal of changing society were more important." (Fanny-30)

In addition to the values of brotherhood and self-sacrifice, another value and ideal that influenced members to stay in the guerrilla movement was political ideology. For instance, Nemesio (CRS) said that during the time he was in the guerrilla movement, he was motivated to fight by his nationalistic ideals:

> "When you live the life of an insurgent, everything is sacrifice. Your life is sacrifice. You know that you could die for a just cause at any moment. You give up your life for the Colombian people." (Nemesio 40)

Being convinced that the guerrilla groups were working on behalf of the people was another important value that led to solidarity within the group and members' determination to continue the fight. Juana (M-19) said,

> "All our work was to benefit the people, this was our slogan and we felt that it was true. We were convinced we were helping the people." (Juana 40)

A final set of values that explains why members stayed in these groups was those related to the military codes of the guerrilla movements. Many members were concerned about quitting the organization, for instance, because of possible retaliation from other members. Talking about the difficulties and lack of preparation that members faced when leaving the guerrilla group before the peace agreement, Armando (CRS) said,

"Leaving was very complicated. People who wanted to leave faced a lot of obstacles in the ELN. Probably it was easier in other groups, but in the ELN it was difficult. In addition, other members called these people cowards, renegades, and traitors. This pressure discouraged you from leaving the group. Also, we were not prepared to be integrated into civilian society. I remember that when I visited Bogota, I walked along the street close to the walls because I was afraid of the cars moving so fast. I was like a frightened small animal." (Armando 49)

As Armando said, the guerrilla movement, as a military organization, limits the possibilities members have to leave the organizations. It creates restrictions such as (1) internal rules that prevent members from leaving, (2) peer pressure, and (3) lack of preparation for the members to be reinserted into a civilian life.

Even what was considered the least orthodox or the most liberal guerrilla movement in this study, the M-19, set strict conditions for members who wanted to leave the organization. On this topic, Ema (M-19) said,

"I believe that in the M-19 people had every chance to leave the guerrilla movement whenever they wanted. Of course, not whenever they wanted, but if they wanted to leave the war, it would depend on the current military situation. In the city, you said, I am leaving, and you were gone. Of course, you needed to return the things that you had received [from the organization], but only that. Of course, you were asked where you were going and why you were leaving. [Before you left,] they evaluated your case. In the rural areas it was different: it wasn't just saying 'I'm leaving,' because usually the [military] conditions didn't allow you to just run away. You needed to be escorted to a city, and you were provided with some money so you could arrive at your destination. Thus, there were some specific conditions when people left. I saw many people leaving the guerrilla movement, but almost always the organization was involved [evaluating your case]" (Ema 49)

Interestingly, Ema (M-19) said that the two most common reasons for people to leave the group were boredom, due to the lack of combat, and bad living conditions, such as the lack of food, water, and a difficult environment. Since members rarely left because of ideological differences, it was not unusual that they should return when the group situation improved.

Most EPL interviewees also agreed that leaving the guerrilla movement was possible, but they recommended following the organization's rules in order to avoid possible misunderstandings. They placed emphasis on the importance of leaving the group on good terms. Explaining the rationale of the organization with respect to members who left the group, Anibal (EPL) said,

> "When you leave, if everybody [in the organization] is being targeted and imprisoned [by government troops], if operations begin failing, if members are killed, then, if you leave and you become lost it is assumed that it is because you have disclosed information about the group. But if you leave after making things clear, there is no problem. They [organization members] wouldn't try to kill you. I left the organization for eight months without any problem." (Anibal 49)

Having to undergo a review before leaving the group, and then knowing that retaliations were possible if someone misunderstood your motive for leaving, were two factors that increased members' determination to stay in the guerrilla movements.

It was also observed during the interviews that while 25 interviewees stated that their guerrilla organizations had flexible policies about members leaving, the remainder said that this flexibility did not exist. Consequently, in their opinion, leaving a guerrilla movement meant deserting, disappearing, and going into exile. In fact, eight subjects said that there was no way out of the movement. Evidently, staying in the movement was the only option for some interviewees.

The author is of the opinion that the difference in perception about leaving the organization should not be attributed to policies within the guerrilla groups, but rather to the way guerrilla unit commanders interpreted the movements' rules. Contrary to regular military forces, in general unit guerrilla commanders and their troops have less communication with the central commander of the group. This translates into a larger degree of autonomy for interpreting rules and conducting internal affairs in the units. For

instance, the study indicates that organizational rules in the guerrilla movement were sometimes applied in ways that surprised even their own members. For example, Diego (EPL) said,

> "I remember a guy who fell in love with a comrade, and after asking the commanders, they were allowed to become a couple, and then, the woman became pregnant. There was a big problem with this gift (in a sarcastic tone). And this SOB [talking about the man] asked for permission to quit the guerrilla group, because he wanted to be present at the birth of his baby and wanted to live with his wife in a different environment. I thought this was not possible. I never saw that. I thought that if someone tried to leave, he was shot, because I had heard about this before I entered the guerrilla movement, but no, no, he was allowed to leave. We found him two years later, during the peace agreement ceremony; he gave up his weapon alongside us, and everything was fine." (Diego 49)

(3) Members' clandestine affiliation and behavior as factors that explain why subjects stay in the guerrilla movement

In addition to the high level of dependency on the organization and the ideals and values that members have with respect to their involvement in the guerrilla movement, it was found that members' clandestine affiliation and behavior reinforced their commitment to the guerrilla movement, and also weakened their relationships with non-guerrillas. The fact that their membership of these insurgent groups was secret prevented outsiders like friends, fellow workers, and relatives from objecting to the subjects' membership of these groups, or at least, from putting forward a view which differed from the guerrilla political perspective. On this point, Natasha (M-19) described living in clandestinity as:

> ". . . living in another country; we lost our reference point of family and acquaintances, as well as the sense of community life on street corners in the neighborhood. We changed residences constantly. You became another person." (Natasha 37a)

Similarly, Mario (CRS) pointed out that in some cases, joining a clandestine organization influenced a member's decision to separate himself from previous social relations and activities.

"Some people, in very extreme states of clandestinity, changed their names, broke off ties with their families and friends, and felt they were being hunted all the time. They led a very difficult life. They did not visit public places, and avoided activities that they had previously enjoyed" (Mario 37a).

Many interviewees explained their break with their families and friends as a way of protecting themselves from possible government retaliation. Keeping their family out of harm's way was an important value within the guerrilla culture, one that even justified changing location and activities.

Being involved full-time with the organization meant that members had very little time to develop any outside activities. For instance, Ignasio (ELP) related how his involvement in the insurgent organization limited other activities outside the group. He said,

"You isolated yourself; it is like the syndrome of the antisocial. I used to be a member of the fan club of a professional soccer team, and I stopped that. I was in a dance company, which performed at the carnival, and I left it. I used to go to a film club, and I stopped attending it. I used to love to go to parties and to dance salsa, and I did commentaries on salsa music, and I stopped all that. I liked to write about social issues, and I stopped. As you get involved in the guerrilla movement you become more withdrawn. The organization was a very closed world. I only saw my family two or three times a year, and I gained the reputation of being rich because I lived in a house alone. People from the guerrilla organization came and went all the time . . . You reached a high level of introspection. You limited friendships with outsiders because you couldn't trust anybody and because you were focused on changing the situation in the country and you couldn't talk with outsiders about your activities." (Ignasio 37a)

Restrictions on everyday activities such as limiting the places that members could visit and setting up very strict schedules for their activities were two factors that made it less possible for members to maintain relationships with outsiders. This was particularly

the case when the guerrilla organization banned certain places for members to live and

establish social relations. Talking about these restrictions on members' behavior, Maria

(M-19) said,

> "Sometimes they ordered you not to go to a place or return to a safe-house for
> security reasons or for any other reason. That was an order that members obeyed.
> Appointments were sacred things, because if you missed an appointment,
> everybody was put on alert, because something might have happened to you. So
> you stressed everybody out and everybody's security became the main concern in
> the group. People began changing locations. Missing an appointment was a very
> serious offense." (Maria 42)

Living in a clandestine house also restricted the possibility of members forging

relationships with outsiders. In this respect, Gladis (CRS) said that,

> "When you lived in an organization house [or safe-house] there were very strict
> rules. For instance, you couldn't invite outsiders or give them the phone number."
> (Gladis 42)

The organizations usually chose safe houses that were located far from main

avenues and bus routes in order to make it less likely that their members would be

accidentally exposed and identified. Guerrilla organizations also encouraged their

members to maintain a low profile in the local community. Members were encouraged to

limit their interactions with neighbors as well as to avoid holding parties and other social

gatherings that would attract public attention. However, in some situations this secluded

life was atypical in the neighborhood, and attracted the attention of the community. For

instance, Armando (CRS) said,

> "Once, I arrived home late in the evening and began to wash a motorcycle. It was
> around ten thirty. Then, a neighbor appeared and said, 'hi, you are a strange
> person, you never drink, you never party, you don't talk to other people in the
> neighborhood; are you a protestant? From the Caribbean coast?' Then, I noticed
> that I was like living in another world, and the next day I told my companion, 'we
> are going to give a big party and invite everybody.'" (Armando 37a)

The practice of clandestine behavior, which strengthens relationships with other members and weakens ties with outsiders, was an important part of the process of socialization into the guerrilla movements, and a key element for explaining why people stay in these clandestine groups.

The study found that entering this secluded life-style involves a progressive adoption of deviant behavior. Early on, subjects began their guerrilla careers by performing relatively harmless acts for their groups; however, as time passed, they became more involved in group activities where subjects committed more serious crimes. Referring to this progressive involvement in the group, Bruno (CRS) said,

> "The guerrilla movement was very strict and selective when it recruited new people. There was a first stage where they got to know you, where you had to win their trust to the point that they began seeing you as someone reliable and dedicated. Then, [in a second stage] they gave you many jobs, for example keeping appointments at one or two in the morning, that you had to do, carrying messages, and other logistic support activities. Then, [in a third stage] they asked you to keep weapons, house other members who arrived sick from guerrilla units, and other things like doing intelligence work, for instance, or following people and collecting information. And later, [in a fourth stage] you were allowed to take part in military operations. At this point you felt totally integrated into the group. This was the process of entering the guerrilla movement, and you wanted to get through this process as quickly as you could because you wanted to get into military activities as soon as possible. Being involved in these activities meant you had received a seal of approval, which signified that you had won their trust and that they considered you part of the group." (Bruno 17)

Something similar happened to Anibal (EPL), who mentioned that his first activities in the movement were

> " . . . carrying papers, leaving pamphlets behind boxes, posting stickers and proselytizing on public buses, also taking part in labor union and school protests. At first, you were always involved in relatively innocuous acts." (Anibal 17)

Later, Anibal (EPL) was involved in more violent activities, including combat.

The situation in the M-19 was not different from in the other two groups. For instance, recalling her early involvement in the guerrilla group, Juana (M-19) mentioned two types of actions: legal actions such as taking part in social protests and fairly mild illegal actions such as helping with guerrilla movement logistic. She said,

> "I drew a lot of maps. Also, I took care of members that the police were looking for in my neighborhood. I had a small house where I hid them. These were my first clandestine activities. [Before] . . . I participated in the peaceful seizure of churches, and in food collections." (Juana 17)

The above quotes show that being a guerrilla was not a dichotomous situation where people had only two options, being in or out of the organization. Quite the contrary, for being a guerrilla member implied a fluid relationship with that group throughout different stages of involvement. It was noted that as members' socialization process in the organization progressed, they undertook more serious deviant behavior that raised their status in the organization and made the possibility of leaving the movement more difficult.

One behavior pattern which appears to have a strong influence on members' self-perception as well as on the reinforcement of their ties with the organization is the replacement of their past civilian names by new, clandestine pseudonyms. This baptism gave members the opportunity to build their revolutionary identity by choosing names of past heroes or events. As time passed, subjects became attached to their pseudonyms, which in some cases became well recognized by the general population, who associated them with the revolutionary struggle. Being emotionally attached to these names, as well as building a professional reputation around them, were factors that influenced the individual to continue his or her revolutionary career.

During the interviews, the author found different types of emotional attachment to members' pseudonyms. For instance, a female interviewee became attached to a name because in her view it represented her maternal qualities. She said,

"I had the name Teresa. It was the name of a comrade's mother. I felt that this name conveyed the emotional state of being responsible for the security of the organization. If the organization was the father figure, I was the person responsible, like a mother, for security and for carrying out and supporting activities." (Gabriela 37)

On other occasions, names were selected in honor of people who had died for the revolution. Selecting names of dead people, or martyrs of the revolution, reinforced the belief that sacrificing their life during the struggle was an act that would not be forgotten. This was the case with Dario (M-19), who said,

"I chose the name of Julian because the day I joined the movement, July 20th, there was a general strike, and a guy called Julian was killed. He was a student at an institution I was involved with. He was killed during this protest." (Dario 37)

The sense of security that the pseudonym offered the member was another reason for developing an emotional attachment to it. In the case of Ema (M-19), for instance, using a false identity allowed her to elude the police by leading a parallel life: one as a university student and another as a guerrilla. She said,

"Three months after I was removed from the communication office in Cali, that office was seized by the authorities. Regretfully, I had left my student ID from the university in there. That information allowed them to obtain my real name and address and the phone number of my house. The government intelligence service searched it and asked questions about my whereabouts at the university." (Ema 38)

Interviews show that guerrilla pseudonyms were substituted for members' civilian names, even among family members who were part of the guerrilla group. For instance, Maria (M-19) said,

"I commonly met my sister in a diner and we always used our pseudonyms; we forgot to use our real names (laughing). We even reached this level of clandestinity." (Maria 38)

The influence of the pseudonym on the person's identity is so profound that despite the reinsertion process and subsequent years in civilian society, some former guerrillas continue using their guerrilla names. One example of this is Fernando (EPL), who said,

"People still call me by my pseudonym Pascual; many people greet me by this name. I believe this has important meanings and connotations." (Fernando 37)

Not surprisingly, the data shows that exchanging civilian names for pseudonyms was widespread among interviewees. The author found that 37 interviewees said they changed their names at least once; two interviewees said they never changed their names, and three interviewees preferred to answer the question in general without talking specifically about their personal experience. More interestingly, only four subjects stated that they were given names by the organization, while the remainder indicated that they chose their own names. In these cases, members submitted possible names to the unit commander, who had the last word on the subject. It was explained to the author that part of the reason for controlling pseudonyms was to avoid popular guerrilla names being repeated. This relatively weak control over pseudonyms indicates a shortcoming in the characterization of the guerrilla movement as a total institution.

Beyond the emotional attachment that members develop to their guerrilla names, these organizations encourage members to use pseudonyms, in order to protect the organization and members' families. This use of guerrilla names was ideologically coherent with the subversive organizations' beliefs. They viewed themselves as avant-

garde groups, formed by a new type of men who were fighting for a new and better society.

(4) Members' perception of mattering as a factor that explains why subjects stay in the guerrilla movement

The fact that subjects felt that their involvement in their guerrilla movement mattered was a key finding that helps answer the research question, "Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement?" More concretely, a central finding in this study is that most subjects felt that: (1) they were important to their groups, (2) the group paid attention to their needs and opinions, and (3) the group depended on their work. These three items——importance, attention and dependence—have been used by other authors as a way of measuring the concept of mattering to significant others (Rosenberg and McCoullough 1981). Before discussing these three variables in detail, the author should mention that to the best of his knowledge, this study is the first to use measurement of mattering in the study of individual attachment to political groups.

(4a)Feeling important as a factor for staying in the guerrilla movement

As the table below shows, it was found that almost all interviewees felt that they were important to the guerrilla movement. In most cases, this feeling of importance was associated with two aspects of guerrilla life: (1) The actions that they carried out on behalf of these organizations (i.e. making political decisions or participating in military operations) and (2) the status (or organizational rank) that they attained.

Table 7: Subjects' perception of their importance in the guerrilla movement

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Feeling important or somewhat important	14 100%	13 92.9%	14 100%	41 97.6%
Feeling unimportant or somewhat unimportant	0 0%	1 7.1%	0 0%	1 2.4%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

Data from the question "During the time in the organization, how important were you for the guerrilla movement? are reported in table 7. Answers to the question are classified in the two categories presented in the table: people who felt important or somewhat important, and people who felt unimportant Classifying subjects into a unique category called "somewhat important" would be too subjective and confusing due to the fact that "somewhat important" has a cultural meaning in English that is difficult to impose on answers given by subjects in Spanish. Upon consulting English dictionaries, the appropriate definition of the word "somewhat" in the context of this answer is not totally clear. For instance, the American Heritage College defines "somewhat" as "to some extent or degree," (Jost 1993:1297); the Chamber's Dictionary defines "somewhat" as "a little" (Kirkpatrick 1987: 708); the Oxford English American Dictionary and Thesaurus offers several synonyms that range from "quite" and "fairly" to "a bit" and "a little" (McKean 2003); and the Longman Dictionary defines "somewhat" as "a formal word meaning more than a little but not so many" (Summers 1993:1068). The problem of choosing a meaning clearly increases when the word is translated to and from a foreign language. Finally, colloquial phrases such as "somewhat important," or "somehow guilty" are strongly related to American culture and are foreign to the Colombian

guerrilla subculture in which this study was conducted, since they allow middle-of-the-

road positions that are not so common in other cultures or subcultures.)

An example that illustrates how engaging in guerrilla actions has an influence on

the subjects' perception of importance was offered by Hugo (CRS). He said,

"During my time in Bucaramanga there were two big protests by the people that influenced the whole northeast of Colombia. This was the area of influence of the guerrilla unit where I was organizing political activities. I think I was important to the organization because I helped mobilize the masses. At that time, political activities were very important to the ELN. I played a leading role in these activities. This allowed me to have some influence and to gain recognition among the leadership of the movement." (Hugo 30)

Another example in which being involved in the logistics of a military operation

made the person feel very important was Natasha (M-19). She explained that,

"When we brought weapons from Ecuador, I was the person in charge of keeping the house where we stored them as normal as possible. The lease was in my name. I had to keep on good terms with the neighbors, and we fitted out a car so it was suitable for moving weapons. We did not have any help from foreign governments. I was in charge of this operation and it was a complete success." (Natasha 30)

A final example that shows how carrying out activities for the guerrilla movement

increases members' sense of importance was offered by Antonio (M-19), when talking

about his work in intelligence operations. He said,

"When the organization began intercepting [government] army communications, we were able to learn about all their troop movements. We learned everything, [even] the exact time we were going to be attacked. Our communication unit worked day and night; we listened to their communications constantly. We were able to identify voices, check situations, and learn about their positions, their strengths, and their morale. We checked their morale by listening to the tone of voice in the communications: Whether or not they showed despair. We kept track of the frequency of communications between colonels and generals, and to what degree these conversations were intended to boost the troops' morale. For instance, we knew that when a colonel said to the troops that he was sending 'morale' it meant that he was sending family correspondence. It was considered to be very important when we learned that the troops had not received mail for the last two weeks or for a month. It meant their morale was low. Sometimes we also

learned about their problems with food and we acted on the basis of this information. The guerrilla movement didn't have generals in rooms full of maps and charts; we carried folded maps in our pockets. For this reason the communications office was very important for making decisions about guerrilla movements. We also helped check the information; sometimes we sent a small group to verify information by talking with the peasants. Because we were an important part of the structure, we were always consulted about possible operations. So the work we did was important; it was important because we had information about everything that happened in a region." (Antonio 30)

There were other cases where a member's status in the insurgent movement was an important factor in his or her perception of importance in the group. For instance, Juana (M-19) said,

"I was a member of the movement's national directorate. I got this job as a result of the evaluation of our work and how important it was to the organization." (Juana 30)

In addition to members' behavior and the status they attained in the guerrilla movement, another source of perception of importance was their personal traits. For example, Armando (CRS) pointed out that he was important because he was always willing to follow orders. Likewise, Gladis (CRS) stated that she was important because of her charisma. She said her personality always triggered good feelings and positive emotions.

Some typical guerrilla group activities, like entrusting members with secret information and keeping an eye on members' whereabouts, were aspects that made subjects feel important in these organizations. For instance, referring to the influence of handling secrets on the subject's feeling of importance, Fernando (EPL) said,

"I began working in the city as a courier for the movement's political headquarters. As a result, I became too dangerous to the organization because I learned the real names of the leaders, their families, their lawful activities, and their clandestine actions. This knowledge made me important, but also potentially dangerous to the movement. Therefore, to diminish this potential threat, I was sent to a rural guerrilla unit. . . ." (Fernando 30)

The feeling that guerrilla organizations keep watch on and protect their members was an element that made interviewees feel they were important to these groups. For instance, when guerrillas were arrested, the group usually mobilized lawyers, the press and human rights organizations so that their lives would be protected while they were in jail. The fact that the guerrilla movement organized this kind of support group made them feel important. Even the feeling that the organization cared for its members in everyday situations was an element that increased members' feeling of importance. In this respect, Lucas (M-19) said,

> "Despite many situations where we were hungry and did not have many resources, there was always someone caring for us. Sometimes this person came with money, or at least he acknowledged our existence. You knew that you existed, that you were part of the organization, and that the organization had a structure that was concerned about the whereabouts of its members. (Lucas 30)

A review of all the answers revealed that in most cases, subjects measured their importance in a very subjective manner. For instance, some subjects defined what appeared to be less important activities, such as storing the movement's propaganda and driving other members around a city, as very important, while in other cases, other subjects rated activities such as setting up a guerrilla front or directing troops in combat as routine. In conclusion, how important interviewees felt, while a very subjective measurement, is an important factor in understanding why members stay in these groups.

Since a study of the subjects' life-courses in these groups involves a prolonged period of time, their feelings of importance can be seen to have fluctuated throughout their life-course in these organizations. It was learned from the conversations that some social conditions influenced members' perception of their importance. For example, some interviewees said they felt less important when the guerrilla group began negotiating the

peace agreement with the government than before the peace talks took place. Other

interviewees said their feeling of importance diminished when they changed locations or

assignments, and consequently they needed to initiate a process of learning new

environments and mastering new skills, for example, when urban guerrillas were sent to a

rural unit, or when members of combat units were transferred to communication

detachments. In conclusion, members' personal relationship with the guerrilla group and

also the overall situation that the guerrilla group was experiencing (i.e. stability or lack of

stability with respect to members' assignments) were two factors that influenced

members' perception of importance in these organizations.

(4b) Receiving attention as a factor for staying in the guerrilla movement

This study also shows that almost all subjects felt that they received attention

from the guerrilla movement. This data is important, since receiving attention from the

group is a factor that influenced the member's decision to stay in these groups. The

analysis of the 42 interviews showed that subjects understood "attention" in two different

ways. Nineteen subjects felt they were getting attention from the group when they

received special treatment, such as money to cope with a family emergency or support to

resolve a security issue. For example, Antonio (M-19) said,

> "One day I went to the city, and I was fine, but someone started gossiping that I
> was sick. They asked me to meet someone and receive a sealed envelope. After
> the meeting, I opened the envelope and it was money. I was surprised. Then I
> began asking what to do with this money. I was told that it was for my medical
> expenses. But I was not sick and I didn't want to be a burden on the organization.
> I was interested in solving, not in creating, problems for the group." (Antonio 32)

It was observed from the interviews that common organizational activities such as

caring for members' well-being and correcting their mistakes were viewed as

demonstrations of attention by the organization toward members. Cesar (EPL), for instance, felt that this attention from the organization improved his relationship with the group. He said,

> "I always felt that the organization was concerned about my well-being. There was a situation when I was wounded and lost for fifteen days. The organization searched until they found me. I was given medical care. I felt that the group was concerned about rescuing me because they looked on me as a person, as a part of the group, and as a human being. I received attention, but I wasn't treated differently from other members. . . . Sometimes when I made mistakes, I was called out and the mistakes were explained to me, the things that I should or shouldn't do. The way they talked to you made you feel you were important to the organization." (Cesar 32)

Eleven other interviewees associated receiving attention with being listened to by other members of the guerrilla group. These were of people who felt that their opinions had some significance in the movement. For example, Bruno (CRS) said,

> "When I reached command positions in the movement, I was often asked about different things. If you were asked, if your opinions had some weight at the time decisions were made, it meant that they paid attention to you." (Bruno 32)

Finally, nine interviewees felt that they received both types of attention. This means that the organization not only listened to their opinions, it also acted upon their opinions. For instance, Jorge (EPL) said,

> "I recall a moment when I had problems with my resources, problems with weapons and troops that could have jeopardized a military operation. Then, I made an urgent request for more weapons and men. And they sent me thirty men with thirty rifles from Uraba. It took them one month of walking to arrive in Guajira. This was because I requested these resources to carry out a very specific military action." (Jorge 32)

Another example of receiving both types of attention was quoted by Gladis (CRS), who pointed out that her relationships, status, and combat skills were elements that increased the attention she received from the movement. She said,

"I always felt that I received a lot of attention, that people were concerned about my well-being, and that they listened to me. This was because I was part of the movement's elite, my boyfriend was member of a central command, and I was close to the priest Perez [ELN leader] and to other commanders, so I had direct access to the most important people in the organization. In fact, I became very knowledgeable and met everybody who was important in the organization . . . I never felt that the organization ignored me. When I was sick, they took care of me. I felt they valued my work; for instance, when they needed to select the best combatants to do some task, I was always selected." (Gladis 31)

The table below shows the distribution of subjects based on their group membership and their perception of receiving attention from their guerrilla organization.

Table 8: Former guerrilla members' perception of receiving attention from their organization

(Data from answers to the question "As a member of the movement, how much attention, or lack of attention, did you receive from the organization?")

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Attention in the form of receiving special treatment	7 50%	4 28.6%	8 57.1%	19 45.2%
Attention in the form of being listened to	5 35.7%	4 28.6%	2 14.3%	11 26.2%
Both types of attention	1 7.1%	4 28.6%	4 28.6%	9 21.4%
No attention received	0 0%	1 7.1%	0 0%	1 2.4%
No Answer	1 7.1%	1 7.1%	0 0%	2 4.8%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

(4c) Members' perception that the organization depended on their work as a factor to stay in the guerrilla movement

In addition to feeling important to the organization and perceiving that they received attention from the group, the study found that most interviewees felt that these

organizations depended significantly, or to some extent, on their work during their time

in the guerrilla movement. Feeling that the outcome of the struggle depended on their

work was a factor that influenced members to stay in the guerrilla movements. The table

below summarizes the 42 interviewees' answers about their perception of how dependent

the organization was on their work.

Table 9: Reinserts' perception that the organization depended on their work

(Data from answers to the question: "How much did the organization depend, or

not depend, on your work for it?")

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Organization depended significantly on the subject's work	8 57.1%	9 64.3%	6 42.9%	23 54.8%
Organization depended to some extent on the subject's work	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	7 50%	11 26.2%
Organization did not depend on the subject's work	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	0 0%	4 9.5%
No answer	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	1 7.1%	4 9.5%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

This table shows four categories of dependence by the movement on

interviewees' work. Interviewees who stated that the group depended on several activities

that they performed were classified in the first category. Those who only mentioned one

or two activities were classified in the second category. Subjects who said that their

groups did not depend on their work were classified in the third category. These four

subjects supported their answers by saying that their organizations were able to substitute

other members who were capable of performing the same tasks for them. Finally, four

interviewees did not give a clear answer about their perception of the organization's dependence on their work.

Some interviewees explained the dependence that the organization had on their work by referring to their military rank and the responsibilities associated with this. For instance, one interviewee classified in the first category, Jorge (EPL), was a commander of a guerrilla front. Explaining the group's dependence on his work, he said,

> " . . . without [some]one giving orders, assigning activities, giving military and organizational instructions, offering ideological education, and assigning recruiting tasks, nothing would happen.   . . . everything needs to be ordered by the commander and everything is based on a specific plan which concentrates on two goals: development of the organization and readiness to fight the enemy." (Jorge 34)

Other interviewees felt that the organization only depended on them for very specific functions. For instance, Juana (M-19) said the group depended on her to keep people in custody that the organization had detained (or kidnapped). She said,

> " . . . the organization depended on me to take good care of these captives. These abductions were not just for money, they were also for political reasons. They were people who mistreated the working class, who stole things from them. Despite that, we needed to treat the detainees well." (Juana 34)

Several interviewees mentioned that the organization depended on their political skills. For example, explaining the organization's dependence on his political work, Hugo (CRS) said,

> "I worked full time for the organization. I was very involved in promoting political activities. It was part of the strategy of prolonged war. We mobilized people and encouraged them to take part in protests as a preparatory stage for a final insurrection, where we could defeat the government. These political activities also allowed us to recruit new militants and sympathizers. A very concrete example was a military blockade that the government mounted in the mid-Magdalena area, in the villages of Carmen and San Vicente del Chucuri. We were able to break the blockade by mobilizing seven thousand peasants in a protest march to Barrancabermeja. I was in charge of directing this protest, which

was able to stop the military offensive against the population that supported the guerrilla group." (Hugo 34)

A typical case of interviewees who mentioned that the organization did not depend on them was Lucas (M-19). He described how easy it was for the organization to replace one member with another if the first member decided not to take part in a guerrilla activity. He concluded by saying,

> " … one does not exist as an individual; each person is like a cog in the machine; [as a result] a person who is malfunctioning can easily be replaced by another. The individual [as an individual] is the least important element, compared to the group as a whole" (Lucas 34).

The following section will address the process of leaving the political group AD-M19, which is viewed as a political party that helps many reinserts in the process of political socialization into civilian society. The discussion in the following section revolves around answers to the question, "Why do members leave the group?" Two stages in the process of leaving the group can be identified. The first stage is when guerrilla organizations sign the peace agreement and abandon military conflict; the second stage that is addressed by this question focuses on the reinserts leaving their legal political party AD-M19, which was created after the peace agreement with the government and has been fully integrated into society.

Part III: Why do members leave the group?

In order to present the findings of this research question in the proper context, a very brief account of the reinsertion process will be given, so as to help the reader understand the objective of the research question and judge the relevance of the findings.

According to official history, the guerrilla movements stopped fighting the day they signed the peace agreement with the government. There can be no doubt that this day was an emotional landmark in the life-course of the members. The events surrounding the signing of the peace agreements were rites of passage in the transition from military life to a civilian one. Many guerrillas paraded with their comrades at these ceremonies and wore their uniforms and emblems for the last time. For many members the most difficult part of these events were giving up their weapons, which were the tools that had offered them security, abandoning the hope of changing society, and relinquishing a high social status in the form of being informal authorities in many communities. Meeting relatives, as well as having the opportunity to engage in friendly talks with their former enemies, the government soldiers, were also crucial experiences for many guerrillas.

Other typical features of these peace treaty-signing ceremonies were speeches by guerrilla leaders and government officials, recalling historical events and dead comrades. There were rousing speeches full of references to the group's current situation, the importance of the peace agreement, and their future plans, which in the three guerrilla groups included becoming legal political forces so that their social and political agendas could be continued. The sense of continuing the political struggle but through different means was present in the minds and hearts of most guerrillas. This cognitive consistency

appears in several of the interviews offered by their political leaders; for instance, Otti

Patino points out that,

> "I believe that we didn't dedicate our life to war or peace but to a change [in society]. I believe that the existence of the M-19 as an armed organization was not in vain. Colombian history, in the last 25 years, cannot be understood without including the M-19 [in the analysis]. This isn't just because of our stunning [military and political] actions, but because the current oligarchic forces cannot [rebuild their power] because of us" (2000:9A).

Thus, guerrilla movements represented themselves to the public during the peace

process as organizations which were contributing to peace in Colombia by giving up

military confrontation, but were at the same time retaining many of their ideological

beliefs and perceptions about the social problems that existed in Colombia. These peace

events were televised to the entire nation, and in many cities thousands of people came

together in spontaneous marches in support of the peace processes and their participants.

Despite the importance of the peace agreements, the process of leaving the groups

took significantly longer than the ceremonies. It started the moment guerrillas learned

that a peace agreement was possible and began thinking about their future in civilian

society, and it finished when the reinserts found many obstacles to continuing their

groups' political projects in civilian life and decided to focus on their individual lives.

Leaving the group thus involved an extensive individualization process, which was

typified by a change in their reference groups. It was a process where civilian families

were substituted, as significant others, for guerrilla members. This is especially relevant

since in Colombian society it is very common that adult children live with their parents

until they get married and/or form their own family.

It is also important to mention that the peace processes were not accepted by all members of the three guerrilla organizations. In the case of the M-19, a small number of rebels formed a dissident faction called the Jaime Bateman front. Also, hundreds of members of the EPL formed a group called EPL Dissidents, which is still fighting the government, and the majority of ELN members did not join the CRS, a group that reached a peace agreement after it broke away from the ELN. There were other cases where members decided to join other guerrilla groups, groups of common criminals, and even right-wing paramilitary organizations. In general, leaving one of the three guerrilla organizations included in the study was not a guarantee that members would reintegrate into civilian society. It is therefore important to bear in mind that the study was based on those former guerrilla members who stopped their deviant actions in order to join civilian society.

In other words, the research question, "Why do members leave the group?" focuses on those members who truly opted for the peace agreement with the government. The question was asked with the goal of gaining some understanding about why people who invested so many years, and who made so many sacrifices, to the point of being willing to die for their groups' ideals, ended up abandoning their life projects. From the group-level perspective, the point of this research question was to gain some understanding of why a group of people with a solid ideology, which was capable of organizing themselves in very difficult environments and had with many years' experience in promoting politics, ended up being unable to create a long-lasting political project.

The result of the investigation shows that internal group factors pushed group members to abandon their former groups. In this respect, the author found that ex-combatants felt that they did not matter to the AD-M19. This means that (1) most subjects felt they were not important to the AD-M19, (2) they did not receive attention from the AD-M19, and (3) they felt that the AD-M19 did not depend on their involvement in the party.

The investigation also found external social elements that pulled reinserts from their previous roles once they had given up arms. These were: (1) increased obligations due to new roles in civilian society, (2) the stigma associated with being a reinsert, (3) political violence against reinserts, and (4) the stripping away of representative functions from the political party. This last point can be illustrated by the party's inability to help reinserts on matters like finding jobs, obtaining scholarships and facilitating government proceedings. The author will present these findings in the following pages. Quotes and tables with data from the interviews will be included whenever possible.

Internal factors that answer the research question, "Why do members leave the political group?"

Several former guerrilla leaders formed political parties and began taking part in elections as a result of their decision to continue their political agenda. They were also motivated by an initial favorable public opinion, as well as by encouragement to take part in politics by important sections of the power elite. M-19 members formed the AD-M19 (Democratic Action M-19), while EPL formed the political party "EPL," which in Spanish stands for Hope, Peace and Liberty. However, after a few months of political

activity, several EPL party members joined the AD-M19. Finally, the CRS founded the *Democracia Socialista* Party.

The AD-M19 was at the height of its fame from the 1989 M-19 demobilization date to the time of the first political elections; by 1994, however, the electoral power of the AD-M19 was clearly in decline due to internal divisions, leaders' loss of prestige, and their members' lack of success in congress. A year later, CRS members signed a peace agreement with the government and formed their own political party, *Democracia Socialista*. While CRS members had seen the AD-M19 as an important political point of reference, they were aware of the disadvantages of joining this declining party, which almost disappeared in the late 1990s.

As part of this modernization process, where violent means of gaining power were replaced by democratic procedures, such as taking part in elections, many guerrilla leaders began a process of replacing their comrades, who in some cases were viewed as uneducated, unsophisticated political partners, and even potential political liabilities, with more skillful civilians who were looked upon as knowledgeable, sophisticated professionals. The positions the leaders maintained in public was not to exclude their former comrades, but to demonstrate democratic values by giving important political party positions to people who were not former guerrillas.

One political result of this "democratization" of the AD-M19 was an estrangement between the leadership and the former guerrilla organization base, which felt that their leaders were mishandling the new political capital by giving party positions to people outside the former groups. This process also led to conflict among the party leadership, since the party had fewer positions than candidates for them.

In order to address, members' perception of their relation to the AD-M19 political party from the socio-psychological perspective, questions about the three dimensions of mattering (importance, attention and dependence) were included in this part of the study.

Subjects' perception of their importance to the AD-M19

An analysis of the data from the forty-two interviews shows that most reinserts did not feel that they were important to the AD-M19. The table below classifies interviewees on the basis of how important they felt they were to the AD-M19. Since the CRS was a guerrilla movement at the time the AD-M19 was at its electoral peak and was not a part of its coalition, the author was surprised by the similar number of subjects in the three groups who felt that they were not important to the AD-M19.

Table 10: Reinserts' feelings of being important to the AD-M19

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Subject felt that he or she was important or somewhat important to the AD-M19	5 35.7%	5 35.7%	1 7.1%	11 26.2%
Subject felt that he or she was not important to the AD-M19	8 57.1%	9 64.3%	10 71.4%	27 64.3%
No answer	1 7.1%	0 0%	3 21.4%	4 9.5%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

The study indicates that reinserts who felt they were important to the AD-M19 based their opinions on three aspects: (1) their status in the party, (2) the roles they performed in the party, and (3) the election results that they helped obtain during election campaigns. An example of the influence of status on the feeling of importance was given by Gabriela (EPL), who was an important party official, who said,

"During moments of crisis in the AD-M19, I was able to be a factor for unity. I was able to make agreements between the party [bureaucracy] and its 23 members in congress. I had some degree of importance in the party because I was a factor for unity. I think that was because I was perceived as being the least dangerous to the rest."(Gabriela 69)

Many reinserts agreed during the interviews with Gabriela's description of the internal divisions and conflicts amongst the AD-M19 leadership. In the period mentioned by Gabriela (EPL), AD-M19's members of congress had more power and resources than the party. After the early victories of the AD-M19, many of its congressmen decided not to follow party guidance and to run their next political campaigns, in 1994, by themselves, in what was called "The Wasp Operation." Regretfully for them, the multiplicity of options open to voters resulted in almost all the AD-M19 candidates being defeated.

As mentioned above, some reinserts also felt important to the AD-M19 because they had a role in the party. Ernesto (EPL) for instance explained his importance to the party by saying,

 "I helped in the development of the party platform, especially on topics such as human rights and the peace process. Our work was taken into consideration. It had an important influence on the opinions of the EPL political party [which after the peace process stood for 'Hope, Peace and Liberty']." (Ernesto 69)

Similarly, Humberto (M-19) felt that he was important to the AD-M19 because of his role as cultural coordinator at many political events. He said,

"I was a cultural coordinator during the political campaigns in my region. I was able to fill public places with spectators at political rallies. I was the director of a very popular theater company. After our performances, we introduced the political candidates to the public. They were able to address the crowd and win many votes." (Humberto 69)

Irrespective of the status and roles that reinserts had in the AD-M19, an election victory made them feel they were important to the party. For instance, Jorge (EPL) said,

"There was a period when I was very important to the political campaign because I was very popular in my province. I had a lot of influence in the labor movement because I was involved and I was well-known in it before I joined the guerrilla movement. My candidacy generated a lot of enthusiasm, and I managed to win the highest number of votes in the province in an election for congress." (Jorge 69)

While it can be argued that there is some degree of interaction between the election result that politicians obtain and their status and roles in the party, the study did not provide evidence that this is always the case. In general, the party elite and party rules may prevent a winning candidate from gaining higher status and more important roles in the party. This study provides some evidence that winning an election increases the candidate's self-perception of his or her importance in the party.

Reinserts who felt that they were not important to the AD-M19 backed up their answers by saying that they did not have a role and they were never contacted by the party. For instance, Maria (M-19) said,

"I was not important because I was not put in charge of anything in the AD-M19. Without a commitment or a responsibility you are not important." (Maria 69)

Typical of responses by reinserts who felt they were not important was Helena's answer. She said,

"I was never invited to participate in any activity." (Helena 69)

A similar answer was given by Natasha (M-19), who said,

"They [AD-M19 members] never contacted us, they never invited us [to party meetings.]" (Natasha 69)

These answers also provide some evidence that these subjects were not too interested in the possibility of becoming members of the AD-M19. In fact, only a handful

of interviewees elaborated on their explanation about their lack of importance to the

party. For instance, Lucas (M-19) said,

> "I feel I am not important. This is partially due to the lack of organization in AD-M19. I doubt my name is included in their database. And personally, I don't see them as having a political program that would win support in the country or make people become committed to the party. However, if they call me, I will look at their political agenda, and it is not out of the question that I would join them." (Lucas 69)

While these answers show that many M-19 and EPL reinserts felt that they were

not important to the AD-M19, this lack of importance was even more noticeable among

CRS members, who were in the guerrilla movement at the time the AD-M19 was at its

political peak. Only one subject felt that he was important to the AD-M19 due to related

life experiences. However, the answers given by most CRS members indicate that they

did not have a clear view of how left-wing guerrillas could be important to the AD-M19,

a political party led by reinserts and with a strong peace agenda. In fact, some CRS

interviewees felt that asking them about the AD-M19 was a design mistake in this

investigation. In some cases, CRS interviewees agreed to answer questions about the AD-

M19 only after it was explained to them that it was for purposes of comparison with ex-

members of other guerrilla groups.

Subjects' Perception of Receiving Attention from the AD-M19

The researcher also found that most interviewees felt that they received little or no

attention from the AD-M19. Only a few subjects said they received some or a lot of

attention from this party. This was an unexpected finding, since the AD-M19 as a party

was supposed to represent the ideals and interests of many reinserts. The following table

shows the classification of the interviewees, based on their perception of the attention that

they received from the AD-M19.

Table 11: Reinserts' feelings of receiving attention from the AD-M19

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Subject felt that he or she received a lot of attention from the AD-M19	2 14.3%	1 7.1%	1 7.1%	4 9.5%
Subject felt that he or she received some attention from the AD-M19	1 7.1%	1 7.1%	0 0%	2 4.8%
Subject felt that he or she received little attention from the AD-M19	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	6 14.3%
Subject felt that he or she received no attention from the AD-M19	6 42.9%	10 71.4%	10 71.4%	26 61.9%
No answer	3 21.4%	0 0%	1 7.1%	4 9.5%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

In contrast to the experience that interviewees had in the guerrilla movements,

very few subjects claimed to receive some or a lot of attention from the AD-M19. In

these cases, the attention did not refer to attention in the form of receiving economic

support or other material help, but to being listened to the party. For example, Luis (EPL)

said,

> "They paid attention to my political opinions but I did not receive any economic
> support. There was some attention because you were invited to take part in
> political discussions and to produce party documents. You had the possibility of
> obtaining a management position in the party. But it was a volunteer position
> without salary. Everybody had to figure out how to solve their own economic
> situation without support from the group." (Luis 71)

For a few interviewees, having their names included on the party's mailing list

and receiving invitations to political activities were actions that made them feel that they

received attention from the party. This was so in the case of Fanny (M-19), who said,

"I always received mailings from the party with invitations to attend party meetings. Last time it was a meeting that the party organized in a hotel to choose the party chairman. Only a select group of people was invited. " (Fanny 71)

As the table above shows, most subjects felt that the AD-M19 paid little or no attention to them. They attributed this lack of attention to several factors, including the opening up of the party to newcomers who did not have strong relationships with reinserts, the lack of sound political organization, and the individualization process in the reinsert population, which made them more concerned with personal issues than with the future of the political group. For instance, the first two topics were mentioned by Juana (M-19) when she said,

"There were many internal ideological contradictions in the AD-M19, and many important decisions were made in moments of weakness. If you asked other comrades, they would answer that the AD-M19 paid more attention to the new people who joined the party than to the members who came from the guerrilla movement. This was a mistake, a big mistake. In a book about Ho-chi-Minh, the Vietnamese leader, I learned that when he was sick he called his second in command, the person in charge of leading the war, and advised him that in moments of strength he should reward the committed members, because in moments of hardship they would be the only ones who remained. The AD-M19 did the contrary. In times of success, the AD-M19 welcomes many newcomers and provided them with electoral strength, because it was convinced that reinserts would stay in the party no matter what, and they would put up with any abuse. Then, when the party was formed, some newcomers who had academic degrees and were eloquent were favored, over and above former guerrillas who had already demonstrated working skills, commitment to the cause, and a sense of responsibility in their tasks before the peace agreement. I remember that Alfonso Caldera [an M-19 reinsert] told me he was worried because newcomers came from other movements, and they were people who, after using the AD-M19 for their own goals, would change movements again. They were people who would damage us because we only had one movement and could not go to others. He felt that the newcomers did not care about the loss [of the movement.] . . . I believe the AD-M19 was unable to build a political structure that could pay attention to its members. Due to this lack of organization, everybody in the AD-M19 felt ignored. Even party leaders felt they were not paid attention to, because there was no arrangement where people could put forward ideas, criticize, or submit reports. I told them [the AD-M19 leaders] that the AD-M19 was like a Vallenato [Caribbean song] that said 'who am I signing to here? Who can I give my thanks

to?' This is because it was not clear who we reported to. The lack of attention could to a large extent be put down to the lack of a party organization." (Juana 71)

Interestingly, as Juana (M-19) indicates, the lack of attention from the AD-M19 was even felt by members who were in the top political positions in the party. For instance, Jorge (EPL), who was a congressman for the party during this period, said,

> "After winning a political campaign for congress [in the early 90s] I received very little attention from the AD-M19. The party began to break up and there was no guidance for our legislative actions in congress. What we accomplished was the result of personal efforts, it was not because of the party. . . . As a congressman, I needed to present some policy projects, but the AD-M19 did not have a leadership or a project-based agenda for congress. The party expected us to generate things for the organization instead of the organization helping its members." (Jorge 71)

On the other hand, AD-M19 members who did not have political jobs felt that their congressmen did not pay attention to them, and that they avoided addressing important party issues such as organizing the party for the next election and having a coherent legislative agenda in congress. Gabriela (EPL) said the following on this matter:

> "There was a total lack of attention [on the part of the party's structure toward the membership] because everybody wanted to be the person in charge of the AD-M19. Members formed small groups for the next election [in what was called 'operation wasp'] and when there was an important debate in congress, we said we needed to talk about the party position, but the party congressmen didn't accept any party interference in decisions by congress. This lead to an individualization process, where nobody paid attention to the group." (Gabriela 70)

The conflict between the weak political party and its strong lawmakers had three important consequences for the AD-M19 and its members: first, the weakening of the AD-M19 as a serious political organization capable of leading a left-wing movement and challenging traditional parties in their quest for power; second, the loss of several seats in congress, since most AD-M19 politicians were unable to gain reelection by themselves; and third, the feeling among many reinserts that their leaders had become like other

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corrupted politicians—only concerned for their own interests. To illustrate this last point,

Carlos (M-19) said,

> "None of the leaders paid attention to us. They became demagogues just like other
> politicians. I continued meeting with comrades, and we tried to give each other
> hope, but the commanders [AD-M19 leaders] did not recognize our effort in the
> war. They didn't recognize that we were good combatants and capable of fighting.
> When the guerrilla fight ended the damned commanders abandoned us." (Carlos
> 70)

Apart from the arrival of newcomers and a weak political organization, it seems

that the most important reason for feeling ignored by the AD-M19 was the result of a

process of individualization among the whole reinsert population. Many reinserts, for

instance, wanted to continue their political work in the AD-M19 but were unable to. New

demands from civilian society such as holding jobs, providing for families, and learning

new work skills became more important than political activities. In addition, some

interviewees felt burned out by their political past, and pointed out that they did not care

whether they received attention from the party.

The same individualization process was observed among AD-M19 leaders who

not only were worried about their personal economic situation but were also

overwhelmed by many more sources of political information and political alliances than

during their time in the guerrilla movement. Interviewees who hold government positions

also agree that this experience was a cultural shock for them. They recognized that they

were not prepared to govern despite their claims during the guerrilla years. A feeling of

insecurity about handling political issues influenced AD-M19 leaders' decision to make

political alliances and bring in newcomers who were detached from the reinserts'

political culture and experiences.

In the case of CRS subjects, most of them felt that they did not receive attention from the AD-M19. They explained that CRS had very few contacts with AD-M19 members. The lack of interest in the AD-M19 that CRS members exhibited is also attributed by the author to the fact that the CRS guerrilla movement signed its peace agreement with the government at a time when AD-M19 was collapsing as a political organization. As a result, CRS members decided to form their own political party, *Democracia Socialista*, which is currently involved in political campaigns as part of a larger left-wing coalition called *Polo Democrático*.

Subjects' Perception that the AD-M19 was dependent on their participation

As with the other two variables in the mattering index (importance and attention),

the data shows that most subjects felt that the AD-M19 was not dependent on their work.

A summary of the results of the interviews is presented in the table below.

Table 12: Reinserts' feelings that the AD-M19 was dependent on their participation

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
AD-M19 was very dependent on my participation	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	0 0%	4 9.5%
AD-M19 depended somewhat on my participation	1 7.1%	2 14.3%	0 0%	3 7.1%
AD-M19 was not very dependent on my participation	3 21.4%	0 0%	0 0%	3 7.1%
AD-M19 was not dependent on my participation	8 57.1%	10 71.4%	12 85.7%	30 71.4%
No answer	0 0%	0 0%	2 14.3%	2 4.8%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

Parallel to the feelings of being important to the party, subjects who felt that the

AD-M19 was dependent on their participation based their answers on three elements: (1)

their status in the group, (2) their roles in the party, and (3) their successful political

performance during previous elections. For instance, Jorge (EPL) explained the AD-M19

dependence on his work by saying,

> "It depended on me, because I was an AD congressman; the party depended on
> my appearances in the media and on my ability to influence public opinion. This
> dependence was mostly at a regional level, because there were other members
> who had more influence in other regions and at national level." (Jorge 73)

The lack of a national party organization increased the influence of local leaders and the party's dependence on them. This was the situation described by Ivan M-19. He said,

> "I think I made a determined effort to help the party in my region. It lasted until 1994, when the party disbanded and everybody went their own way. During my political involvement I never had influence in Bogota [on the party headquarters], and I never received economic or human resources. Every political activity in the region depended on me." (Ivan 73)

As in the previous case, the party's dependency on reinserts was limited to reinsert support and expertise during elections. This was the case with Betty (EPL), who used her expertise in the region to help out during the visit of an AD-M19 presidential candidate. Her answer was classified by the author as someone who felt that the party somewhat depended on her participation. She explained her limited involvement in the party by saying,

> "During the 1994 presidential campaign, I coordinated the visits that Navarro Wolf (the AD-M19 presidential candidate) made to my region. Regretfully, this led to problems with other people in the campaign. This enmity was very difficult to manage and other political parties took advantage of our internal divisions." (Betty 73)

Most interviewees felt that the AD-M19 depended very little or not at all on their participation, because the party offered reinserts very few opportunities to engage in politics. Elaborating on this topic, Lucas (M-19) said,

> "Originally, the AD was formed so everybody who was in the M-19 would have a place in it. Regretfully this was not an organized process, and the party's leaders became more important than the organization. Some of these leaders went from living out the same experiences as we did in the guerrilla movement to using us as pawns in the party. Occasionally, that use became abuse. They felt we had an obligation to them. . . . The AD depended on us because we were able to win some votes and help build a party, but we couldn't criticize without being marginalized or considered liabilities by the party. The lack of receptiveness by the leaders greatly reduced many members' interest in the party." (Lucas 73)

A similar experience of becoming alienated from the party and its leaders was voiced by Carlos (M-19), who said,

> "In the AD-M19, only the demagogues remained, sly people who used politics for their own benefit. The rank-and-file didn't have political experience, so we didn't have any place in the AD. They never counted on me; moreover, they tried to prevent us from showing up." (Carlos 73)

In the case of the EPL, many members felt even more distanced from the AD-M19, since they originally formed their own party (Hope, Peace, and Liberty) but their leaders decided to join forces with the AD-M19. This alliance caused a division within the EPL membership that resulted in many EPL activists leaving the party. Helena (EPL) explained why the AD-M19 was not dependent on her work by saying,

> "It was not dependent on me because the people who were doing the political work were people who were only interested in their own fame. These people were different from us. . . . When the EPL party (Hope, Peace and Liberty) decided to join the AD-M19, we lost the possibility of having a closed, organized, hierarchical party. This alliance was a mistake, because many EPL members didn't feel any attraction toward or closeness to the AD-M19. As a result of this alliance with the AD-M19, I stopped participating in politics." (Helena 73)

Most CRS interviewees felt that the AD-M19 was not dependent on their participation, since they were fighting in the guerrilla movement until 1995, and after reinsertion they formed their own political party instead of joining an already demoralized AD-M19. However, it was clear from the interviewees that the AD-M19 was an important political point of reference for other guerrilla groups that were planning to become a political party. On occasions, the guerrilla movements even did their best to favor the AD-M19 in elections. For instance, a former CRS commander said that during an election, he advised a group of peasants in his area of influence to vote for the AD-M19. Despite endorsing the AD-M19 among the general population, he felt that the AD-M19 was not dependent on his political support.

There is some indication that the internal cohesion between the individual and the party was broken. From these interviews, elements that increase members' sense of mattering, such as having a status or a role in the party as well as obtaining a successful election result for the party were identified. It was also found that members who felt they did not matter to the AD-M19 attributed these feelings to a lack of opportunities to be involved in the party. A closer analysis shows that these in-group factors included the excessive individualism of the party's leaders and a lack of party organization.

These in-group factors that pushed members to abandon the AD-M19 political project, and in many cases to abandon any other political endeavors, were accentuated by other external factors that pulled reinserts away from their political activities. The findings on these external factors will be presented in the next section.

External factors that answer the research question, "Why do members leave the political group?"

Irrespective of the ability, or lack of ability, by the AD-M19 and its leaders to keep reinserts interested in supporting and participating in the party, this study found four external (out-of group) reasons that discouraged reinserts from getting involved in the AD-M19. These were: (1) increased social obligations due to new roles in civilian society, (2) the stigma associated with being a reinsert, (3) the political violence against reinserts, and (4) the stripping away of representative functions from the political party.

(1) Increased social obligations due to new roles in civilian society as a factor for leaving the political group.

Changing from the controlled military life of the group to freer civilian life was a culture shock for many reinserts. Leaving the guerrilla movement made them face a new set of roles and obligations that were competing for their time and resources with the desire that many of them had to continue being involved in politics. For instance, Armando (CRS) related his difficulties in performing new roles in civilian society, saying,

> "Returning to civilian life was a painful process, because you were emotionally attached to many guerrilla traditions and customs. It involved a process of learning to do things that people often take for granted, such as going to the post office, using a computer, or just sitting in a restaurant without facing the windows. You never did that as a guerrilla. Even the way you walked was different from the way you walk in the city. [Country dwellers usually balance their bodies more, to compensate for the softness of the terrain in rural areas, while city dwellers don't balance them that much because they walk on hard surfaces.] Even the tone of voice is different. In the guerrilla movement you were used to talking with a commanding voice, giving orders, but here people dislike it and complain when you talk like this. Also words that we use in the guerrilla movement are not common here. We called everybody 'compa', as 'compañero' [comrade]. After leaving the movement my first job was as a teacher. Of course, I began calling all the students 'compa' and they complained about it. I noticed that it was a problem, so I decided to imitate the art teacher who was calling all his students 'darlings'. So I started saying 'darling' even to the male students. . . ." (Armando 60)

The difficulties associated with assuming new roles and obligations were compounded by the lack of funds that many reinserts faced in their civilian lives. These new challenges in civilian life made them question past values and hold different views of their political struggles. For instance, Oscar (CRS) recalled that,

> "Early on in the reinsertion process, I underwent a huge personal crisis. I was part of a group of people whose entire life was dedicated to a set of ideals in a guerrilla movement, and suddenly you lost everything. You questioned all your values and you suffered a personal crisis. Then your new concerns were: How to

survive? How to pay for food? How to rent an apartment? How to buy a car? These were bourgeois values that we criticized in the guerrilla movement. So, this change led to a personal crisis, but becoming a civilian also made you more sensitive to social issues, because you lost this social awareness when you were, like a liberator [in a sarcastic tone], fighting in a war." (Oscar 60)

Changing roles, facing new obligations, and not having the economic resources to handle their personal situation made many reinserts enter a stage of uncertainty about their future. Reflecting on this situation, Federico (CRS) said,

"When I left the guerrilla movement, I cried a lot because of the uncertainty. The little money I had was gone in the first few days, and then I had to work a lot. You really experience a situation of misery. I had obligations, with a wife and children. The transformation is hard, because you pass from feeling that you are changing the world, that you have power, that you are almost a king, to a situation of uncertainty. The big problem for me was uncertainty, not fear. Then I began working at terrible jobs. I began driving a car for private security personnel at night and became ill, because I was not used to working at night and the salary only paid for the groceries." (Federico 61)

Several interviewees expressed a feeling of uncertainty about their economic and family situations. There were cases where interviewees had had stable work and romantic relationships for many years, but felt uncertainty about these relationships.

As stated above, facing new roles and obligations without funds and with psychological uncertainties led to reinserts planning to pay less attention to political activities. On the other hand, reinserts with manageable new roles and obligations were able to channel their energy into political endeavors. For instance, Cesar (EPL) said,

"Immediately after reinsertion I began my involvement in politics in Bogota. I didn't have many problems because I had a place to live that was paid for by many comrades. Some of them were members of the public teachers' union. They didn't take part in the reinsertion program and continued working as teachers. Because I lived with them, I was able to work full time in politics . . . I worked in Pizarro's [former M-19 leader] campaign for mayor. I can't remember how many votes he got but he did well." (Cesar 62)

Despite the effort that many reinserts made to keep up their involvement in political activities, as the financial assistance from the state run out, they had to change their priorities and turn to other activities. The case of Olga (M-19) exemplifies this. She said,

> "Early in the reinsertion process, the state gave reinserts monthly financial assistance; this allowed many of us to join the AD-M19 political party. When the state stopped supplying this money, we began to engage in other activities like any other people in a capitalist society. We needed to work to survive. I began working with an NGO that allowed me to organize people in our neighborhoods" (Olga 62).

Olga M-19's case illustrates the situation of many reinserts who were not able to continue opposing the government through electoral politics and began a career in non-profit organizations and NGO's. From within these groups, reinserts were able to use their skills to organize people around grassroots organizations with no electoral goals, and were able to promote policy agendas on topics such as environmental protection, gender equality, peace agreements, and the rights of the handicapped. Most of these organizations were supported by the state, or at least had a political agenda that was in agreement with many governmental policies.

The increase of social obligations due to new roles as a factor for leaving a group is identified as the final stage in SanGiovanni's (1978) model for studying the role exit processes. The three stages presented in her work are: (1) relinquishment of one or more social roles, (2) a transitional phase of experimentation and initial accommodation, and (3) acquisition of new roles (SanGiovanni 1978).

It should be noted that these three categories can be applied to the case of the reinserts. For instance, ex-guerrilla members had to relinquish several of their previous roles such as engaging in violent confrontation with government forces or kidnapping

people for ransom money. Reinserts also had a transitional phase where they experimented with new roles. During the early years of reinsertion, several subjects engaged in politics within their political party AD-M19, and set up small business ventures such as driving taxis and tending to small grocery stores. For most reinserts these political and economic activities were part of a transitional phase that ended with the collapse of the AD-M19 as a party and with the bankruptcy of the majority of the business ventures that the government helped to finance. The concept of a transitional phase in the process of role exit is extremely important for understanding and evaluating government policies toward these subjects, especially because current attacks on the government reinsert policies are partially based on the high level of failure of the initial entrepreneur projects. This has even generated a situation that negatively affects the reinserts' self-esteem and their personal goals since many of them blame themselves for their lack of success in their transitional roles.

The third stage in SanGiovanni's model, the acquisition of new roles, also occurred among reinserts. After leaving the guerrilla movement many of them got married, became parents, and underwent some training for engaging in new occupational roles that placed new obligations on them and involved them in novel social roles. In fact, several of the interviewees included in this study have professional careers in law, journalism, engineering, and public administration, and work in settings where most coworkers are not aware of their previous roles in the guerrilla movements.

(2) Stigmatization as a factor in the transition to the civilian role

In addition to the demands of the reinserts' new roles in society and the lack of funds to meet the demands of living in a civilian society, reinserts had to face a society that for many years had been inundated with a great amount of negative information about them.

> "The most difficult part of being a reinsert is finding a job. In many cases, when people learned that you were a reinsert they closed their doors. . . . Also, I don't like to say that I am a reinsert because people always ask me a lot of questions, and you need to feel some degree of trust in the person before you answer these questions." (Osvaldo 88)

One feature of the stigmatization of reinserts by the general population and right-wing groups is the belief that they keep in contact with the guerrilla movement. For instance, Helena (EPL) said,

> "When someone you know or a relative gets kidnapped, people complain to me or ask me to help through my assumed contacts with the guerrilla movements. You have to make it clear that you left many years ago, that you don't agree with these acts, and that you don't have any contact with them. This situation is always difficult to handle." (Helena 87)

In addition to associating reinserts with crimes that current guerrilla members commit, other elements that reinserts perceived as features of their stigmatization in the mind of the public were: (1) The association of reinserts with a violent culture where problems are solved by engaging in aggressive behavior, and (2) the association of reinserts with Marxist anti-capitalistic values, such as identifying business owners with the bourgeoisie that exploited the workers. Reinserts felt that most of the business community was afraid to hire them because they feared they would strengthen labor unions and increase illegal practices within the factories. The author also learned from the

interviews that subjects felt that the reinsert stigmatization was reinforced by the fact that some reinserts were actually involved in common crimes after leaving the guerrilla movement.

Viewing reinserts as the political avant-garde of current guerrilla movements led to much apprehension among the civilian population, and especially among right-wing political groups. Evidently, this apprehension was related to the reinserts' previous history of violence, and it made their political activities more difficult, since they had to spend time assuring the public of their true democratic intentions, instead of advancing their political agenda.

Nevertheless, another important hostile group that reinserts faced was the legal left-wing organizations. Instead of becoming their natural allies, left-wing followers labeled many reinserts as traitors to the revolution. Analyzing the effect of left-wing stigmatization on the reinserts' self-concept, Maria (M-19) said

> "Early in the reinsertion process, I was very open about my guerrilla past, but now I talk only when it's necessary, and only with people I can trust. Otherwise I prefer not to talk. This is because revealing myself as a reinsert leads to social rejection. Some people from the left see us as traitors who betrayed the revolution. These are people who have some connections with revolutionary and left-wing political groups. I used to argue with them, but now I prefer to ignore them." (Maria 88)

Along with other interviewees, Mario (CRS) also found that the stigmatization of reinserts, the product of associating past guerrilla movements with current ones, has an important effect on his self-concept. He said,

> " It is curious, but when I was reinserted, I remember I was proud of my guerrilla past. I felt that only a few Colombians put their lives at risk in order to improve the country; it made my family and me very proud. However, things have changed recently, not because I cannot defend my political views, but I don't feel that proud any more. This is because people compare my guerrilla past with the current guerrilla movement. Our guerrilla movement was very respectful of

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civilians and the enemy. We believed in human rights; for this reason I feel ashamed of the actions of the current guerrillas." (Mario 83)

Other subjects felt that the stigmatization process was something that occurred during the early period of reinsertion. They argued that as society becomes more familiar with them, the negative attitudes toward them are replaced by a certain degree of indifference toward them. Explaining this change, Betty (EPL) said,

> "At the beginning of the reinsertion process, people looked at us as if we were weird animals. We felt we were exhibited as exotic animals, but because we didn't bark or fire weapons, they began to feel some trust in us. As a result of this process, people learned that we were human beings like them. Seeing us without weapons helped in the process of separating us from the guerrilla myth. Then, people became indifferent toward us. Today people don't care, nor do they think about us. Society is too involved in war, and public opinion favors the use of force as a solution. Reinserts are people who were involved in the guerrilla movement because they felt they could build a different society, but life is very complex and as time passed I sensed a deeper feeling of helplessness." (Betty 83)

In conclusion, it was observed that the perception of being stigmatized by important segments of the population, such as the business community and left-wing politicians, created limitations on reinserts' normal involvement in civilian activities, including those related to politics. It was noted that in some cases, refraining from political activities as well as keeping their status as reinserts hidden were techniques used for neutralizing the stigmatization.

(3) Violence as a factor for leaving the political group (AD-M19)

The reinserts' perception, in many cases real, that they were being targeted by many violent groups was another factor which influenced their decision to abandon political activities. This violence was put down to several sources, including (1) government forces and paramilitary groups which doubted the reinserts' honest intentions

with respect to the peace process; (2) other guerrilla groups that wanted to set examples and punish the traitors to the revolution; and (3) civilians who were unhappy with the peace agreement, which included a pardon for guerrilla crimes, and decided to take justice into their own hands.

Assassinations of key AD-M19 leaders, including presidential candidate Carlos Pizarro, and the murder of hundreds of AD-M19 party members in rural areas such as Uraba (Garcia 1996), in the northwest of Colombia, created a strong feeling of insecurity among many reinserts who felt unsafe due to the large number of murders, the lack of adequate government programs for their protection, and the psychological uneasiness of being unarmed after many years of carrying weapons. Some interviewees pointed out that they felt more secure when they were at a rural guerrilla front than now, walking on the streets of Bogota.

An example of abandoning political activities due to the violence against reinserts was given by Diego (EPL), who said,

> "I was living in [the city of] Cucuta when we received a note saying that we should attend a meeting in order to make things clear. The note said that our lives would not be in danger. This message was directed at a group of friends who were members of the EPL. We were a group of four reinserts who were engaged in activities together at that time. I was particularly involved in public affairs, mostly leading community efforts on public issues. When we received the note, I got worried and decided to move to Bogota. My partners argued that since we were here [in Cucuta] and since we had weapons— everybody had a revolver— we should stay here. I gave them my revolver and I told them that I had decided to move to Bogota. I had problems leaving, because the former commander of the unit did not want me to leave. He first said that I was doing very important work for the community, and then he threatened me, saying that if I left he would suspend any financial help that I was receiving from the government, but I did not care about that. After this argument, I was able to get a letter of introduction to the authorities in Bogota, and the bus fare. I had very little money with me. The day after I arrived in Bogota, I learned that one of my friends, the only one who went to the appointment, was killed; they shot him 25 times. The other two saved their

lives, like me. One of them decided to stay at a party and missed the appointment, and the other was arrested after picking a fight with the police." (Diego 60)

Also, reflecting on the negative impact that violence has on reinserts' political participation, Humberto (M-19) said,

" You learn from these murders that achieving equality in this country is very difficult, because things have not changed. You also learn that if you decide to work for the people, you become a military target. This creates a feeling of impotence in us because the people who worked on public issues had ended up 'vanishing'" (Humberto 90)

Even subjects who were not directly threatened felt a psychological impact when they learned about the murder of other reinserts. For instance, Bruno (CRS) said,

"The deaths of other reinserts leads to feelings of insecurity; each time a reinsert is killed you feel like it is a blow against you. It is like being in the same body, and it has a psychological impact on you." (Bruno 90)

Many subjects stated that in their particular case, political violence was not a reason for abandoning politics, but that in the case of many other reinserts, it was a key factor. There were other situations where even when these violent events were public knowledge, they created a feeling of insecurity among many reinserts. Exemplifying these cases, Hugo (CRS) said,

"You feel a personal and psychological impact, because you see that they are killing your people, your friends. Of course there is a political impact, too. You feel it is very difficult to engage in politics through democratic means in Colombia. This diminishes your hope and optimism about what can be done in Colombia. As a group, we were forced to remove our people from some regions, and any political work in these areas was lost. This caused us many risks, because we had to report these crimes to the authorities and the media, and doing this increased the likelihood of retaliations." (Hugo 9)

A particular relationship with death in the reinserts' sub-culture was also observed from the interviews, not only because they had close encounters with death during their years in the guerrilla movement, but also because of the recurring murders— estimated at

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more than a thousand—after the peace process. As a case where fiction imitates reality, Colombian Nobel prize winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez' fictional work, *Cronica de una Muerte Anunciada* (Chronicle of a Death Foretold) tells a story which parallels the personal history of reinserts who already knew who were trying to kill them. For instance, explaining how difficult it was to engage in public activities, Betty (EPL) said,

> "I had to abandon my studies at university in 1995 because my bodyguard was murdered. I was able to learn the names of people who wanted to kill me." (Betty 85)

(4) The stripping away of representative functions from the political party [or party weakness] as a factor to leave the political group

Another external factor which influenced reinserts to abandon their political activities was the weakness and lack of effectiveness that the AD-M19 demonstrated in representing the interests of the reinsert population. The weak relationship between the political parties and their natural political followers, the reinserts, can be partly explained by the fact that at least three types of organization took over many party functions with respect to the former guerrillas.

The first organization is the government, and mainly, the President's Office for Reinsertion Affairs. This office handles problems that reinserts encounter with other government agencies. For instance, this office helps reinserts when they have judicial problems due to their previous criminal records. It carried out procedures like communicating with other agencies about the pardon that reinserts received when they signed the peace agreement. As a result, reinserts who have problems with the government go to this presidential office instead of the political party.

In order to promote social, educational and economic programs among reinserts, the government also set up and funded non-political cooperatives that included all former guerrillas. The M-19 cooperative is called *Compaz*, the EPL's one is called *Progresar*, and the CRS's cooperative is called *Arco Iris*. These organizations were very effective in taking over many party functions, since the government used them to advance all social programs that favor reinserts. For instance, it is through these cooperatives that the government helps reinserts with job training and set up small business.

Finally, NGOs that are funded by the private sector and by other countries also took over some party functions, such as reporting violations of reinserts' human rights and promoting economic projects in areas where the former guerrilla groups had some political influence.

The relationship between reinserts and their parties was weakened as a result of a stripping away from the reinserts' parties of most functions relating to the reinsert population. In the particular case of the AD-M19, only six reinserts from the EPL and two from the M-19 were found to attribute their political participation to assistance from the party.

Table 13: Influence that AD-M19's help had on subjects' decision to participate in politics with the AD-M19

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Participated in the AD-M19 and received assistance	2 14.3%	6 42.9%	0 0%	8 19%
Participated in the AD-M19 without receiving assistance	3 21.4%	0 0%	0 0%	3 7.1%
Did not participate in the AD-M19	5 35.7%	8 57.1%	14 100%	27 64.3%
NA	4 28.6%	0 0%	0 0%	4 9.5%
Total	14 100%	14 100%	14 100%	42 100%

Results from other questions confirm the interviewees' perception that their party was not as important to them as other institutions. For instance, answers to the question, "Today, who are you important to?" shows that most interviewees felt that they were important to their families. Thirty-two interviewees cited their families as people who considered them important. Eight interviewees mentioned NGO's and reinserts' cooperatives, and only five interviewees mentioned their political parties. Four of these five interviewees were CRS reinserts and mentioned their party, *Democracia Socialista*. Nobody felt they were important to the AD-M19.

Reflecting on the impact that not receiving assistance from the party had on her political involvement, Gabriela (EPL) said,

> "I received nothing from the AD-M19. I didn't get a government job or a contract. [When a member of the AD-M19 was the secretary of health,] I asked for a job for my husband, who has a professional degree, but it was not possible. Nevertheless, I continued in the AD-M19, but I couldn't do as much as I wanted to because I needed to work in order to pay the bills. It would be easy to engage in politics if you had a job in Congress with an excellent salary. Then, you could

work full-time in politics, but if you are always worried about buying groceries, and paying school tuition and rent, then there is little time left for politics." (Gabriela 67)

From this perspective, the weakness of the AD-M19 as a political organization was explained not only by its failure to support the reinsert population but also by the actions of non-political organizations such as the non-political reinserts' cooperatives and NGOs that were actively involved in assisting reinserts. For example, reflecting on his problems as former guerrilla member, Ignasio (EPL) said,

"I did not receive help from the AD-M19, I received help from an NGO, and for the last four years I have been working for this NGO. Also, I had security problems in the past and Progresar [the ELP reinserts cooperative] helped my family and me move to Bogota. Progresar paid the rent on an apartment, the cost of a mobile phone, and life insurance premiums for my family in case something happened to me." (Ignasio 63)

Most interviewees were of the opinion that AD-M19's weakness was a result of its personal greed, as well as its incapacity to manage a modern political party. They said that leaders explained their lack of concern for other former guerrillas with three arguments: first, they pointed out that their obligations toward the guerrillas ended with the signing of the peace agreement. In fact, interviewees reported cases where leaders left the ceremony after the peace agreement was signed, abandoning their troops, who were left without even the means to buy the next meal or travel to see their families.

Second, leaders explained their lack of concern for other reinserts by saying that leaving the guerrilla group was a step toward liberation from paternalistic values and relations in these movements. As a result, they felt that instead of continuing to help the less fortunate reinserts, their role, as former leaders, was to encourage the former guerrillas to take on more responsibility for their own lives.

Finally, many AD-M19 leaders believe that their party should base its strength on support from the general public rather than support from a strong party structure, or political machinery, as do other traditional Colombian parties. As a result, they were unconcerned about building a political base that would have included other reinserts. Looking at the importance of the political base, not only in Colombian politics but also in many other democratic countries, the belief that a party would progress without a strong base reflects the political inexperience of the AD-M19 party leaders.

Chapter 5: Analysis of the data from the perspective of Giele and Elder's life course model

This section contains an analysis, on the basis of the four elements of Giele and Elder's model (location in time and place, human agency, linked lives and timing of lives), of the answers to the three questions used to organize the data: (1) Why do subjects join the guerrilla movement? (2) Why do subjects stay in the guerrilla movement? and (3) Why do members leave the group? The present discussion focuses on a micro-level analysis since the data collected for the present dissertation has that level of analysis. As a result, some aspects of the model that approach a macro-level analysis will not be discussed in equal depth.

It was found that location in time and place (or cultural background) has an important influence on the subjects that joined the guerrilla movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Events such as the triumph of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, the student protests around the world, and the Vietnam war provided a historical framework for the decision to join a revolution in Colombia. These historical events were of particular importance for those subjects that view politics from a Marxist perspective.

In addition, the existence of a weak democratic regime (characterized by an inefficient, poorly paid, and sometimes corrupt bureaucracy, as well as a lack of strong electoral support), and the increased influence of the drug culture since the advent of Colombia as a major producer of Marihuana in the 1970s generate a cultural perception of deviant behaviors being rewarded in society. The lack of informal and the weakness of formal sanctions were elements that not only explained the proliferation of guerrilla movements but also the increased power of the drug cartels and other illegal groups. This

can also be attributed to a cultural shift in Colombian society due, in part, to a process of modernization where there is an increase in the value of material goods or private possessions and a decrease in the value of social traditions based on nonmaterial goods. An example of this tendency is the increased commercialization of religious holidays in an attempt to imitate the consumption patterns of economically more advanced societies. Against this cultural background, joining the guerrilla movement can be viewed as a way of improving the material well-being (housing, health, education, etc.) of all members of society.

The location in time and the place for entering a guerrilla organization were also influenced by government policies of repression directed against these groups. Periods of negotiation and relative peace have allowed the groups to strengthen their organizations, while periods of conflict have decreased their capabilities. For instance, at times of a high level of conflict, distrust toward newcomers increases and that makes recruitment more difficult.

The findings of this dissertation also indicate that human agency (or individual goal orientation) was an important element in the decision to join a guerrilla movement. It was observed that subjects entered these groups as a way to increase their effectiveness in their pursuit of the goal of social justice, as well as personal goals such as improving their economic and social status in their community. Guerrilla groups guaranteed food, protection, and the improvement of their social status since in many regions the guerrilla organization wields symbols of "authority" such as weapons and uniforms, and it exercises authority over the population in the form of enforcing taxes and dispensing justice.

The study also found that linked lives (or social integration) are a key element in the process of joining a guerrilla movement. Two important outside groups influence the process of joining these organizations. The first is the family, especially in situations where the families have previous experiences with guerrilla groups such as a tradition of family members being involved in guerrilla activities.

A second type of group that plays an important role in the recruitment process is legal left-wing radical organizations, such as student associations, labor unions and peasant cooperatives. They provide ideological and social support for their members' process of political radicalization. Joining these radical group activities such as destroying university facilities, damaging factory installations, or seizing private lands can be the beginning of a career in violent confrontations with government authorities.

The guerrilla group policies are also key in the process of social integration into these organizations. Resources and requirements of the organizations regulate the process of joining the group. For instance, in urban environments, study groups created by the guerrilla movement are important settings for evaluating and recruiting new members. In rural areas, social references or being part of a well-known social network (being the cousin of Mr. Gutierrez or the daughter of the village pharmacist) form an important element in the process of gaining the group's trust. The study also found that not all members were integrated to the same degree. Based on the trust that the group places in a member, he or she could have the status of sympathizer, supporter, "part-time member," or professional. Professional is the highest level of social integration in the group; it involves having to work full-time, receiving a salary, and having significantly less freedom to select one's task.

The study found that the first three elements in Giele and Elder's model (time and place, human agency, and linked lives) have a strong influence on the timing of transitions (or strategic adaptation) subjects make. For instance, it was observed that the process of joining the rural guerrilla movement took place more quickly than the process of joining the same organization in an urban environment. This difference of timing can be partially explained by the influence of the peasant culture in the process of rural recruitment. It was observed that the Colombian peasant culture accelerates the individuals' arrival at major turning points in their life-course; for instance, peasants have a shorter childhood period, get married sooner, and enter the labor force at a younger age than people in urban areas. In this context, it is understood why the rural units had speedier recruitment processes than their counterparts in urban areas.

From the perspective of human agency, it can be seen that the guerrilla movement offers one of the few opportunities for upward mobility in many rural areas. Poor peasants who do not join groups such as cultivators of illegal drugs or irregular armed forces have few opportunities to improve their social and economic living conditions. Contrary to the situation in rural areas, an urban environment offers its inhabitants several additional avenues for improving their social and economic standing. This distinction is closely related to other results of the study, which found that rural subjects joined guerrilla groups mostly for material ends such as expropriating lands, securing income, and escaping real situations of deprivation, while urban subjects had the tendency to join these groups for what Inglehart calls post-materialist reasons, such as following an ideology that espouses protest against social inequality (Inglehart 1990). Inglehart uses the concepts of materialist and post-materialist to explain the evolution of European

social movements from those that were organized around the basic economic needs of their members, such as the labor movement, to those that face a situation where the basic needs are already solved and refocused their aim toward goals such as saving the rain forest. Ted Gurr's concept of relative deprivation is also helpful for understanding the differences between rural and urban guerrilla members' reason for joining the rebel groups (Gurr 1970). It general, it can be said that rural members face more real situations of economic deprivation than their urban counterparts. While both groups may claim economic disadvantage, in many cases the perception of the urban members is strongly influenced by their observation of other social groups and not by their real economic deprivation.

The fast pace of the process of joining rural guerrilla units is also explained by the influence these organizations have on other rural groups (schools, churches, cooperatives, etc.) and by the importance that these social integration groups have in rural environments. Contrary to urban areas where dwellers have several options for buying groceries, receiving medical attention, and obtaining education, in rural areas avenues of social integration are severely limited, leaving the marginal rural regions of the country under the heavy influence of the guerrilla groups. The fact that these groups have a strong presence within the avenues of social integration facilitates the speed with which peasants are integrated into rural guerrilla units.

A second question to be addressed from Giele and Elder's perspective is why subjects stay in the guerrilla movement. It is important to take into account the concept of time and place (or cultural background) when addressing this issue. Guerrilla units located in rural areas are strongly influenced by their isolated condition, which affords

little contact with civilians. They live in settings where information is filtered and interpreted by the guerrilla organization, and where lines of authority are extremely hierarchical and dominated by a culture of machismo. For instance, this macho culture is reflected in the division of labor in the guerrilla units. During the study, some subjects with an urban background reported experiencing cultural shock when joining rural units, where they found a lack of intellectual discussion about current political events and ideologies. They reported that rural guerrilla members are more interested in talking about military topics than about the political scene or other topics of intellectual interest. These subjects state that living in the city gave them a different perspective of the conflict due to access to information about major world and national events through the media. This was despite the fact that they recognized that they were also influenced by a culture of conflict and clandestinity that strongly affected their perception of the trustworthiness of mainstream media sources. Two other important elements that permeate the cultural background of the guerrilla movement are the cult of violent events and the idealization of revolutionary "martyrs." It is common that members adopt as pseudonyms the names of dead comrades, that units be called by the name of dead guerrilla heroes, and that printed material and songs reflect the importance of past leaders. The idea of being immortalized by sacrificing your very life for the sake of the group is a central element in the guerrilla culture, and a characteristic that is shared with other subversive movements around the world.

Using the concept of human agency to explain the stage of an individual's life-course when they are involved in an organization with totalistic characteristics such a guerrilla movement offers an interesting situation for analysis. The study clearly shows

that guerrilla members give up an important part of their individual autonomy when entering these groups. They have to perform group functions without question. Even activities that may be considered to be within the individual private sphere, such as having children or engaging in romantic relations, are strictly regulated by the guerrilla group. In spite of these constraints on human agency, the guerrilla members felt that the organization is a source that enhanced their collective and thus personal efficacy since they recognized that there are some rebel activities that they cannot carry out alone. This personal efficacy is a source of motivation and pride for the members of these groups. Some interviewees state that one of the best things about being part of these groups was the feeling that they were changing the world. Within these groups, seemingly unimportant political actions, such as stealing a truck loaded with bottles of milk and distributing them among shantytown villagers, were perceived by the group members as a major propaganda coup. The conclusion that members' feelings of personal efficacy function as motivation for staying in the subversive organization can also be found in Reinares' study of the militants of the Basque Separatist Movement, ETA, in Spain (Reinares 2001).

Due to the totalistic characteristics of the guerrilla organizations, most of the members' social relations ("linked lives") exist within the group social boundaries. This is especially the case among rural guerrilla members. In general, the social integration of members is rationalized by guerrilla leaders to the point that in many cases members of the same organization do not share information or even recognize themselves as part of the group. This is based on the principle of compartmentalization that is essential for maintaining the integrity of the group in cases where some of the members are arrested.

During the conversations with the subjects about the linked lives within the guerrilla movement, it became clear that these lives were ruled by the principle of the three Chinese monkeys, one that covers its eyes, one that covers its ears, and one that covers its mouth. People with too much information about the group were viewed as suspicious and dangerous, since they could be undercover government agents, and they could put the group at risk if they were arrested. The totalistic characteristics of the groups were so strong that sometimes members engaged in romantic relationships with other members without disclosing their real names or personal past histories.

Looking at members' links with outside people, the study found that on some occasions, such as when members were jailed or were seriously ill, the guerrilla movement contacted family members and human rights groups in order to protect the well-being of the member. The study found other situations where families became supporters of the guerrilla movement through housing members or storing materials.

The totalistic elements of the guerrilla movement also have a strong influence on the timing of events in the lives of its members. For instance, some subjects indicated that there was an interesting variation in the members' perception of the time needed to obtain a revolutionary victory. Urban guerrilla members usually expected a quick revolutionary victory. They went to rural guerrilla units expecting to join very dynamic groups that were pursuing a swift military triumph. However, they suffered cultural shock upon arrival when they encountered groups mired in a slow, meaningless routine. Some interviewees who reported having this experience stated that the monotony of the daily routine was so overwhelming that it was a main cause of desertion. Situations were recalled when the slow pace of life in the rural units was so wearing that some members

disobeyed orders and initiated some inconsequential skirmishes against nearby police stations in order to break the monotony.

In conclusion, the life course model helps in understanding the differences in the timing of lives between urban and rural guerrilla members. The study found differences between the cultural backgrounds of urban and rural members. It also identified stronger linked lives in rural areas due to the level of isolation of rural members, and underlined the importance that differing conceptions of human agency in relation to personal efficacy have in their perception of their lives in the guerrilla movement.

The life course model is also very helpful in exploring the question of why members leave the group. Events such as the fall of some countries within the communist world, the democratization of Colombian political institutions (for instance the possibility of electing mayors and governors), national events, and the increased level of violence produced by multiple factions in the Colombian conflict provide the appropriate time and place for opening the possibility of a peace agreement between the government and some guerrilla organizations. This characterizes a first stage in the process of leaving the group, a stage when members surrendered their weapons in order to engage in political activities. A second stage in the process of leaving occurred with the electoral collapse of the reinserts' political party, the AD-M19. At that point, most reinserts abandoned their political activities to concentrate on personal projects.

Human agency, and especially personal efficacy, plays an important part in the model for studying ex-combatants' lives, since reinsertion involves a process of individualization for the guerrilla members. In the first stage, due to the hierarchical structure of the guerrilla movement, the element of human agency is especially related to

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the guerrilla commanders, who took the risky decision to stop group participation in the struggle. Partly they took this decision because they felt that Colombian society was saturated with violence to a point where any new military action on the part of the group was politically meaningless. They also felt that they were losing control of their organizations, which were increasingly influenced by drug lords, and were increasingly abandoning their political goals in order to concentrate on military ones. In the second stage, many reinserts abandoned their political activities due to the requirements of their personal roles. New family and occupational roles took up many resources that they could have allocated to their political careers. Engaging in personal projects was also a way of gaining more control of the outcome of their life activities. This was important since many reinserts still feel that their time in the guerrilla movement was a waste of part of their lives. Other elements of human agency, such as the level of education that reinserts had at the moment of leaving the guerrilla movement, are important factors for explaining their level of success in rebuilding their civilian lives.

Leaving the guerrilla movement involves the members' termination of very important relationships, or linked lives, within the group that had been built up throughout several years of military conflict. In this context, reinsertion involves rebuilding past relationships with family and civilian friends, and modifying the nature of the interaction with the government, other reinserts and the rest of society. From the interviews with reinserts, it was learned that in general the family, government, and reinsert associations play positive roles in the process of resocialization. Families usually provide an essential initial economic and social support group for the ex-combatant; government programs offer the reinsert population the opportunity to gain easy access to

educational and economic programs as well as to solve their judicial situation. Reinsert associations provide important settings and reference groups where reinserts can vent their opinions to peers.

On the contrary, the actions of current guerrilla movements, paramilitary forces, some left wing parties, and economic elites have jeopardized the process of reinsertion by damaging or refraining from helping in the process of the reinserts' integration into society. For instance, this study brings to light situations of stigmatization against reinserts that affect their resocialization within civilian life.

Political parties are important during the initial stage of reinsertion because they provide a link between the guerrilla political ideology and the new ways of viewing the country. Many reinserts explained that because of their membership in a left-wing political party, they have not disappeared from the political scene but have channeled their energy into a different type of political organization, and so have not betrayed their ideals or their former comrades who made sacrifices for them.

Returning to civilian society clearly involves a process of adaptation, where subjects move, in different time frames, from a group with totalistic characteristics to an individual situation. It was observed that this process is not uniform among all subjects. Some reinserts have became totally independent from past linked lives while others still heavily depend on their past relations with other reinserts and support organizations. This is the case with reinserts who still receive financial assistance from the government and NGO programs.

Another dimension of the timing of events in their lives that reinserts faced was the reconstruction of their past. With respect to this, reinserts have adopted dissimilar

strategies, from embracing and even profiting from their past involvement in the guerrilla movement by working as consultants or creating their own NGOs to keeping secret their guerrilla past and making up information in their résumé. Although these differences exist, it was also observed that at the beginning of the reinsertion process, subjects were more willing to disclose their past, and being reinserts was central to their identity. However, as time passed, the likelihood of disclosing their past to new acquaintances decreased. Many subjects reported that presenting themselves as a reinserts creates a more negative than positive outcome. The expectation that society would react negatively to their disclosure also created some concern and negative feelings when they evaluated the time that they spent in the guerrilla groups. As a result, most interviewees only mentioned their past to people very close to them, and only when it was absolutely necessary.

In summary, the life course model, one that unites individuals' development with the social and historical times in which they live, offers an excellent approach to exploring the data collected on the life-course of the Colombian reinserts. However, since the data was collected long before the researcher began using the model, there are gaps between the requirements of the model and the data available. It is clear that a new collection of information will be needed, including more macro-level data, in order to better fit the needs of the model.

Analysis of the data from the perspective of Matza's model

According to Matza's model, subjects who join a deviant group undergo three stages: They initially feel some affinity toward the group; thereupon, they form some type of affiliation with the group by participating in some of the group's actions; and finally they reach a stage of full in-group socialization when they feel the negative consequences, or signification, of being part of the group. Despite the fact that Matza's model only addresses the life-course process of joining deviant groups, its use in this study is interesting since it is the first time that the model has been applied to exploring subjects' socialization within guerrilla organizations.

In order to research the subjects' affinity toward the guerrilla group, the questions, "Thinking about the process of becoming a member of a guerrilla group, before joining the organization, what were some of the characteristics of the organization that appealed to you? and Could you tell me about these characteristics?" were included in the interviews. Seven factors of affinity were identified in the answers.

First, 19 subjects indicated affinity with the moral/cultural characteristics of the guerrilla group. They were attracted to the rebel groups' values and ethics with respect to freedom, social justice and equality. Second, 15 subjects expressed an affinity with the type of people who were in these groups. They perceived guerrilla members as role models worth following. Third, 11 subjects indicated affinity to the guerrilla movement idea of using violence to achieve political goals. Fourth, 11 subjects were attracted to the rebel group's capability for advancing their political agenda and glamorized the guerrilla movement's engagement in publicity stunts such as robbing a supermarket in order to give its products to the needy. Fifth, ten (10) subjects indicated affinity toward the group

because of its cordial group dynamics where relationships were permeated by feelings of brotherhood and altruism. Sixth, nine (9) interviewees felt affinity toward the group due to the groups' historical trajectory in the revolutionary struggle. Being part of these rebel groups was seen by the subjects as getting involved in their historical legacy, which was often filled with mythical heroes and tales of courageous acts. Finally, four (4) subjects felt affinity toward the group due to the benefit that they obtained by joining them, for instance having a secure job and the possibility of receiving some military training.

The chart below shows the distribution of the seven factors of affinity mentioned above. It should be noted that some subjects were included in more than one factor. Each cell should be read by itself; for instance, in the first column, three of 14, or 21.4% of the M-19 subjects recall their affinity for the guerrilla group because of its use of weapons to achieve political goals. Also, looking at the column called "total," it can be observed that the most-mentioned reason for affinity for a guerrilla movement was its moral/cultural characteristics. In this case, 19 of 42 subjects, or 45.2% of the total interviewees, state that this was a reason for their affinity.

Table 14: Reasons for the subjects' affinity for their guerrilla movement

	M-19	EPL	CRS	Total
Moral/cultural characteristics	4	7	8	19
	28.5%	50%	57.1%	45.2%
Human capital	6	4	5	15
	42.9%	28.5%	35.7%	35.7%
Using weapons to achieve political goals	3	2	6	11
	21.4%	14.3%	42.9%	26.2%
Propaganda actions	7	1	3	11
	50%	7.1%	21.4%	26.2%
Cordial group dynamics	1	5	4	10
	7.1%	35.7%	28.5%	23.8%
The groups' place in the history of the struggle	2	0	7	9
	14.3%	0%	50%	21.4%
Welfare structure	0	4	0	4
	0%	28.5%	0%	9.5%

To explore the subjects' affiliation with the guerrilla movement, the second concept in Matza's model, the question, "What was the first activity that you participated in as a member of a guerrilla group?" was included in the study. Results show a total of thirty-six (36) different "first activities" that range from innocuous acts, such as teaching illiterate comrades to read, to violent activities, such as planting a bomb or taking part in a kidnapping. During the interviews, several subjects mentioned more than one activity as their "first" activity.

The most common "first" activities were: (1) stealing or "expropriating" goods for the revolutionary cause, mentioned by ten interviewees; (2) distributing guerrilla propaganda, recalled by nine subjects; (3) participating in military training, mentioned by seven interviewees; (4) painting graffiti, with slogans and pictures, in favor of the subversive organizations in public areas, usually at night, recalled by six interviewees, and (5) transporting documents, money, and/or weapons in both urban and rural areas,

recalled by six interviewees. Other "first" activities mentioned by some reinserts were doing intelligence work, participating in social protests, cooking food, visiting political prisoners in jail, providing safe storage for important organizational materials, and accommodating guerrilla members in their homes. It should be observed that most of these "first" activities match the expectations that they would be mild, considered in the context of the range of deviant behaviors in an insurgent group.

According to Matza's model, the last stage in the process of joining a deviant group is signification. This is when subjects feel that they could be targeted due to their activities in the organization. The question, "Would you describe the first time that you felt aware that your guerrilla activity could produce repression against you?" was included in order to address this topic. From the analysis of the results, two types of initial awareness were identified: an intellectual awareness and a practical awareness.

Intellectual awareness occurred through watching the news, talking with acquaintances, and even reading popular novels with descriptions of the trials and tribulations of traditional heroes, as represented in international writings. Propaganda literature, which often reported cases of guerrilla members who were either captured or became martyrs of their revolution, was also a factor that increased new members' intellectual awareness. Practical awareness generally happened as a result of direct acts of repression against the movements.

An interesting finding of this study is that while the three stages in Matza's Model can be observed in all the subjects' life-courses, the stages do not always follow the same order. For instance, due to the high level of violence in Colombian society, many subjects stated that they had experienced a great deal of repression even before joining a guerrilla

movement. This concurs with Gary Marx's (Marx 1969) concept of escalation as a reason to join a subversive group. This means that some subjects can initially join guerrilla movements to receive protection and increase their efficacy for confronting government forces and as a result they could develop affinity to and affiliation with the rebel organization that shelters them. In this investigation it was observed that several subjects took part in protests and confronted state authorities long before they joined a guerrilla movement. In some cases, subjects were also expelled from schools, fired from their jobs, and even jailed by police prior to entering the guerrilla movement.

It was also found that among some urban subjects, affiliation happens before affinity; it happens in situations where subjects affiliate with left-wing study groups without knowing that the study groups were organized by the guerrilla movement recruiters. Because of the affiliation, and due to the study group dynamics, subjects developed affinities toward the guerrilla movement's goal and actions.

In defense of Matza's model it should be said that while subjects early on were very aware of the risks of belonging to an opposition group, the research indicates that interviewees' awareness of repression peaked while in the guerrilla movement. The five most common situations where this peak occurred are: (1) when they were stopped by the police; (2) when the guerrilla movement changed their operations base to unknown areas—this was especially the case when urban guerrillas were sent to rural areas; (3) when the members felt that their undercover identity was at risk; (4) when police or other government officials visited their parents' or spouse's homes to interrogate their family, and usually to check for hidden weapons or other incriminating material; and (5) when they carried weapons in military operations. On this last point, the investigation reveals

an interesting cultural interpretation: it was found that subjects made a clear distinction between the risks involved in logistical roles such as being a "look-out " and active engagement in an action that might require the use of a weapon. In their minds, the possession of a weapon in a guerilla operation not only meant that the individuals had to be prepared to use them but also that if they were caught they became a direct enemy target.

In summary, Matza's model offers an interesting set of concepts on the basis of which it is possible to explore the subjects' life-course trajectory when joining a guerrilla movement as well as to compare this process to subjects' process of joining other deviant organizations. Future studies should also investigate the use of Matza's model in the process of leaving deviant groups, in particular the order in which subjects lose their group signification, affiliation, and affinity, and the rate at which this occurs.

Chapter 6: Conclusions:

The present study describes the life-course process of a particular group of subjects who are characterized by their engagement in violent political careers. The deviant (or at least non-mainstream) characteristics of the subjects' past ideals and behaviors add an interesting feature to this study. The conclusions of the investigation corroborate principles of life-span development, which holds that life-course changes are life-long processes that do not stop occurring at a certain age (Elder et al. 2003).

The study found that the subjects' relationships to others, or "linked lives," have a strong influence on their political involvement during three life-course stages. During the first stage, family, peers in legal left-wing social groups, and the subversive movements themselves have a strong influence on the subjects' decision to enter guerrilla groups. In the second stage, it was found that totalistic characteristics of the guerrilla groups such as having extensive control over the members' behavior and relationships, including romantic relationships, subordinating personal preferences to the rigors of the doctrine (for example, exerting extensive control over the professional members), and using ideologically-loaded language to filter information about the world, such as censorship of news in the rural guerrilla units, are factors that help explain why people stay in the guerrilla movement. A third stage finds linked lives having a strong influence during the reinsertion process. Family, government programs, and the reinserts associations and parties ease the process of reinsertion into civilian society. However, other types of social groups, such as current guerrilla organizations, paramilitary groups, some legal left-wing parties, and other groups in society, have created obstacles to the process of resocialization because they have direct and indirect influence on the occurrence of

stigmatization and violence against reinserts. These findings concur with the principle of linked lives, which underscores the interdependence of life experiences during personal relationships and participation in social networks. (Elder et al. 2003)

The life course principle of agency, which emphasizes the importance that individuals have in conducting their own lives, was also found to obtain (Giele and Elder 1998; Elder et al. 2003). With respect to this, the present research provides evidence that a reinsert's agency has an important influence on that individual's life-course process. An individual's past choices and actions may increase his or her likelihood of being recruited by guerrilla groups, which in turn show preference for subjects with a proven track record in taking leading roles in, and making personal commitment to, social issues, which were characteristics of human agency that, in the mind of guerrilla recruiters, would separate potentially good recruits from suspect government undercover agents. The individual's agency is also important for understanding subjects' joining the guerrilla movement in times of escalation of violence. The same social constraints, such as excessive police force, that influence some people to relinquish the fight for social goals encourage other people to participate in groups with more capability for violence, such as guerrilla movements, which allow subjects to engage in what they may believe are more efficient means of social protest.

Once a subject is a member of a group with totalistic characteristics such as a guerrilla movement, individual agency is channeled toward obtaining the group's goals. Nevertheless, group members experience a feeling of empowerment because of the use of weapons and the status that these groups have in some communities. Also the internal group dynamics reinforce the members' sense of mattering. They felt that they were

important, that other members depended on their work, and that the group paid a lot of attention to their opinions and needs. This experience of mattering that happens in all ranks of the movements has an important effect on the energizing of the individual agency of the members. Subjects who were engaged in ordinary activities of the guerrilla movement felt that their actions were changing the world.

Reinsertion involves a transition from a group with collective agency to situations of individual agency where members recovered their autonomy and were able to make everyday decisions. In many cases, this involves a process of adjustment that is facilitated by the reinsert associations and political parties, but that always ended up transferring agency to the ex-members, who in general leave the guerrilla groups to concentrate on personal goals that were denied by the collectivity, such as having a stable family or finishing a career. It was observed that the increased demands that the new roles placed on the reinserts was a major factor for explaining many reinserts' decision to abandon their active participation in politics. It was also observed that the reinserts' choices and actions were influenced by the reinserts' ex-roles. Being an ex-guerrilla member creates more constraints than opportunities in the everyday lives of reinserts in Colombia due to stigmatization of and violence against reinserts.

Time and place have an important influence in the life-course of the subjects. Subjects' perceptions of national and international events had a strong influence on them when joining and leaving the guerrilla movements. Also, the local geography and the cultural environment of the area where the guerrilla unit was located had a major influence on the members' experience in the organization. As to this point, it was found that cultural cleavages between the members' experience in the rural and the urban

guerrilla units are central elements for understanding the subjects' life-course experiences in the guerrilla movements. Historic events and geographical locations were found to influence subjects' attitudes and decisions, a conclusion that is consonant with the importance given to the principle of time and place in life-course studies.

Finally, the principle of timing, which underlines the significance of time itself as an element in the life-course process, was also addressed in the present study. For instance, it was observed that timing in the person's life has an important influence on the decision to join the guerrilla movement, since a large number of subjects in the study joined these organizations when they were teenagers or young adults. It was also found that an important part of the everyday guerrilla experience was the members' individual perception of timing in relation to conducting their activities. Thus, whether the subjects belonged to an urban or a rural guerrilla unit had a strong influence on the subjects' perception of the development of the revolutionary struggle. It was also found that the timing of reinsertion has an important impact on reinserts' political socialization. For instance, by being the first group that signed a peace agreement with the government, the M-19 was able to found their reinsert political party, the AD-M19, in 1989, and was able to benefit from the initially favorable public opinion that the peace process enjoyed in Colombian society. By the time that the EPL underwent reinsertion in 1991, the left-wing political space in society available to reinserts was already dominated by the AD-M19, and as a result, many EPL members who wanted to participate in politics joined the AD-M19. Regretfully for the AD-M19, many EPL members were unable to become fully integrated into the AD-M19, and as a result, they ended up abandoning political activities. In the case of the CRS, members signed the peace agreement when the AD-

M19 was already in serious political trouble, and consequently CRS members opted for creating their own minor left-wing political party, Socialismo Democrático, that continues to participate in electoral campaigns through forming coalitions with other left-wing organizations. In this type of situation, the timing of the signing of a peace agreement and thus entering the political arena is key in shaping the type of political socialization that guerrilla members would experience.

Beyond the conclusions drawn from the use of Giele and Elder's model, several theoretical, empirical, methodological, and practical conclusions can be drawn from this investigation.

From a theoretical perspective, the study of the Colombian reinserts offers an opportunity to apply different social theories in order to better understand this topic. For instance, the different types of authority and leadership in the guerrilla movement can be studied from a Weberian perspective (Weber 1946). In this respect, the dissertation addresses how rural guerrilla leaders often exhibit traditional elements of authority and leadership that are related to the traditional peasant culture where these groups operate. For instance, the rural guerrilla leaders' personal interpretation of the organizational rules for leaving the guerrilla movement offers a clear example of this type of traditional authority and leadership. On the contrary, urban guerrilla leaders have a more charismatic approach to leadership style, so that they are more capable of successfully transferring their leadership skills to the legal political sphere after reinsertion.

This study also offers the opportunity to apply several micro-level theoretical concepts in order to achieve a better understanding of this topic. For instance, Goffman's concepts of total institution and stigma (1990) are pivotal for understanding the reinserts'

life-course experiences during and after leaving their guerrilla groups. Also from a micro-macro perspective, Mannheim's idea of generational effect (1985) is very useful for understanding the influence that generational events have on the subjects' decision to join guerrilla movements.

In summary, from a theoretical perspective this investigation offers an alternative approach—different from a classical Marxist perspective which underlines macro-level economics forces—for understanding the life-course of the Colombian reinserts.

Similarly, from a middle-range theoretical perspective, the investigation provides an avenue for an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing this complex topic. This is the case when using concepts from political science such as Gurr's "relative deprivation" (1970) and Sears' "political socialization" (1997), which support similar sociological findings. Clearly the topic of reinsertion offers the possibility for further interdisciplinary studies, where many disciplines outside of social science can provide additional elements for a better understanding of this issue.

From the empirical perspective, the investigation presents findings related to the influence that location and gender have on the members' life-course experiences which are of interest. It was observed that urban and rural guerrilla members have different experiences with respect to topics such as secrecy and information. Urban members operate in a terrain dominated by the enemy and are exposed to outside sources of information, while rural members move in places where they have more power and are less exposed to external information. The investigation also addresses some gender differences in the life course of the reinserts. For instance, it was observed that authoritarian personality characteristics learned during the military life of the guerrilla

movement have more negative effects on the female reinsertion process than is the case among males, since personality characteristics which are considered desirable in the guerrilla movement (such as talking in a rough manner, giving orders, and behaving in a manly way) are the opposite of desirable female characteristics in civilian society.

Another important empirical finding is the personal shock associated with life course transitions. For instance, this is the case with the personal cultural shock that many urban guerrilla members experience when joining rural units. Another example of this cultural shock occurs when members leave the certainty of the guerrilla organization and begin experiencing the uncertainty of civilian life, where they have to solve their own problems and formulate their personal goal without the strong guidance of a guerrilla organization.

From a methodological perspective, the study provides an interesting contrast between the spontaneous answers that the subjects provide when they are asked directly about a particular situation and what unfolds from their life-course descriptions throughout the interview. In general, it was observed that the spontaneous answers to many direct questions were couched in more socially desirable terms than what the subjects describe throughout the interviews. For instance, when subjects were asked about their reasons for joining the guerrilla movement, a common spontaneous answer was that they joined to fight for the poor and for social justice. However, very often an analysis of the whole interview indicates that subjects were also motivated by less socially desirable reasons when joining these groups. This is the case when subjects join the group to improve their social and economic status in the community. There were also situations in which subjects had previous criminal/deviant careers and then joined a

guerrilla group as a way to escape from authorities. Clearly, this methodological finding provides additional support for the use of in-depth interviews in this type of study, especially in situations where some of the subjects had already been exposed to the interview technique. For example, in this study, several subjects had participated in journalistic interviews and/or read these interviews in newspapers.

The study also draws important conclusions which can be compared with investigations of other groups. For instance, the research finding in regard to the strong ties between deviant activities and family and community influence can be compared to Sampson and Laub's life-history research on 500 men from a delinquent childhood up to the age of 70 (2003) which also indicates the strong influence that family and community have on the process of engaging in deviant activities, in this case, pulling men away from crime. These findings provide some important guidelines about the significance of including families and communities in the design of social policies oriented to the prevention of criminal activities.

The investigation of Colombian reinserts also provides some bases for understanding terrorist groups in other parts of the world. For instance, despite cultural and political differences, there are interesting similarities between the supporting roles of many of the families of Colombian guerrilla and those of Middle Eastern suicide bombers. In both cases, members of these subversive movements develop and maintain a stake in conformity to the deviant groups instead of to the mainstream groups of society. In the case of the Colombian reinserts, it was observed that some members stayed in the guerrilla movements because of the economic and social support that they and their families receive from these groups. Subjects usually expressed their beliefs that if

something happened to them, the organization would take over their personal responsibilities toward children and parents. In this respect, it was found that in several situations the guerrilla groups provide security, childcare, and medical attention to family members who were not even part of these organizations.

Future studies may evaluate the relationship between the timing and the quality of a peace agreement, quality meaning the amount of benefit that the agreement produces for its subscribers. For instance, data indicate that errors in legal aspects of the peace agreement signed between the government and the M-19 were corrected in the later agreements with other guerrilla organizations. As a result, members of other former guerrilla groups faced fewer judicial problems after abandoning their illegal activities. Also, newly created procedures for dealing with the reinsertion of M-19 members were improved when other guerrilla groups were reinserted into civilian society.

In conclusion, the present study validates the use of the life course model presented by Elder, Kirkpatrick and Crosnoe (Elder, et al. 2003) and Giele and Elder (Giele and Elder 1998) for the study of the life course of individuals living outside of developed societies. Also important was the employment of other theoretical perspectives in order to enrich this model, as was the case when including Matza's model for exploring the process of becoming deviant or using the concept of ex-role to better understand the meaning of becoming a reinsert (Matza 1969).

This study is a first step in the process of better understanding the life-course experience of the Colombian reinserts. Current political developments, such as the recent reinsertion of right-wing paramilitary groups, and changes in government reinsertion policies, which now allow the reinsertion of single members, create new challenges for

the study of this topic. Internal changes in the current guerrilla movements, FARC and ELN, which could be characterized by their recent emphasis on military goals rather than political objectives, have also influenced the ways in which these organizations recruit members, treat members while in the groups, and produce the conditions for the creation of reinserts.

These elements, as well as the effect of the "Plan Colombia," which provides a large amount of military resources for combating the guerrilla movements and the drug lords, have generated a significant growth in the reinsert population. It is estimated that more than 4,000 new reinserts participated in the government reinsertion program in 2004. This is more than four times the number M-19 reinserts. The massive increase in the reinsert population and its strong impact on civilian society are topics that need to be addressed in future investigations. Lack of government funding, a high level of violence directed against reinserts on the part of their former guerrilla organizations and other social groups, and the increasingly negative perception of the reinsert population that is prevalent in society create more challenges for the study of the new reinserts of today than for the ones that were included in this investigation. For instance, currently, new reinserts are being put into a few "safe houses" in Bogota and other major cities, where they live in overcrowded conditions and receive insufficient government support during their process of resocialization. As a result, some of these "safe houses" are increasingly becoming the focus of violence and crime in the cities.

While a more extensive and better-funded sociological investigation will be needed to address the situation of reinserts that have left the guerrilla movement in the last two or three years, the present study offers helpful insights for designing a more

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effective policy with respect to this population. For instance, one finding of this study is that family has great importance in the reinserts' life-course, and thus it may be advisable to include the families in the government programs of support for the reinserts' process of resocialization within civilian society.

In summary, this dissertation shows that the life-course model used is applicable to groups outside the U.S.; it explores possible improvement of the model by including concepts from other sociological areas that address the particular characteristics of the subjects, such as concepts derived from the sociology of deviance like stigmatization and ex-roles; and it provides the foundations for a more comprehensive investigation of this topic.

Appendix A: Historical Background

Long before the Movimiento de Estudiantes y Trabajadores Colombianos (MOEC) (Colombian Students' and Workers' Movement) was formed in 1960 as the first Marxist revolutionary guerrilla movement in Colombia, the death count in the country as a result of civil conflicts between the Liberal and the Conservative parties had already reached more than 300,000. As Diaz-Callejas indicates, the majority of the conflicts associated with Colombia's civil war ended by 1957. They were " . . . internal phenomena with no relationship to international factors or to the Cold War" (Diaz-Callejas 1996:46).

According to Guzman, Fals Borda and Umana, this bipartisan conflict started in the 1930's and reached its critical point when the Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan was assassinated in 1948 (Guzman et al. 1980). The anarchy that decades of this bipartisan civil war generated was a clear sign of a lack of governability by civilian authorities. As a result, in 1953 General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla led a coup d'etat with bipartisan support, to end the bloodshed.

After a year of government control, General Rojas Pinilla issued decree # 1823, which granted an amnesty to all combatants who had participated in the conflict during the civil war years. Thus began the demobilization of the liberal guerrillas and the conservative paramilitary groups, including pardons for their military leaders.

Unfortunately, following this demobilization, all the major Liberal party ex-guerrilla commanders were murdered (Correa 1993). These events set a historical precedent of political intolerance that was to have a strong negative influence on the

Colombian government in its continuing struggles in negotiations with guerrilla movements.

While General Rojas Pinilla's military regime undertook the task of reducing the level of violence within Colombia, the bipartisan elites met in Benidorm and Sitges, Spain, and reached a joint governability agreement called the "National Front." This agreement involved political power being shared by the two parties from 1958 to 1974. After this pact was agreed, the Liberal and Conservative party elites initiated a political opposition to what they perceived as being an excessive use of force against the civilian population by General Rojas Pinilla's regime, populist discourse, and nationalist economic policies. In May 1957, a military junta loyal to the traditional parties overthrew the general, and months later, the traditional elites were in power again. To many analysts, the real power of the Colombian oligarchy and its influence over the government's administration was never really challenged during the period of military control (Bermudez 1982).

After General Rojas Pinilla's regime ended, a more-elaborately restrictive democracy was installed. The National Front, which proved to be a very effective tool in preventing an intra-elite conflict, also established a political mechanism that obstructed the development of real democratic opposition. This separation between the popular masses and the political leadership virtually guaranteed victory for the National Front - even before the elections were held. With the National Front as the governing authority, the political and ideological differences between the two traditional parties vanished, and marginal sectors started looking for other political, non-electoral options to better represent them.

Within the framework of such a restricted democracy, three major guerrilla groups were formed during the 1960s. The "Fuerza Armada Revolucionaria Colombiana" (FARC) was formed on July 20, 1964; the "Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional" (ELN) on January 7, 1965; and the "Ejercito Popular de Liberacion" (EPL) on July 20, 1965. The EPL was the military branch of the Colombian Communist (Marxist-Leninist) Party. This armed response to the Colombian ruling parties has proven to be so profound that, after more than thirty-five years of conflict, the Colombian government is still confronting the FARC and the ELN in armed conflict.

A small group from the ELN, called Corriente de Renovacion Socialista (CRS) (Socialist Renovation Current) was reinserted into society in 1995. The CRS is one of the three groups that this dissertation focuses on.

The EPL was demobilized in March 1991 and became a political party known as "Esperanza, Paz y Libertad" (EPL) (Hope, Peace, and Liberty). Months later, this version of the EPL joined the "Accion Democratica Movimiento Abril 19" (AD-M19). The AD-M19 is a political party, which consists of a large coalition of former guerrilla members, dissident groups from traditional parties, various left-wing party members, and people's civic organizations.

Parallel to the development of the guerrilla movements, a legal political opposition to the National Front by the so-called "Alianza Nacional Popular" (ANAPO) (People's National Alliance) arose in the late 1960s. Under the leadership of General Rojas Pinilla, ANAPO was able to bring together large numbers of ordinary citizens who felt excluded from the National Front. In spite if its lack of political organization, ANAPO's role in making the democratic system increasingly legitimate by allowing

formerly under-represented sectors to take part in the 1970 national election, marked a turning point for legal opposition to the National Front in Colombia.

National Front Conservative leader Misael Pastrana Borrero won the 1970 election against ANAPO leader General Rojas Pinilla. Many Colombian historians consider this election victory fraudulent. Out of a total of more than 4 million votes cast, approximately 65,000 votes separated the two candidates. This election sent a chilling message, especially to the younger generation of leftist activists. Many of these supporters decided that the only alternative for winning power was through armed conflict. As was the case in Argentina, where the "Montoneros" (a radical left-wing political movement) gradually developed from the Peronist party and became a guerrilla group, in Colombia the ANAPO SOCIALISTA membership evolved from radical sectors of the ANAPO party to become an armed organization known as the "Movimiento 19 de Abril" (M-19). (Villamizar 1995: 69-72).

In 1974, the M-19 initiated its offensive against the Colombian government by the symbolic act of stealing Simon Bolivar's sword from the Quinta de Bolivar Museum. The symbolism of this act was that it recreated the beginnings of another historic liberation in Colombia – Simon Bolivar's freeing the country of Spanish occupation in the 19th century – thereby establishing a precursor for what was to come.

Talking about the origins of the M-19, Jaime Bateman, one of its founders, pointed out that they "thought that political activity in Colombia had to be undertaken not only through mass mobilization and mass self-awareness, but also by arming the masses, as a fundamental right to confront what had been a big electoral fraud" (Castro 1995:32).

After the fraudulent 1970 elections, the leftist forces that remained within the traditional democratic process found that their electoral support was continuing to decline, going from 1,561,468 votes in 1970 to 630,944 in 1974, to 197,623 in the 1978 presidential election, and finally bottoming out in during the 1982 presidential election with only 83,017 votes. Some Colombian left-wing political analysts, such as Nicolas Buenaventura (Buenaventura 1983), pointed out that these election results discouraged many left-wing political supporters, who saw their electoral participation as a marginal action, since they had lost over ninety percent of their voting power over the four presidential elections between 1970 and 1982. The divisions inside the left-wing political parties and their weak political leadership completed the breakdown of the left-wing electoral opposition until 1986.

In 1986, upon being granted an amnesty by the Colombian government, the FARC formed a new left-wing political party, --- "Union Patriotica" (UP), which was established by former guerrilla members Ivan Marquez and Braulio Herrera, and members of other left-wing political parties in Colombia.

Comparing the FARC to the other guerrilla groups during the Betancur administration (1982-1986), Francisco Leal, a leading Colombian sociologist, wrote that, " . . . the FARC, although slow, knew how to answer the government in a more political way. Not only did they subscribe to the first cease-fire agreement, they also supported a new political movement, the Patriotic Union, UP" (Leal 1989: 326).

The UP candidates won 580,344 votes in the 1986 congressional elections while its presidential candidate got 328,752 votes in the same year. By 1990, with the M-19 incorporated into the electoral process and continued repression of opposition parties, the

left-wing movement won 754,740 votes in the presidential election and reached a peak of 992,613 votes in the 1991 election for constitutional reform (Sanchez 1991).

With the excellent results that the former guerrilla members were continuing to obtain, the traditional political class became more and more desperate and this was summarized by Enrique Santos Montejo in a newspaper column by saying, "A very specific and traditional sector in Colombia killed the tiger and was scared by its fur" (Garcia Marquez 1996: 302).

Despite the excellent election results of the early 1990s, the popularity of the left-wing leaders and their parties dropped from 56.2%, in December 1990 to 3.8% in May 1994 (Semana magazine, May 31, 1994). For instance, in the 1994 presidential election, the ADM-19, the party led by former guerrillas from the M-19 and EPL who had been reinserted into society only a few years earlier, won only 215,000 votes. This represented less than one quarter of the votes obtained by the same left-wing political parties in the 1991 constitutional election.

Alvaro Villarraga, a former ADM-19 member, attributed this rapid and sudden decline in popularity to the ADM-19 party leaders' decisions to make dramatic changes in their political strategies. According to Villarraga, the sudden change from a political strategy of developing an autonomous political agenda, which involved consulting the popular sectors, to an election strategy of reaching political compromises with other traditional political sectors, was one of the most influential factors in their decline in popularity. Additionally, Villarraga pointed out that other factors that caused the decline of the ADM-19 were, " . . . the behavior of the leadership, internal party competition without clear rules, the exercise of hegemony over the party structure by former M-19

members, arrogance on the part of certain former guerrilla commanders, frequent internal

clashes for power among groups, and [internal and external] prejudice against the leftist

groups . . ." (Villarraga 1996: 61)

First part of the questionnaire: questions about the first turning point: leaving civil life and joining a guerrilla movement.

1. How was your life before joining a guerrilla movement?

2. What were your motives to enter a guerrilla movement?

3. Did you have any reason(s) for entering the guerrilla movement?

4. Did you live in an urban, or rural, area before joining a guerrilla movement?

5. Would you tell about your experience(s) while entering a guerrilla movement?

6. Thinking about the process of becoming a member of a guerrilla group, before joining the organization, what were some characteristics of the organization that appealed to you? Would you tell me about these characteristics?

7. How old were you when you joined the guerrilla movement?

8. Did your family (parents, siblings, etc.) influence your decision to join the guerrilla movement? If so, how?

9. What other people influenced your decision to join the guerrilla movement? Please explain the influence(s) that these people had on your decision making process.

10. How did your religious life influence your decision to enter a guerrilla movement?

11. Thinking in terms of economic status, one (1) being the lowest and six (6) the highest, what was the social status in which you lived before joining the guerrilla movement?

12. Please describe your economic situation before joining the guerrilla movement?

13. What was the level of education that you reached before joining the guerrilla movement?

14. Do you remember any publications (books, newspapers, etc.) that influenced your decision to enter a guerrilla movement? If yes, would you discuss them?

15. Before joining the guerrilla movement, did you participate in any political group or organization that had an ideology similar to the guerrilla movement?

16. If yes, would you describe your participation in this group?

17. What was the first activity that you participated in as a member of a guerrilla group?

18. Would you describe the first time that you felt aware that your guerrilla activity could produce repression against you?

19. Would you describe, in general, the recruitment process of your guerrilla group?

20. As a guerrilla member, did you have experiences recruiting people into the organization?

21. If yes, would you describe these experiences?

22. Thinking about your experiences in the guerrilla movement, why do you think other people joined these organizations?

22a. To what degree did romantic relationships, or feelings of attraction to a guerrilla member, influence other people's decisions to enter a guerrilla organization.

23. How much time passed (weeks, months, years, etc.) from the time that the guerrilla activities began to appeal to you to the moment that you joined a guerrilla movement?

Second part of the questionnaire: Questions about life in the guerrilla movement.

24. Would you describe your experiences as a member of the guerrilla movement?

25. How did entering a guerrilla movement change your relations with your family? How about your friends?

26. What impact did departing from your family and friends, in order to join a guerrilla movement, have on you?

27. Were you a member of an urban or rural guerrilla movement?

28. How long were you a member of the guerrilla movement?

29. During your time in the organization, how important were you for the guerrilla movement?

30. Would you give an example that illustrates your importance to the organization?

31. As a member of the movement, how much attention, or lack of attention, did you receive from the organization?

32. Would you give an example that illustrates the level of attention, or lack of attention, that you received from the organization?

33. How much did the organization depend, or not depend, on your work for it?

34. Would you give an example that illustrates how much the organization depended, or did not depend, on your work?

35. During your life in the movement how much did you depend on the organization?

36. Would you give an example that illustrates your dependence on the movement?

37. To maintain clandestineness during life in the guerrilla organization, people changed their names. In your case, how did this process occur? Did you choose the name or was it assigned to you by the organization?

37a. Other reinserts have said that becoming clandestine had several levels. They describe the process in which they became increasingly immersed to the point in where they became "strangers" even to themselves. One former guerrilla mentioned

that he felt that when he looked at himself in a mirror, he saw an stranger. Did you

have similar experiences?

37b. If so, how did this stranger that you saw in the mirror appear to you?

38. Would you give another example that illustrates the importance of maintaining the

covert nature (such as hiding a person's real name) of your guerrilla group?

39. During your experience in the guerrilla movement, how veracious was the altruistic

ideal of "one for all, and all for one"?

40. To what degree did people sacrifice themselves to reach some group goals? Would

you give an example?

41. How were norms and rules produced within the guerrilla movement?

42. Would you give an example of a norm or rule in your guerrilla movement?

43. During your life-course in the guerrilla movement, what were the things that made

you happiest?

44. During your life-course in the guerrilla movement, what were the things that satisfied

you the most?

45. During your life-course in the guerrilla movement, what were the things that satisfied

you the least?

46. During your life-course in the guerrilla movement, what were some things that made

you sad?

47. What was your biggest disappointment in the guerrilla movement?

48. What was the most difficult thing you experienced during armed conflict?

49. Long before the peace process began what were some alternatives that members had

when they wanted to leave the guerrilla movement?

50. Do you remember a song that you heard or sang during your time in the guerrilla movement?

51. Could you sing, or repeat, some verses?

52. What do you think now when you hear this song (or these songs) again?

53. Would you recount an important conversation that you had with another member of the guerrilla movement?

54. During your period in the guerrilla movement, how difficult was it for you to think about leaving the armed struggle?

55. When did you begin thinking that a peace process with the government was achievable?

56. At this point, how did you foresee your future as a reinsert in civilian society?

57. Would you narrate your personal experience(s) during the demobilization process?

58. Did you participate in the ceremony in which the guerrilla movement surrendered their weapons? If so, would you describe your experiences in this event?

Third part of the questionnaire: questions about their lives after leaving the guerrilla movement.

59. How old were you when the guerrilla movement demobilized?

60. In general, how did you experience leaving the guerrilla movement during the demobilization process?

61. Could you narrate some of your experiences during the first weeks after leaving the guerrilla movement?

62. Some reinserts have mentioned facing economic difficulties after leaving the movement because during their time in the movement the organization gave them

everything, but after reinsertion they had to provide for themselves. Was this your case?

63. Did you receive any economic support from the movement or from other former members after demobilization?

64. After demobilization did you receive any job training or formal education (high school, college studies, etc.)?

65. Would you describe your political participation in the AD-M19?

66. Why do you think the AD-M19 lost the electoral potential that they had obtained after the guerrilla movements' demobilization?

67. In what way(s) did the help, or lack of help, from the political movement AD-M19 influence your decision to continue, or not to continue, your political participation?

68. How important was the AD-M19 for you?

69. Would you give me an example of how important, or not important, you were for the AD-M19?

70. How much attention, or lack of attention, did you receive from the AD-M19?

71. Would you give an example that illustrates how much attention, or lack of attention, you received from the AD-M19?

72. During the time of the AD-M19, how much did this political organization depend on your political participation?

73. Would you give an example?

74. To what degree do the reinserts that are currently in politics represent your political ideas and views of the country?

75. Who are the people that depend on you the most today?

76. To what degree do other reinserts depend on you?

77. Who are the people that currently give you the most attention?

78. How much attention do you receive from other reinserts?

79. Today, who are you important to?

80. How important are you for other reinserts?

81. What has been your biggest disappointment as a reinsert?

82. What is the hardest thing that happens in the life of a reinsert?

83. In general, what is the situation of the demobilized combatants in Colombia?

84. Did you have problems in your work due to your status as a demobilized guerrilla member?

85. If yes, would you give some examples of these problems?

86. Did you have personal problems due to your status as a demobilized guerilla member?

87. If yes, would you give some examples of these problems?

88. When do you think it is appropriate to tell someone that you are a reinsert?

89. According to government figures, more than four hundred seventy (470) reinserts have died since they left the armed struggle. How do you explain this situation?

90. In what ways do these deaths affect you?

91. What are the things that make you happiest (now that you are a reinsert)?

92. What are the things that satisfy you the most about yourself?

93. What are the things that satisfy you the least about yourself?

94. What are the things that make you saddest?

95. In the final analysis, how would you evaluate your experience(s) in the guerrilla movement?

96. Would you describe how you see your life in five years?

Note: The three questions with a letter in parenthesis [22(a), 37(a), and 37(b)] following the question numbered are questions that were added after some interviews were already completed. The question number indicates the location in which these questions were inserted into the original questionnaire at a later date. The inclusion of these three questions was a decision based on the analysis of the first set of interviews in which it was noticed that two important topics (having romantic relationships as a cause to join guerrilla groups, and the effect of clandestineness on self-concept) were being sufficiently addressed by the subjects' answers in the original questionnaire.

While it is understood that including additional questions in a survey research interview may affect other answers in the same survey, there is no evidence that the inclusion of these three questions in the in-depth interview process affected other answers in this exploratory/descriptive study. This conclusion is based on a comprehensive analysis of the possible references regarding the topics of romantic relations and clandestine/self-concept issues in other answers in the study.

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