Organized Violence after Civil War

The Geography of Recruitment in Latin America

Sarah Zukerman Daly

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Nearly half of all countries emerging from civil conflict relapse into war within a few years of signing a peace agreement. The postwar trajectories of armed groups vary from organizational cohesion to dissolution, demilitarization to remilitarization. In *Organized Violence after Civil War*, Daly analyzes evidence from thirty-seven militia groups in Colombia, demonstrating that the primary driving force behind these changes is the variation in recruitment patterns within, and between, the warring groups. She documents the transition from war to peace through interviews with militia commanders, combatants, and victims. Using rich ex-combatant survey data and geo-coded information on violence over fifty years of war, Daly explains the dynamics inside armed organizations and the strategic interactions among them. She also shows how the theory may be used beyond Colombia, both within the region of Latin America and across the rest of the world.

Sarah Zukerman Daly joined the University of Notre Dame faculty in 2013 as assistant professor in Political Science after receiving her Ph.D. in the subject from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her doctoral dissertation received the 2011 Lucian Pye Award for the Best Dissertation in Political Science from MIT. Her research interests lie in the fields of civil war, peace processes, international security, and ethnic politics with a regional focus on Latin America. Daly has served as a fellow in the Political Science Department and at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University, at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, and at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University.

Sarah Daly argues that organizational characteristics of armed groups in Colombia strongly affect whether they remilitarize after a peace agreement. Their extensive ties enable members of local groups to remilitarize, but members of non-local groups disperse and lose this capacity. Networks and geography are more important than access to weapons, which is almost universal. Daly's extraordinary fieldwork with extremely violent former group members provides convincing quantitative and qualitative support for this important argument. *Organized Violence after Civil War* is an extraordinary work of political science.

– Robert O. Keohane, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University

This study provides a novel and thoughtful explanation of an important question for societies emerging from warfare – why do some groups silence their guns after agreeing to peace, while others remilitarize and return to violence? The argument highlights the role of the geography of recruitment – whether militant groups recruit and deploy fighters locally or from farther afield. The theory put forth is both parsimonious and subtle, and the empirical evidence adduced for it from the case of paramilitary groups in Colombia is extremely impressive. This book is certainly a must-read for any scholar of Colombia or any scholar of paramilitaries, but it will also find an important audience among scholars interested in the complicated dynamics of civil conflict and the behavior of non-state actors as they navigate the often stormy seas of postconflict transition.

– Page Fortna, Columbia University

Organized Violence after Civil War explores why some – but not all – armed groups remilitarize after demobilization. Daly argues that the explanation lies in the geography of recruitment – whether the group recruited members from the locale where it was deployed – and in its strategic interaction with other groups after conflict's end. She shows that her theory accounts for why about half of Colombia's three dozen paramilitary groups remobilized, drawing on a wide range of data, from interviews with imprisoned leaders to surveys of demobilized combatants to unpublished government documents. This is an extraordinary achievement based on remarkable field research over several years.

– Elisabeth Jean Wood, Yale University

Civil wars have a strong tendency to recur, yet we know little about why. Drawing on a stunning array of data from extensive fieldwork in Colombia, Sarah Zukerman Daly shows that the geography of armed group recruitment explains why countries at peace slip back into violence. Groups that recruit locally remain cohesive after wars end whereas groups that recruit outside their own region wither away as their members depart. Regions comprised of locally based groups thus maintain a stable and peaceful balance of power, whereas regions where local groups neighbor non-local groups become unstable and prone to violence. Anyone seeking to understand the recurrence of violence after civil war should read this excellent book.

– Alexander B. Downes, George Washington University

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For my family

Contents

List of Figures — *page* x
List of Tables — xi
List of Maps — xiii
Acknowledgments — xv
List of Abbreviations — xix

1 Introduction: A Farewell to Arms? — 1
2 Theory of the Postwar Trajectories of Armed Organizations — 12
3 Violence and Peace in Colombia — 44
4 Geography of Recruitment and Postwar Organizational Capacity — 72
5 Strategic Interactions between Armed Groups and Remilitarization — 97
6 The Path to Demilitarization: Configuration of Local Militias in Antioquia — 138
7 Remilitarization, Strong and Weak: Local and Non-local Militias in Catatumbo and Urabá/Córdoba — 172
8 Beyond Colombia: Transitions from War to Peace in Comparative Perspective — 218
9 Conclusion — 248

Appendix — 259
References — 279
Index — 299

Figures

2.1	Configuration of Local Groups and State	*page* 25
2.2	Configuration of Local and Non-local Groups and State	25
2.3	Configuration of Non-local Groups and State	26
2.4	Remilitarization Predictions	31
3.1	FARC's Military Strength	58
4.1	Prewar Networks by Levels of Command	78
4.2	Socialization and Training by Recruitment Type	84
4.3	Recruitment Patterns and Geographic Dispersion Postwar	88
4.4	Predicted Postwar Networks	95
5.1	Paramilitary Organizations Subway Map	104
6.1	Ex-combatants' Relationships with Their Ex-commanders, Medellín	147
6.2	Model Neighborhood, La Sierra, Medellín	162
6.3	Mural of Commander "Don Berna" and Representatives of Medellín Civil Society	164
6.4	Involvement in the Community, Medellín	165
6.5	Embeddedness in Medellín: How Does the Community View Former Fighters?	168
7.1	Distribution of Power, Urabá	210

Maps

2.1	Case Study Areas	*page* 39
4.1	Paramilitary Zones of Operation	76
5.1	Geographies of Recruitment	101
5.2	Variation in State Presence	110
5.3	Presence of Guerrillas	111
5.4	Incidence of Remilitarized Violence	121
5.5	Intensity of Remilitarized Violence	125
5.6	Rough Terrain and Remilitarization	130
5.7	Border Sanctuaries and Remilitarization	131
5.8	Drugs and Remilitarization	135
6.1	Medellín Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation	151
7.1	Catatumbo Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation	182
7.2	Number of Ex-combatants by Comuna, Medellín	191
7.3	Urabá/Córdoba Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation	197
7.4	Remilitarized Groups in Urabá: Zones of Operation	212
A.1	Poverty and Remilitarization	275

Tables

1.1 The Relationship between Recruitment Geographies and Postwar Remilitarization or Demilitarization *page* 5
3.1 A Brief History of Violence in Colombia since the Mid-twentieth Century 45
3.2 State and Non-state Armed Actors in the Colombian Conflict 51
4.1 Recruitment Patterns and Postwar Organizational Capacity 74
4.2 Combatants' Prewar Networks 80
4.3 Postwar Physical Proximity of Ex-combatants 87
5.1 Paramilitary Organizations 106
5.2 Average Shift in Power by Regional Configuration 113
5.3 Remilitarization and Demilitarization of Thirty-Seven Paramilitary Groups by Regional Configuration 118
5.4 Municipalities Experiencing Remilitarized Violence by Regional Configuration 122
5.5 Intensity of Remilitarization by Recruitment Geography 123
5.6 Intensity of Remilitarized Violence by Regional Configuration 124
5.7 Tactical Terrain and Remilitarization: Organizational Level 129
5.8 Group Motivations and Remilitarization 133
5.9 Resources and Remilitarization: Organizational Level 134
5.10 Recruitment and Remilitarized Violence, Propensity Score Matching 137
7.1 Bloque Catatumbo's Recruitment and Postwar Relocation Patterns 179
8.1 Recruitment, Clustering, and Networks at Faction Level, Sierra Leone 239
8.2 Recruitment, Clustering, and Networks at Subfaction Level, Sierra Leone 239

A.1 Determinants of Individual Recruitment into Local and Non-local Groups 268
A.2 Recruitment Geography and Postwar Cohesion 268
A.3 Determinants of Postwar Networks 271
A.4 Determinants of Organizations' Recruitment Geography 273
A.5 Tactical Terrain and Remilitarization: Municipal Level 274
A.6 Resources and Remilitarization: Municipal Level 276
A.7 Determinants of Organizational Remilitarization 276
A.8 Determinants of Remilitarized Violence: Municipal Level 277

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Abbreviations

ACCU	Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá (Peasant Self-Defense Forces of Córdoba and Urabá)
ACR	Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (Colombian Agency for Reintegration), previously called Alta Consejería para la Reintegración (High Council for Reintegration)
ANAPO	Alianza Nacional Popular (National Popular Alliance)
ARENA	Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (Nationalist Republican Alliance, El Salvador)
ASEDSUR	Asociación de Desmovilizados de Urabá (Association of Demobilized of Urabá)
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia)
BACRIM	Bandas Criminales Emergentes (Emerging Criminal Gangs)
BCN	Bloque Cacique Nutibara (Cacique Nutibara Bloc)
CAD	Comités de Autodefensa y Desarrollo (Committees of Self-Defense and Development)
CDC	Comités de Defensa Civil (Civil Defense Committees)
CDF	Civil Defense Forces (Sierra Leone)
CEDE	El Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (Center of Economic Development Studies)
CERAC	Centro de Recursos Para el Análisis de Conflictos (Conflict Analysis Resource Center)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States)
CINEP/PPP	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular / Programa por la Paz (Center for Research and Popular Education / Peace Program)
CNRR	Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation)

CODHES	Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement)
CRS	Corriente de Renovación Socialista (Socialist Renewal Current)
CTI	Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación (Technical Investigation Unit)
DANE	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (National Administrative Department of Statistics)
DAS	Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (Administrative Department of Security)
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration (United States)
DECAS	Defensa Civil Antisubversiva (Anti-subversive Civil Defense Forces)
DIPOL	Dirección de Inteligencia Policial (Directorate of Police Intelligence)
ELN	Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army)
EPL	Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army)
ERG	Ejército Revolucionario Guevarista (Guevarista Revolutionary Army)
ERP	Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (Revolutionary People's Army)
ERPAC	Ejército Revolucionario Popular Antiterrorista Colombiano (Antiterrorist Popular Revolutionary Army of Colombia)
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)
FDN	Frente Democrático Nicaragüense (Nicaraguan Democratic Front)
FIDH	Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (International Federation for Human Rights)
FIP	Fundación Ideas para la Paz (Ideas for Peace Foundation)
FMLN	Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, El Salvador)
FPSG	Resistance Front against GAM Separatists (Indonesia)
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front)
FSLN	Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (Sandinista National Liberation Front, Nicaragua)
GAM	Gerakin Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement, Indonesia)
ICBF	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (Colombian Family Welfare Institute)

ICG	International Crisis Group
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
IEPRI	Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales (Institute of Political Studies and International Relations)
IGAC	Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (Agustín Codazzi Geographic Institute)
INPEC	Instituto Nacional Penitenciario y Carcelario (National Penitentiary and Prison Institute)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JAC	Juntas de Acción Comunal (Community Action Committees)
JAL	Juntas Administradora Locales (Local Administration Boards)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)
M-19	Movimiento 19 de Abril (19th of April Movement)
MAPP	Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz (Mission to Support the Peace Process)
MAQL	Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame (Quintín Lame Armed Movement)
MAS	Muerte a Secuestradores (Death to Kidnappers)
MEVEC	Mecanismo de Verificación Conjunto de Bandas Criminales Emergentes (Joint Verification Mechanism for Emerging Criminal Gangs)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines)
MILPAS	Milicias Populares Anti-Somocistas (and later on, Anti-Sandinistas) (Anti-Somoza / Anti-Sandinista Popular Militias) (Nicaragua)
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front (Philippines)
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
MRTA	Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru, Peru)
NBI	Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas (unsatisfied basic needs)
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OEA/OAS	Organización de los Estados Americanos (Organization of American States)
PAC	Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil (Civil Self-Defense Patrols, Guatemala)
PCP-SL	Partido Comunista de Perú–Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru–Shining Path)
PEPES	Perseguidos por Pablo Escobar (People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar)

PRT	Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Worker's Party)
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambican National Resistance)
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SAME	Sistema de Acompañamiento, Monitoreo, y Evaluación (System of Accompaniment, Monitoring and Evaluation)
SENA	Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (National Training Service)
SIJIN	Policía Nacional de Colombia (Colombian National Police)
SIMCI	Sistema Integrado de Monitoreo de Cultivos Ilícitos (Integrated Illicit Crops Monitoring System)
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SSR	Security-sector reform
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UP	Unión Patriótica (Patriotic Union)
UPA	Uganda People's Army
URNG	Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YATAMA	Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka ("Sons of Mother Earth," Nicaragua)

1

Introduction: A Farewell to Arms?

What happens to powerful non-state armies after they sign peace accords, disarm, and demobilize? Why do some former belligerents reactivate their organizational structures and return to perpetrating violence, whereas others transition away from violence and enable peace to consolidate? These are the questions that motivate my book.

Colombia provides a rich comparative laboratory in which to seek answers. In the aftermath of its mid-twentieth-century partisan civil war, known as *La Violencia*, a surge of left-wing armed mobilization erupted, seeking to overthrow the state through communist revolution. In response to these rebel movements, right-wing militias proliferated during the 1980s and 1990s. They became strong armed organizations that sought to control specific territories, engaged in irregular warfare against the rebels, advocated a conservative ideology, funded themselves through extensive licit and illicit dealings, and sought state takeover not through revolt, but through alliances, co-optation, and corruption.

The Colombian conflict, still ongoing, has touched every region of the country, stolen the lives of at least 220,000 people, and internally displaced 4.7 million (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013).[1] In 2002, negotiations to end the militias' violence began. These yielded successful peace bargains between President Álvaro Uribe's administration and the thirty-seven militia organizations, and led, between 2003 and 2006, to the decommissioning of these formidable, illegal non-state armies.

Thereafter, these armed organizations exhibited significant divergence in their postwar trajectories.[2] Roughly half of the warring factions

[1] There were 220,000 or more fatalities between 1958 and 2013. During *La Violencia* (1948–58) approximately 250,000 individuals lost their lives (Guzmán, Borda, and Umaña 1962).

[2] This book uses the words "post-conflict" or "postwar" at the organizational level and not the country level to refer to groups that have signed a peace accord and are, in that sense, in a post-conflict stage, even if the country as a whole may still be at war with other armed factions.

remilitarized over the next five years: they reenlisted their fighters and revived their command-and-control apparatuses to carry out coercion in the form of massacres, displacement, extortion, and widespread abuses of the civilian population. In other words, they returned to being armed groups and shattered the emerging peace in their regions. Armed with assault weaponry and dressed in camouflage, their members confronted other illegal non-state armies and state security forces and engaged in sophisticated criminality.[3]

The other half of the militia structures, however, demilitarized. While in the short run, they retained the ability to coerce and to remilitarize, equipped with "silenced guns," they did not revert to using violence.[4] In the five years following the signing of accords – the postwar period with which this book is concerned – many of these groups reinvented themselves as sociopolitical entities or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with significant leverage over civilian affairs. They sought political office, exercised social control, administered local justice, regulated economic activities, and behaved as proto-states. In the long term, they fully demilitarized. What explains the variation across these armed groups? Why did some transition back to organized violence while others did not?

This same puzzle manifests itself around the world where similar organizations diverge in their postwar trajectories. Failure of peace processes and recurrence of civil war are widespread. Almost half of all countries emerging from conflict relapse into war within five years of signing a peace agreement (Collier et al. 2003).[5] Even where civil war does not resume, most post-conflict environments experience elevated levels of violence (Call 2012; Grandi 2011). Yet the extent of remilitarization varies across nations, over time, across geographic regions within countries, and across warring organizations.[6]

In Nicaragua, for example, after the civil war of 1982–90, the Contras and Sandinistas reverted to collective violence as the Re-Contras, Re-Compas, and Revueltos (Brown 2001). In Angola, after only a brief period of peace in 1994, war resumed between UNITA and the MPLA.[7] In Myanmar, the Kachin

[3] The remilitarized groups' sources of funding included narcotrafficking, extortion, arms smuggling, kidnapping, and alliances with micro-drug cartels. In the 1980s and early 1990s, powerful drug cartels, in particular the Medellín and the Cali cartels, rose to prominence in Colombia riding the wave in marijuana and cocaine production. After Pablo Escobar's death in 1993 and the capture of the Orejuela brothers in 1995, the Medellín and Cali cartels fractured into micro-cartels.

[4] As the empirical chapters demonstrate, demilitarized organizations usually facilitate negative peace: the absence of manifest violence. This does not mean that they are necessarily "peaceful"; in fact, these units often threaten violence, are latently coercive, and retain the ability to remobilize militarily. They also tend to remain involved with criminal dealings and illicit financing.

[5] The five-year period has become standard in the quantitative literature on civil war recurrence and peace.

[6] It should be noted that remilitarization includes any return to organized violence, not just a recurrence of the earlier civil war.

[7] Spears (1999). UNITA: National Union for the Total Independence of Angola; MPLA: People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Independence Army reactivated its armed movement in 2011 after almost two decades of ceasefire (Themnér and Wallensteen 2012). And in Iraq, the Mahdi Army, which had disbanded in 2008, reverted to full-scale militancy in the form of the Peace Brigades in 2014 (Bayless 2012).

In contrast, in Mozambique, RENAMO, FRELIMO, and the Naparama militias engaged in a sustained transition to peace following the 1992 Rome General Peace Accords.[8] In El Salvador, the FMLN and ARENA relinquished their arms in 1992 and fully demilitarized.[9] In the Philippines, the MNLF largely ended its campaign of violence in 1996 and transitioned to legitimate politics as did the IRA in 1997 and Indonesia's Free Aceh Movement in 2005.[10]

Across the world, after entering peace agreements, insurgents, rebels, paramilitaries, and militias dissolve or endure and redeploy, for violence or for peaceful politics. A better understanding of the organizational processes that generate remilitarization or demilitarization can help shape policy to disrupt chronic patterns of violence, render peace settlements sustainable, effectively transition former combatants back into civilian life, and enhance the prospects for advances in human rights, reconciliation, democratic governance, reconstruction, and state-building in territories under the control of non-state armed groups. Peace depends on warring factions not returning to violence; thus the trajectories of these factions matter deeply for the quality of people's lives in post-conflict environments.

ARGUMENT AND MECHANISMS

This book seeks to answer why peace consolidates in some contexts while violence recurs in others. It does so by examining the processes of organizational formation and evolution. I argue that the effects of a single distinct factor – the geography of the armed organization's recruitment, whether local or non-local, and that of its neighboring armed actors – determine whether the organization goes back to or turns away from the use of collective violence.

First, I look *inside* the armed organization. I argue that where, geographically, the armed organization recruited – locally, or not – affects its network structure, whether it sustains its power during the transition from war to peace, and how accurately it estimates its own power as it decommissions. I then look at how these effects influence the dynamics *between* armed organizations. Within regional configurations of groups, I map the geography of each organization's recruitment, predict where the distribution of power shifts or is instead

[8] Themnér (2011). RENAMO: Mozambican National Resistance; FRELIMO: Mozambique Liberation Front.

[9] Holiday and Stanley (1993). FMLN: Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front; ARENA: Nationalist Republican Alliance.

[10] Neumann (2005); Stange and Patock (2010). The MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), meanwhile, reinitiated its attacks (Noble 1981). MNLF: Moro National Liberation Front; IRA: Irish Republican Army.

preserved after the peace accords, and identify which sets of groups have good informational bases for renegotiating bargains if the balance of power does change.

I argue that remilitarization results when the distribution of capabilities shifts and bargaining fails because of information problems. Specifically, I find that armed groups built on a local recruitment strategy – drawing participants from the same area where they were deployed – enjoy stronger prewar networks and, after demobilizing, tend to remain geographically clustered where they operated. As a result, the local groups tend to remain cohesive, with their command-and-control apparatus intact. They also retain stronger information-gathering capabilities, and thus are able to provide their leaders with more accurate intelligence on the resolve and abilities of their former members and those of their neighboring armed groups.

In contrast, armed organizations that drew their recruits non-locally, from outside of their zones of operation, tend to have weaker pre-conflict social bonds and, after surrendering their weapons, tend to disperse away from where they fought. As a result, they weaken, and they suffer more from information problems; they cannot accurately assess the extent of their erosion in power.

Accordingly, I find that a change in relative power occurs in areas where groups engaged in divergent recruitment strategies: local groups stay intact while non-local groups weaken. Bargaining tends to fail because of the inability of the groups to agree – due to information asymmetries – on the extent of the power shift. Both groups then remilitarize, the cohesive local groups more powerfully and the non-local rump groups more weakly.

In contrast, where the distribution of relative power remains unchanged by the peace process – because all groups were local and thus remain cohesive – the bargains tend to hold and the local former armed actors demilitarize over time.

Table 1.1 summarizes these relationships between armed organizations' recruitment geographies and their postwar trajectories.

ARMED ORGANIZATIONS DURING TRANSITIONS FROM WAR TO PEACE

This book builds a novel organization-level theory to explain variation in a previously unstudied dependent variable: whether armed groups remilitarize or demilitarize after signing peace accords. In so doing, this study extends in important ways research on armed organizations during war. Other scholars of armed groups have focused on the groups' origins, internal structures, or dynamics of contestation; these studies are usually truncated at war's end. Rigorous research on armed organizations postwar remains scarce; this study seeks to fill that gap.

I look at the inner workings of organizations for answers to outcomes relating to violence and peace, following the lead of founding scholars of non-state

TABLE 1.1. *The Relationships between Recruitment Geographies and Postwar Remilitarization or Demilitarization*

Step 1: Recruitment Patterns and Postwar Organizational Capacity	
Local Group (L)	**Non-Local Group (NL)**
Concentrated recruitment	Dispersed recruitment
Dense networks	Thin networks
Physical proximity of combatants in zone of deployment after demobilizing	Geographic dispersion of combatants away from zone of deployment after demobilizing
Resulting maintenance of networks	Resulting decay of networks
Postwar cohesion preserves power	Postwar dissolution weakens power
Step 2: Regional Configurations of Armed Groups and Remilitarization	
Configurations that include only Local Groups	**Configurations that include Non-local Groups**
No change in balance of power	Change in balance of power
Physical proximity and networks of local groups allow local groups to obtain accurate information about their power	Dispersion and decayed networks of non-local groups result in information problems, thus non-local groups cannot estimate their power accurately
Successful renegotiation of bargains	Unsuccessful renegotiation of bargains
Local groups demilitarize	*Local groups remilitarize in powerful fashion; rump non-local units remilitarize in weak fashion*
State respects local groups' sovereignty in their territories	State engages in confrontational state-building in non-local groups' territories
Embedded in communities, demilitarized local groups maintain social and political influence	Non-local groups have influence through coercion

armed structures during the onset and duration phases of war.[11] I diverge from those scholars not just in the phase of the conflict cycle that I examine, but also in the organizational factors that I highlight. The established accounts propose, as causes of variation in war onset and dynamics, differences in motivations for participation, in territorial control, and in resource endowments. My study instead focuses on the mapping of recruitment: whether leaders staff their structures with local members or with non-local members. My findings therefore emphasize the importance of human and social geography over physical and economic geography, and over greed, grievance, and other moral and emotional motivations for participation.

[11] I draw especially on the work of Stathis Kalyvas (2006), Roger Petersen (2001), Jeremy Weinstein (2007), and Elisabeth Wood (2003).

The book's organization-level focus suggests implications about the nature of combatants' postwar social networks. These implications contribute to a recent literature on the microdynamics of peace that focuses on the trajectories of *individuals* emerging from conflict: their demobilization, political participation, economic reintegration, reconciliation, and psychological transitions.[12] The microlevel literature treats former fighters as independent agents, rather than as components of a web of ex-combatants and armed institutions that structure their postwar paths. This book demonstrates the critical role played by social bonds and how organizations pull their combatants with them, either back to violence or toward more peaceful activities. Individual-level postwar trajectories cannot be fully understood without taking into account the organizational outcomes of cohesion, dissolution, remilitarization, and demilitarization modeled in this book.

Most studies of peace have examined the war or the country as the unit of analysis.[13] Such macrolevel research tends either to ignore the role of armed organizations or to take the organizations as unvarying. By using the armed organization as the object of analysis, I can account for the significant subnational variation in the recurrence of organized violence that often exists even when macrolevel variables such as power-sharing and external guarantees are held constant.

Instead of treating the armed organization as a black box, I look inside it: there I uncover networks and principal-agent dynamics that enable me to integrate a key insight of bargaining theory into our understanding of civil war resolution. To date, it has been assumed that information on capabilities and resolve is complete in intrastate contexts (Fearon 2004; Walter 1999). I argue instead that information problems resurface during the uncertain transition to peace and, moreover, that they vary depending on the structures of the armed groups. I thereby provide nuance to the nature of the information problem, emphasizing not only the intelligence asymmetries that exist between belligerent organizations but also those that emerge within organizations. These asymmetries are key to understanding remilitarization.

By engaging in organization-level analysis, I build on emerging work on multiparty wars, looking beyond state-rebel dyads to illuminate the critical strategic interactions among various non-state actors and their effects on postwar outcomes.[14] The organization-level approach also facilitates theorizing

[12] See Annan et al. (2011); Bellows and Miguel (2009); Blattman (2009); Gilligan, Mvukiyehe, and Samii (2013); Humphreys and Weinstein (2007); Samii (2013).

[13] See Call (2012); Downes (2004); Doyle and Sambanis (2000); Fortna (2003, 2008); Gilligan and Sergenti (2008); Hartzell (1999); Licklider (1995); Mattes and Savun (2009); Reiter (2009); Toft (2010); Walter (2002, 2004).

[14] Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour (2012); Christia (2012); Pearlman and Cunningham (2012); Staniland (2012b). The book's organizational approach enables analysis of the common phenomenon of "partial peace": when some armed groups sign peace accords while others continue to fight (Nilsson 2008).

about the other actors in civil conflict, such as militias, warlords, self-defense forces, paramilitaries, and civilian patrols that fall outside of the traditional "rebel" category.[15] The literatures on war recurrence and on peace have almost entirely ignored these large, prevalent, and influential actors. Militias were present in 81 percent of the country-years in places that experienced civil war between 1981 and 2007 (Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe 2013, 254). These forces mobilized more than one million combatants in Pakistan, and similar numbers in Indonesia, Guatemala, and Ethiopia. Most importantly, militias do not just disappear after peace accords; in some cases, they facilitate an end to violence, but in others they pose a challenge to the durability of peace. This book's journey inside the Colombian militias contributes to the conflict resolution literature by building theory on the war-to-peace transitions of these underexamined groups.

Study of these non-state actors also advances the broader research agenda on militias in the context of civil war and state formation. It deepens our understanding of governance by "incomplete" states where sovereignty is fragmented (resting both with the state and with non-state actors) and where the state lacks "the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within [a] given territory" (Weber 1946, 78).[16] It joins an emerging literature that does not presume that state formation constitutes a natural progression toward a monopoly over the means of coercion,[17] arguing instead that the lack of such a monopoly may also constitute an equilibrium, one that serves the interests of certain stakeholders.[18] In this sense, the book helps lay the foundation for a research agenda on the varied relationships between the state and militias. It sheds light on the conditions under which the state is likely to continue to outsource state functions to these proxy forces or to tolerate shared rule, rather than seeking to extend its sovereignty by confronting the forces and establishing a state monopoly over the means of violence.[19]

[15] On warlords, see Jackson (2003); Marten (2006/07); Olson (1993); Pye (1971); Reno (1998). For an excellent typology of militias and a theory of the timing and location of their emergence, see Jentzsch (2014). In Colombia, the rebels or insurgents are revolutionary and are called *guerrillas;* they fight against the state security forces and the militias. The militias are called *paramilitares* (paramilitaries) or *autodefensas* (self-defense forces), and they fight against the rebels. Chapter 3 elaborates further on the nature of the armed actors in Colombia.

[16] On "shadow" or "incomplete" states, see Clunan and Trinkunas (2010); Davis and Pereira (2003); Kingston and Spears (2004).

[17] The traditional assumption is that the state wishes to retain or recover a monopoly over the means of force and that if this does not occur, it is either because the state lacks the ability due to poverty, a weak military, difficult national topography, dispersed populations, or lack of infrastructure (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Herbst 2000), or because it lacks the incentives since it does not face exogenous shocks such as warfare (Migdal 2001; Tilly 1990).

[18] Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos (2013); Driscoll (2012); Hidalgo and Lessing (2014); Staniland (2012c); Walston (1988).

[19] See Daly (2016).

RESEARCH STRATEGY

This book contributes to the methodology of studying war and peace. To demonstrate how the geography of recruitment by armed organizations conditions their postwar trajectories, I draw on empirical materials from the extraordinary comparative laboratory of contemporary Colombia.

My study employs a complementary mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. In addition to large-*n* statistical tests, I employ extensive primary qualitative data collected during a year and a half of fieldwork in Colombia over the period 2006–13. I analyze eleven original surveys of ex-combatants, their families, psychologists, and civilian community members, conducted by myself and others over the course of ten years, to trace the inner workings, network structures, and information asymmetries of the armed groups. Organization-level information on all militia factions and remilitarized units, and geo-referenced data on 29,000 violent events between 1964 and 2013, allow me to measure precisely where organized violence recurred. I trace the mechanisms underpinning the warring groups' evolution and their postwar trajectories with in-depth primary accounts derived from more than 300 interviews I conducted with ex-combatants, victims, military personnel, civilians, politicians, and experts on the armed conflict.[20] The scope and detail of the data enable significant empirical rigor, facilitating testing of every step along the causal chain of my geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization.

POLICY LESSONS

Knowledge of why groups remilitarize or demilitarize in the aftermath of peace agreements offers clear policy implications. The theory presented in this book reveals forces that influence these postwar outcomes, and suggests policy instruments that could help prevent a return to violence and encourage a sustainable end to armed conflict. For example, a better understanding of why groups follow divergent paths helps illuminate why, after war, large-scale violence recurs in certain regions, why low-level conflict persists in others, and why relative peace emerges in still others. This understanding enables us to anticipate where and how a state may effectively engage in state-building, where non-state armed actors are likely to dispute territory or retain hegemonic control, and what these dynamics imply for the populations living through the volatile transitions from war to peace.

[20] The majority of my interviews were conducted in confidentiality; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement and changed in the text to protect my respondents, and to adhere to my Human Subjects Protocol. I do not cite my interviewees' names unless they granted me permission to do so. Throughout the book, translations from Spanish into English are my own.

In Chapter 9, I examine several of the instruments that policymakers employ to influence or constrain outcomes after peace accords. The theory advanced in this book suggests, in particular, that there may exist potential dangers and unanticipated negative side effects of an approach that seeks to break up all organizations and networks uniformly. It shows that this approach is likely to spark shifts in power and remilitarization. I recommend instead that policymakers seek to preserve the balance of capabilities and to mitigate information problems within organizations. To do so, in its efforts at consolidation, a state should strategize differently toward different types of armed organizations based on their structural characteristics. I propose specific reintegration, information, and reconstruction tools aimed at diminishing the risks of renewed violence and enhancing the prospects for consolidated peace.

ROAD MAP

The book unfolds as follows: Chapters 2 and 3 show how the geographic patterns of recruitment shape the postwar trajectories of armed organizations, and they introduce the methodological and historical context in which I evaluate my argument. Chapter 2 develops the proposed causal process in detail. I describe how the geography of recruitment affects the networks, cohesion, and information asymmetries within armed organizations. I then explain how variation in recruitment patterns across armed organizations in strategic interaction causes the organizations to either cooperate and demilitarize, or defect and fight. The chapter demonstrates how other explanations, centered on peace terms and on the correlates of civil war, cannot account for postwar variation in remilitarization. Chapter 2 concludes by presenting the research design and the rich sources on which the project draws.

Chapter 3 provides a historical narrative of the origins and evolution of the Colombian militia forces. It examines three important analytic background questions: why these powerful belligerent groups decided to enter negotiations with the Colombian government when they easily could have continued fighting; why these armed organizations signed peace agreements that lacked guarantees, and that failed to reflect the military, political, economic, and social power with which they entered negotiations; and why non-local units, in particular, agreed to peace terms and implemented demobilization when they would weaken as a result. By exploring this puzzling behavior, the book lays the groundwork for a future research agenda on bargaining and implementation of peace accords when information is incomplete, when parties to the conflict fail to anticipate the future accurately, and when actors are multiple and non-unitary.

Chapters 4 and 5 then engage in quantitative tests of the proposed argument and mechanisms. Chapter 4 explores variation in the geography of recruitment in Colombia and its implications for the militia groups' social network structures and postwar cohesion. To code whether individuals operated

locally or not, the chapter uses survey data on all 35,310 ex-militia members' self-reported locations of origin[21] and information on the armed groups' zones of operation derived from the confidential testimonies of 2,700 former top and midranking militia commanders under the Justice and Peace Law.[22] The chapter looks inside the armed organizations and explores how their members were connected to each other and how their social networks were situated in geographical space. It traces the combatants' prewar and postwar social connections, based on a series of four surveys of the former fighters, triangulated with additional surveys of their families and psychologists. These survey questionnaires facilitate indices of the combatants' norms of reciprocity and mutual dependence, and indices of the extent of commanders' information about their subordinates. I use geo-coding to estimate the former fighters' postwar geographic clustering or dispersion. After accounting for endogeneity and controlling for alternative hypotheses centered on recruit type, motivations, and socialization, I show that there exists a strong relationship between armed groups' geography of recruitment and their postwar organizational capacity.

Chapter 5 explores the regional configurations of the armed groups and how their recruitment patterns affected their remilitarization and demilitarization. It also analyzes how the strategic dynamics between armed factions influenced regional levels of remilitarized violence. For these statistical analyses, I developed a series of original organizational and municipal-level databases on remilitarization, constructed with data from Colombia's intelligence agencies, Attorney General, National Police, Institute of Forensic Medicine, National Penitentiary Institute, Observatory of Human Rights of the Vice-Presidency, and National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation, as well as with information appearing in reports of the Organization of American States' (OAS) Peace Mission, Colombian press, and various Colombian think tanks. The quantitative tests evaluate the explanatory power of the book's theory against rival explanations derived from the literatures on war outcomes, tactical terrain, and the political economy of violence. The results prove extremely suggestive of the proposed relationship between recruitment and remilitarization.

[21] The International Organization for Migration (IOM) asked for "locations of origin" in its baseline survey administered in the "concentration zones" of each of the paramilitary bloques prior to their demobilization. The Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (ACR) conducted follow-up surveys to fill in any missing values.

[22] The Justice and Peace Law (Law 975) was the transitional justice regime governing the peace process with the militias. Approved on 21 June 2005, the act aimed "to facilitate the processes of peace and individual or collective reincorporation into civilian life of the members of illegal armed groups, guaranteeing the victims' rights to truth, justice, and reparation." See Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (2008). Under the regime, former combatants found guilty of crimes against humanity were required to make full and honest confessions of their actions (known as *versiones libres* or "voluntary depositions"), make reparations to victims, and not commit further acts of violence or criminality. In return, they received reductions in their prison sentences.

Chapters 6 and 7 turn from statistical breadth to qualitative depth with case studies of transitions to peace and of reversions to violence. Chapter 6 explores the evolution of several Colombian militias that demilitarized. Chapter 7 examines examples of Colombian militias that remilitarized, either powerfully or weakly. I draw evidence principally from three distinct geographic parts of Colombia, relying on process tracing, participant observation, extensive in-depth interviews, and analysis of diverse sources of survey data and information on violence. I examine the warring factions' recruitment maps, social ties, geographic distribution, command and control, intelligence, cohesion, changes in relative power, and post–peace accord interactions and negotiations with the state and with other illegal non-state actors. The case analysis provides evidence for the postulated connection between armed organizations' recruitment geographies, strategic interactions, and postwar trajectories.

Finally, Chapters 8 and 9 take the theory beyond the Colombian militias to assess its explanatory weight in other contexts and to probe its implications for research and policy. Chapter 8 discusses challenges to evaluating the theory's generalizability and outlines its scope conditions. I explore the historical case of the left-wing rebel armies in the aftermath of La Violencia. I then skim the world for evidence of the prevalence of the theory's scope conditions and for qualitative narratives that suggest the theory's validity beyond the recent Colombian case. I employ ex-combatant survey data from Sierra Leone to illustrate the network mechanisms in another context. I find that the first part of the argument, about how the geography of recruitment relates to post-conflict organizational capabilities and information, plausibly applies to most, if not all, militant groups after peace agreements. However, the second part of the theory, about how groups with differential recruitment patterns interact, how relative power shifts among them, and how this leads to resumption of conflict in some places but not in others, may be limited to multiparty conflicts.

Chapter 9 concludes by exploring the impact of the project on the study of transitions from war to peace, of violence more generally, and of state-building, and suggesting avenues for further research. It then addresses the policy implications for practitioners aiming to dismantle rebel and paramilitary structures, harness their collective capacities, neutralize their coercive logics, and redeploy them for peaceful politics.

2

Theory of the Postwar Trajectories of Armed Organizations

Around the world, in the aftermath of peace agreements, militia and rebel groups disarm but then follow puzzling divergent trajectories. Yet, we have a surprisingly weak understanding of why they dissolve, or endure and redeploy for violence or peaceful activities.

To develop an organizational-level theory of transitions from war to peace, this book builds on a strong tradition of research on civil wars and peace processes but departs from existing approaches in important ways. Thus, this chapter first outlines two existing frameworks for understanding conflict resolution and peace implementation. The first, embedded in bargaining theory, focuses on the credible commitment problem and the extent to which the terms of a peace accord can resolve this problem. The second framework, broadly rooted in a contest model of conflict, establishes the correlates of civil war recurrence: poverty, sparsely populated peripheries, lootable natural resources, and mountainous terrain.

Convinced that putting the armed organization at the center of the analysis provides critical analytic leverage on questions of postwar violence and peace not answered by these two established frameworks, I then explore existing theories of warring organizations before and during conflict. I build on these theories to understand armed organizations after conflict. I argue that the geographic recruitment patterns of armed organizations and those of their neighboring armed groups influence whether the organizations cease or instead resume violence after demobilizing. The final section of the chapter explains why and how I use the cases of Colombia's militia groups to illustrate and test my arguments about remilitarization in the aftermath of peace accords.

ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORKS

Bargaining Theory Leaves Significant Variation Unexplained

One framework for explaining variation in conflict resolution derives from the rational bargaining theory of interstate war. The core idea behind this theory

is that the costliness of war motivates both sides in a conflict to negotiate an agreement that will leave each side better off than the inefficiency of fighting. Conflicting parties should, in theory, be able to reach a peaceful outcome equal to what would be traded at the war's end, but without incurring the costs of continued fighting.[1] Their inability to do so results from information asymmetries and commitment problems.[2] The information asymmetry explanation proposes that conflict occurs because rational agents possess different (private) information about their estimates of the likelihood of winning. In order to gain the most favorable resolution of the issues, each party faces incentives to exaggerate its willingness or capability to fight. Private information, combined with these incentives to misrepresent the information, generates information asymmetries between belligerents. When the belligerents do not know each other's relative resolve and strength, it becomes difficult to locate a peaceful agreement that both would prefer to war (Fearon 1995).

Several prominent scholars have proposed that the information asymmetry explanation does not apply to the intrastate context because, they argue, information is complete in ongoing civil wars. Fearon (2004, 290) writes, "After a few years of war, fighters on both sides of an insurgency typically develop accurate understandings of the other side's capabilities, tactics, and resolve." Others similarly maintain that fighting reveals information and thus solves information problems among belligerents.[3] Walter (1999) adds that the very fact that a peace agreement can be reached and civil war terminated implies that the belligerents' beliefs about their respective costs of fighting and their relative resolve have converged. Of the two rational explanations for war, the credible commitment logic has therefore become dominant in the study of intrastate conflicts.[4]

This logic proposes that intrastate wars are difficult to end, settlements are challenging to broker, and lasting agreements remain elusive when promises are not credible, that is, when any negotiated deal to end the violence may not be in the interests of the actors to uphold in the future. Thus, fearing the consequences of defection, both sides will prefer to continue to fight.[5]

Scholars propose a variety of solutions to this commitment problem. The solutions include third-party security guarantees, which reduce defection with promises by external actors to intervene in the event of a breach of the

[1] Fearon (1995); Powell (2006, 2012).

[2] Issue indivisibilities provide another "rational explanation" of war, but they have been discounted in the case of civil wars, especially non-ethnic or non-religious ones. Fearon (1995, 382) argues that issues "typically are complex and multidimensional; side-payments or linkages with other issues typically are possible." Others, however, argue that identity issues and sacred spaces are exceptions and are, indeed, indivisible (Hassner 2003; Toft 2005).

[3] Filson and Werner (2002); Slantchev (2003); Smith and Stam (2004).

[4] Lake and Rothchild (1998); Mattes and Savun (2010); Rauchhaus (2006); Regan and Aydin (2006) are exceptions that do not rely on a credible commitment logic.

[5] Fearon (2004); Powell (2012); Reiter (2009); Walter (1997).

agreement and to protect the party that becomes threatened by its opponent's opportunism.[6] Other authors point to institutional safeguards by which power is shared or divided by the belligerents.[7] Such power-sharing arrangements give both the government and the rebels a role in government decision making and allocate economic resources, territorial governance, and control of the armed forces, preventing the belligerents of either side from excluding or coercing its ex-adversary.[8] Actors should prove more likely to sign bargains, implement the agreements, and demilitarize if provided with these "fear-reducing" provisions (Mattes and Savun 2009). In the absence of such guarantees, armed groups should be likely to renege on the negotiated settlements and remilitarize.

These "scraps of paper," defining the terms of peace and its implementation, structure the post-settlement environment, and can account for some of the empirical divergence in war recurrence across conflicts (Fortna 2003). However, there remains significant variation even within contexts of similar peace terms. In Zimbabwe, for example, Atlas and Licklider (1999) show how, despite identical third-party assurances and power-sharing institutions, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) implemented the peace agreement, whereas the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) returned to fighting between 1982 and 1987. In Ireland, despite shared Good Friday Agreements in 1998, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (RIRA) demilitarized, but the Real Irish Republican Army remilitarized. Looking at organizations involved in different conflicts, but with the same types of peace terms, we observe similar variation. For instance, of warring factions granted power-sharing, 63 percent sustainably transitioned to peace, whereas 36 percent remilitarized. Of those not awarded shared access to political power, 57 percent successfully implemented the accords whereas 43 percent returned to violence.[9]

To understand the important share of variation left unexplained by the peace terms, I open the black box of armed organizations that either revert to violence or facilitate peace, and look for insights into how and why power shifts occur after peace agreements. I appeal not only to the commitment-problem logic of bargaining theory, but also to its information logic.

My resulting argument is that a return to organized violence emerges as a strategy in some cases but not in others due to the interplay between the inner workings of the armed groups, specifically their ability to remain cohesive and to calculate their capabilities accurately; the dynamics between these non-state actors as they struggle to translate their war power to power at peace; and their informal interactions with the state as the state seeks to reconstruct and extend its authority. In this interplay, the geography of recruitment patterns emerges as

[6] Doyle and Sambanis (2000); Fortna (2004); Walter (1997, 1999, 2002).
[7] Hartzell and Hoddie (2003); Mattes and Savun (2009); Walter (1999).
[8] Hartzell and Hoddie (2003); Lijphart (1977); Roeder and Rothchild (2005); Sisk (1996); Toft (2010).
[9] These figures derive from the data of Hartzell (2014).

a powerful explanation for the post-demobilization capacities of the organizations, their balance of relative power, the information asymmetries both within and between their structures, and the likelihood of their bargaining success or failure. Through these intervening mechanisms, the geography of recruitment influences whether renewed violence erupts or order and security is restored.

Correlates of Violence Recurrence Diverge from Correlates of Civil War Onset

A second framework for explaining war recurrence and remilitarization derives from the literature on civil war onset. Scholars argue that "where a rebellion is financially and militarily feasible it will occur" (Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner 2009, 1). This scholarship assumes that the causes of repeated war are the same as those of initial war onset.[10] Scholars who have looked at the specific question of civil war recurrence, examining only the subsample of countries that have experienced prior conflict, investigate this same set of variables believed to cause violence in the first place.[11] These correlates of civil war onset and repetition include poverty, rough terrain, weak state capacity, lootable natural resources, and large, sparsely distributed populations (Blattman and Miguel 2010; Hegre and Sambanis 2006). Combined, these conditions afford armed actors access to recruits, materiel, sanctuaries, and financial resources. Thus, we should anticipate that organizations with access to these endowments will remilitarize, whereas those starved of these circumstances will demilitarize.

Can this cross-national account of war recurrence offer insights into organizational remilitarization in the aftermath of peace accords? Although surely mountain refuge, financial support, and ineffective local policing support the process of remilitarization, all organizations transitioning from war after a settlement should have benefited from these endowments, or they would not have amassed sufficient power to terminate the conflict through negotiations. The question of remilitarization asks instead why violence recurs in some places that were favorable to past armed mobilization (providing sufficient recruits, finances, refuge, etc.) and not in others that were similarly favorable. The structural features, by themselves, do not afford organizations the disciplined action, command and control, and recruitment webs necessary to wage war again and to withstand countermilitant campaigns. Actors seeking to initiate an armed movement from scratch face a different collective action problem than do those seeking to remobilize a decommissioned army. In the latter case, collective action has already been achieved, and must only be sustained and reactivated. The correlates of war onset therefore matter less. These structural

[10] For example, see Collier and Hoeffler (2004); Sambanis (2004). In the datasets of these studies, both onset and recurrence are coded as "1," whereas "peace incidents" – those associated with never having had a war and also those related to post-conflict periods – are coded as "0."

[11] Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom (2008); Quinn, Mason, and Gurses (2007); Walter (2004).

conditions also provide little insight into the motivations for remilitarization and, given that geography, demographics, infrastructure, and income change only slowly over time, they cannot explain variation in the timing of a return to violence.

Existing empirical studies relying on the contest framework also tell us little about what to expect for cases that do not fit neatly into the anti-state, rebel category: are the conditions favoring the resurgence of paramilitaries and militias – organizations that tend to be anti-rebel and aligned with the state – the same as those favoring the recurrence of insurgency?

A FOCUS ON ARMED ORGANIZATIONS

To understand the outbreak of renewed violence and durability of peace after negotiated settlements, I focus on the organizations that decide whether to wage conflict and ravage the country again or instead to silence their guns and allow their nations to recover security and order. These organizations are surprisingly absent from studies of the implementation and breakdown of peace. In opting to focus on armed organizations and their inner workings, I join the ranks of scholars working on how armed groups mobilize, how they organize, and how they fight. I extend this research agenda to explore how they evolve after conflict, and how they demobilize or remobilize.

The literature on organizations during war has proliferated. It examines outcomes, including mobilization of high-risk collective action;[12] armed groups' fragmentation, cohesion, and alliances;[13] their repertoires and use of violence;[14] and their governance structures and creation of social order.[15]

One important thread that runs through this literature, although it examines different outcomes than those that are the focus of this study, is the role of resource wealth or poverty. Variation in the endowments of armed organizations has been found to affect the groups' cohesion, perpetration of violence, and relationships with the civilian population. We may therefore anticipate that the nature of the groups' economic assets would also affect whether the groups threaten or protect peace after signing an accord. Derivative of the larger greed-versus-grievance debate and perhaps best formulated by Jeremy Weinstein, the logic suggests that "resource-endowed" groups – those that benefit from revenues from drugs, gems, oil, taxable wealth, diasporas, or external benefactors – attract opportunistic "salaried" joiners, whereas "socially endowed" or ideologically motivated units – those that draw on identities and

[12] Gould (1991); Parkinson (2013); Petersen (2001); Wood (2003).

[13] Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour (2012); Bearman (1991); Christia (2012); Costa and Kahn (2003); Pearlman and Cunningham (2012); Staniland (2012a).

[14] Cohen (2013); Downes (2006); Humphreys and Weinstein (2008a); Kalyvas (2006); Kalyvas and Kocher (2009); Straus (2006); Weinstein (2007); Wood (2009).

[15] Arjona (2013); Huang (2013); Mampilly (2011); Metelits (2010).

interpersonal networks – recruit "committed" members. Translating this literature to the postwar period, one implication is that resource-rich groups lack incentives to remain at peace; war constitutes a more efficient means to their desired end of economic profits.[16] A second implication is that resource-rich armed actors are more likely to suffer principal-agent problems and vulnerability to organizational fragmentation, rendering them less able to keep their soldiers in line and to remain at peace. Finally, the behavior of resource-rich groups tends to reflect a disregard for the interests of the civilian population and is "predicted to exhibit much higher levels of indiscriminate violence, looting, and destruction" (Weinstein 2007, 216). As a result, such groups are more likely to face rejection and resistance by the noncombatant population after they demobilize; they therefore may need to remilitarize in order to maintain their territorial control (De Zeeuw 2008). We should expect resource-rich armed organizations to remilitarize, whereas resource-poor groups should prove more likely to demilitarize.

The belligerent cases I examine all benefited from resources. Resource endowments therefore cannot account for the substantial variation across these groups after the peace agreements were signed. More generally, although extraordinary profits from narcotrafficking or other sources of loot may fuel the rearming phenomenon, access to this materiel remains largely constant across time and thus cannot explain longitudinal variation in demilitarization and remilitarization. Controlling resources, moreover, does not necessarily require remilitarization; latent coercion, and the possession of "silenced or muted" guns may suffice. Thus, the puzzle becomes: why do we see latent arms and no violence in some cases, and manifest arms and violence in others? The resources argument cannot explain this variation.

A second thread running through the literature on organizations during war explores the implications of variation in the existence, density, and structure of social networks. This literature, advanced by scholars such as Roger Gould, Doug McAdam, Sarah Parkinson, Roger Petersen, Paul Staniland, Guillermo Trejo, and Elisabeth Wood, shows how social networks transition from unarmed to armed and how they hold members together in common cause, enabling them to withstand strong counter-resistance campaigns.[17] I build on this tradition of exploring how collective action is generated and sustained, and extend this thread into the postwar period, to the transition from armed to unarmed collectivities. I join it with a final thread in the scholarship on non-state armed organizations during war. This thread, conceptualized by scholars such as Fotini Christia, Alexander Downes, Stathis Kalyvas, Matthew Kocher, and Barry Posen, centers on the balance of power and territorial contestation. I show how social networks translate into power, and how variation

[16] Collier (2000); Keen (1998); Stedman (1997).

[17] Gould (1991, 1995); McAdam (1986); Parkinson (2013); Petersen (2001); Staniland (2012a); Trejo (2012); Wood (2003).

in these networks – stemming from variation in recruitment maps – produces shifts in the post-conflict distribution of capabilities and territorial control, resulting in divergence in bargaining outcomes: violence or peace.[18]

THE GEOGRAPHY OF RECRUITMENT THEORY OF REMILITARIZATION

This section outlines the building blocks of my argument and traces the organizational pathways that lead from initial recruitment to remilitarization or demilitarization. I begin with recruitment and participation. Existing theories of organizations that instigate and fight civil wars emphasize the strategic choices leaders make about recruitment and the critical impact of this defining organizational feature on the groups' evolution. I focus on a different recruitment decision – not on whom to recruit (which individuals) or how to recruit (with what incentives: material, social, ideological, emotional, etc.), but where to recruit: its geography. I show that the organizational element of recruitment geography provides substantial leverage for understanding variation in the behavior of groups transitioning from war to peace.

Step 1: The Effects of Geographic Patterns of Recruitment on Postwar Organizational Capacity

In mobilizing and growing an armed movement, organizations recruit and deploy in different ways. I distinguish local from non-local groups. Local armed organizations are structures that recruit where they deploy: recruitment and deployment coincide geographically. Non-local groups are units that recruit from places other than where they deploy. Of course, in practice, no group draws its members only locally or only non-locally. Organizations fall along a continuum; leaders mix these recruitment strategies as they build their organizations, a point to which I return below. It is, however, useful to examine the extremes, and to study how focus on only one recruitment strategy conditions the types of organizations that emerge, and the trajectories of those organizations.

Geography of Recruitment and Network Structures

My theory centers on how these recruitment patterns affect network structures. Scholars of armed organizations have long emphasized the role of social networks, both "real" and "imagined" (Anderson 1983). These ties come in many forms including shared ethnicity, kinship, friendship, religion, political party affiliation, ideological conviction, or formal association or social movement membership.[19] I focus on networks that are centered on shared homeland

[18] Christia (2012); Downes (2006); Kalyvas (2006); Kalyvas and Kocher (2009); Posen (1993).

[19] Barkey and Van Rossem (1997); McAdam (1986); Padgett and Ansell (1993); Petersen (2001); Sageman (2004); Trejo (2012).

because they are multifaceted in nature and because they have a unique endurance that extends beyond the conflict.

Organizations structured on different recruit bases vary in their networks. Those composed of non-local recruits tend to attract their members from geographically dispersed areas. As a result, their fighters call different places home; they are geographically heterogeneous. Moreover, they tend to be enlisted not through multifaceted networks, but instead by non-network recruitment tactics or through one-dimensional ties. If they come into contact with their armed faction through a social connection, it is often a single individual, such as a former member of the battalion with which they served while completing their military service. Fighters of such non-local groups usually have weaker norms of reciprocity and their leaders weaker means of policing and monitoring the behavior of their subordinates.

In contrast, local armed factions tend to recruit in a more geographically concentrated manner. Because they are recruited and deployed near their homes, fighters in local factions often share places of origin, identities,[20] and social connections that predate their entry into the conflict. Recruitment often takes place through embedded and trusted networks, providing commanders with more and better information as to potential enlistees' character, commitment, and competence. The leaders plug into homogenous networks within potentially heterogeneous and divided communities.[21] The formal organizational structures sit atop preexisting informal networks (Gould 1991). These networks vary in type and nature, ranging from ties based around prior gang, guerrilla, military battalion, or vigilante group affiliation, to bonds rooted in membership in business, peasant, or labor associations. Those who share homelands also tend to share multidimensional bonds of kinship, marriage,

[20] Place creates "distinct locality groups." According to Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda, when asked their identities, "local people refer to themselves as 'from [X place]'" as this says it all (Fals-Borda 1962, 40–43). Before indicating other aspects of their identities, most Colombians will say, for example, that they are "paisa," "caleño," "costeño," "llanero," "urabeño," or "rolo" (from Antioquia, Cali, the coast, eastern plains, Urabá, or Bogotá). Slang, accents, physical appearance, food, music and dancing preferences, and other markers usually make a Colombian's place of origin quite clear to other Colombians. Accordingly, "local" and "non-local" labels are easily applied. This is not unique to Colombia.

[21] Extreme levels of internal displacement (4.7 million) have disrupted and uprooted many communities in Colombia (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013). Some of this displacement has been of a collective nature (Steele 2009). According to Fernán González, "Neighbors, families, friends, towns all moved together, they transplanted themselves. They had very, very strong ties and so they reproduced their original campesino societies and norms in their new zones" (interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006). Displacement has generated the further homogenization of communities because only those loyal to the local armed group in control remain (Wood 2008, 549). At the same time, the conflict has fractured many communities and, as Colombia has modernized and voluntary internal migration has drastically increased, communities have increased in heterogeneity.

friendship, community, school, employment, and other quotidian links.[22] Together with the embedded local networks, these bonds afford local armed groups stronger interpersonal relationships among their rank and file, and with their commanders. These social webs foster trust, deepen "identity-movement" linkages between the individuals and their organizations, and produce norms of reciprocity that keep the combatants linked to the organizations even after disarming (McAdam 2003). During war, factions that are built on these foundations of established social networks become infused with more effective systems and a robust repertoire of positive and negative sanctions to monitor defection and enact punishment; these remain influential after the armed groups have decommissioned (Wood 2003).

I focus on locality because, during my fieldwork, I found locality-based ties to be the strongest, most durable, and most complex ties between combatants. Other ties often fused only one part of an individual fighter's identity to the organization; I explore some of these alternative bonds in the qualitative analyses. However, I do not seek to explain cohesion, fragmentation, and military effectiveness *during* war. Indeed, non-local groups, too, can achieve organizational unity and be highly militarily effective, as I illustrate statistically in Chapter 4: in Colombia, non-local units coalesced into some of the most successful in combat. Combatant groups may also achieve a considerable degree of interpersonal trust and cohesion through training and indoctrination, and through the experience of combat.[23]

Instead, I am interested in cohesion and collective action capacity *after* war. I focus on locality and on the networks, norms, monitoring, and intelligence-gathering mechanisms that are influenced by local or non-local recruitment primarily because these assets are distinctly more durable after peace accords than those derived from other ties that predated or were constructed during the conflict. This is attributable, in large part, to the pronounced patterns of homeward relocation to which I turn next.

Geographic Proximity after War

After handing over their weapons, ex-combatants tend to return to their towns of origin. "Returning home … is often a key step in reintegration programmes" (United Nations 2006, 166). It constitutes a central tenet of the international community's demobilization and reintegration doctrine. In Angola and Namibia, in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, a majority of

[22] Orlando Fals Borda wrote, of these geographically-rooted networks, people are "connected in one way or another [and] … an attempt to trace those lines in a sociogram result[s] in a great accumulation of lines." (Fals-Borda 1962, 40–41).

[23] The United States army, for example, does not deploy individuals in their places of origin, nor does it couple civilian and military life, and yet it is viewed as a highly effective fighting force. On combatant socialization, see Checkel (2014); Cohen (2013); Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood (2014); Hoover Green (2011); Wood (2008). Chapter 8 shows how, in other cases around the world, intensive combatant socialization intersects with my proposed causal story.

ex-combatants relocated back to their places of origin (Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer 1996; Government of Sweden 2006). In Colombia, nearly 70 percent of ex-combatants returned to their home areas.[24]

For commanders and foot soldiers who operated where they are from, there is thus a strong tendency to remain where they fought after disarming: they are already home. Given the concentrated recruitment patterns of local groups, this implies high levels of postwar geographic clustering of the groups' combatants. This physical proximity protects and strengthens the already strong networks of local factions and preserves the social capital between their members (Gould 1995). Ex-combatants of local units continue to interact with each other face-to-face. The resulting intimate knowledge and fine-grained intelligence means that their leaders can continue to monitor group members' behavior and contributions, and can sanction disobedience at a relatively low cost (Ghosh and Ray 1996). These dense ties and repeated interactions help resolve the collective-action and principal-agent problems that arise when the necessity of waging war and the overt coercion of the military chain of command have been removed (Alchian and Demsetz 1972; Taylor 1988).

Because local combatants are unlikely to displace elsewhere, the expectations of continued interactions extend the shadow of the future; it becomes important to cooperate with one's ex-comrades today so that they, in turn, will cooperate in the future. This enhances a norm of generalized reciprocity.[25] Former commanders and foot soldiers' close personalized exchanges also create the possibility of a host of side-payments to influence each other's behavior and render exit from the organization more costly. These include "social acceptance, personal services, or other motivating factors" (Miller 1992, 9). Social relations and hierarchies are not quickly dismantled. Because local former fighters do not change contexts after demobilizing, it proves more challenging for them to alter their social milieu, especially when their bonds as militants were built on preexisting civilian networks. In such cases, a return to their civilian status reinforces these militant bonds. Similarly, commander–combatant relations also remain relatively fixed in the short to medium term because of silent coercion, psychological power, and fear, but also because of standard operating procedures: obedience becomes habit. Finally, oftentimes, local combatant organizations form legal associations, political parties, or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the aftermath of peace processes. These may further lock in the hierarchical relations, command-and-control mechanisms, and social webs of the former armed structures.

The fact that local combatants remain where they fought has additional implications. These former fighters remain in the zones where they exercised power over the civilian population, where they developed extortion rackets,

[24] This figure is based on survey data of all 54,749 ex-combatants in Colombia as of mid-2015.

[25] See Axelrod (1984) and Fearon (1998), for discussions of the role of shadows of the future in facilitating cooperation.

trafficking routes, money laundering rings, and other systems of financing, and where they generated sanctuaries and intelligence webs to avert detection, camouflage themselves from their enemies, and punish defectors. Of course, the extent of their wartime governance and the nature and sophistication of their financial transactions likely varied across their zones of operation depending, in part, on how much territorial competition they faced and how long they had maintained a presence in each zone (Kalyvas 2006). However, relative to places where they had never operated militarily, their portfolio of organizational assets should have been significantly more robust in the locations where they fought. These assets are usually nontransferable to other places to which the combatants might displace after the war.

In sum, local combatants have strong preexisting organizational ties, reinforced by their physical proximity after implementing the peace accords, which enable these structures to stay intact. Networks equate with capacity in my model. Thus, local groups preserve their organizational capacity. The additional fact that local units' combatants remain in the places where they fought further cements their power and, as I explain below, has important implications for remilitarization.

In contrast, the towns of origin of non-local groups tend to be geographically dispersed; thus, many of these groups' homeward-bound combatants scatter to a variety of places after disarming. As geographical distance expands, principal-agent and monitoring problems grow (Gates 2002). Moreover, already uprooted and displaced by their wartime deployment away from their locations of origin, some non-local fighters do not return home after decommissioning. Instead they migrate to wherever the best security and economic package is available, often in larger cities where they disappear into the urban social fabric. Accordingly, their superiors do not know where to find them and thus cannot supervise, punish, or reward them as required for the organizations to survive. Command-and-control problems become exacerbated and connections between comrades break down. Lacking strong ties and face-to-face interactions, "each [non-local group's] [ex-]soldier is theoretically freed from constraint and may pursue individual rather than group ends" (Bearman 1991, 324). Non-local factions thus face greater challenges remaining cohesive and sustaining collective action; they tend to weaken after demobilization.[26]

Moreover, as their combatants leave the zones in which they fought, these non-local organizations also lose many of the assets that were tied to these zones: financial resources, contacts, informant networks, civilian support, sources of refuge, and territorial control. Thus, even if the combatants relocate en masse to a new location, they do so without these critical endowments. They are thus less likely to achieve collective action and power in the

[26] It should be noted that non-local groups are not weaker during the war; rather, the factors contributing to their erosion are particular to the demobilization phase. In the quantitative analyses, I examine the alternative explanation of defeat prior to demobilization.

localities to which they displace (especially if these are occupied by other factions).

Although non-local units weaken significantly, they usually do not disappear completely; rather, they tend to leave rump cadres where they operated, for two reasons. First, few warring factions are entirely non-local. Given the military requisites of accurate intelligence, support, noncombatant collaboration and, at times, reinforcements, most units attract at least some locals. Second, although significantly less likely to remain where they fought than local fighters, some non-locally deployed combatants may do so. Thus, a structure usually survives, if diminished, in the zones where the non-local factions operated.

Organizational Capacity and Power

After implementing the peace terms and disarming, former armed groups' capacity to return to violence (and to continue to exercise influence over the populations, economies, societies, and politics in their territories) depends, I argue, not on their guns, but on their networks. In Barbara Walter's credible commitment theory of conflict resolution, arms determine power shifts; that is, because peace agreements generally stipulate that non-state actors must disarm, power will shift in their disfavor (Walter 1997, 1999, 2002). This is the principal source of a change in postwar power posited in existing theoretical conceptualizations. Moreover, this power change is assumed to be uniform across all armed groups and conflicts unless military integration or security-sector reform moderates it.

In contrast to this approach, my analysis places emphasis on warring units' network structures rather than on their guns. Post-conflict environments tend to be awash with weapons. Organizations do not surrender all arms but keep many in caches; they often hand over their most faulty weapons; and they retain the ability to procure armaments rapidly on the small-arms market. In Guatemala after the 1996 peace accords, the militias maintained "a large stockpile of firearms" (Bateson 2013, 81). In Nicaragua in 1990, the Contras "retained arms in secret caches, just in case" (Spalding 1999, 43–44). Although access to weapons varies little across groups and time, social infrastructures and networks vary significantly. As a result, organizational endurance cannot be taken for granted; it varies among demobilizing actors. Accordingly, we should expect configurations of power and, more importantly, the extent of changes in postwar power also to vary significantly. This argument about military capabilities deriving from networks is not new; rather, military sociologists and political scientists have made similar claims. Barry Posen (1993, 31), for example, argued that the "military capability of groups will often be dependent on their cohesion, rather than their meager military assets."

In particular, local groups' networks, geographic clustering, and sustained presence in the zones where they fought render these units better able to translate their war power to peacetime power. In contrast, non-local organizations' weaker bonds, dispersion, and emigration from their places of operation

expose them to greater erosion in their power and territorial control after war. Meanwhile, unless the state experiences extensive security-sector reform and disarmament, it remains militarized throughout the transition from war to peace, with its power relatively unchanged.

Step 2: The Effects of Regional Configurations of Armed Groups on Remilitarization

The strategic set of belligerent groups – whether they are local, non-local, or mixed – determines whether the power balance endures or shifts in the aftermath of the negotiated accords. Specifically, I examine "regional configurations" defined as armed actors (state or non-state) with overlapping or contiguous zones of operation at the time of demobilization. A "region" is thus the strategic area over which groups interact.

The Distribution of Power and Bargaining

The logic described above leads us to anticipate that local groups that have strategic interactions only with other local factions or with the state will witness little change in their power dynamics; each such group will, I predict, remain cohesive with its power intact (see Figure 2.1). If the local groups and state are instead in configurations that also include non-local fighting units, they should experience a power shift vis-à-vis these non-local groups, as they remain strong and the non-local groups weaken (see Figure 2.2). In sets of only non-local actors, all such units should weaken to some degree (Figure 2.3). If falling on the extreme non-local end of the recruitment spectrum, the non-local organizations may disappear entirely, leaving a power vacuum.

The bargaining literature argues that, for peace to hold, either the distribution of power underpinning the peace bargains must remain unchanged or, if the power balance shifts, the parties must agree on the extent of this power shift (Werner 1999). In this latter case, a shared understanding of the change in power facilitates an agreement on the transfers necessary to re-equilibrate the bargains (Fearon 1995). According to this well-established logic, peace bargains involving only local groups and the state should hold, because the distribution of power in these cases remains unchanged. In configurations involving non-local groups, we should witness renegotiation of the peace bargains to reflect the non-local groups' diminished power. The bargaining literature would lead us to expect that, since a return to war is inefficient, these renewed negotiations will succeed, preventing remilitarization. However, we observe that the bargaining process with non-local groups instead tends to fail. I argue that this is due to information problems.[27]

[27] Since the power change is associated with demobilization, the change constitutes a shock, but then it is over: future power shifts are not expected.

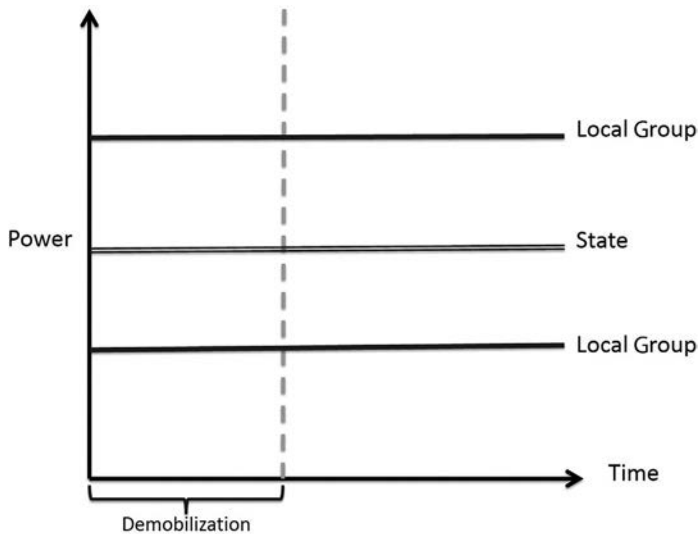


FIGURE 2.1. Configuration of Local Groups and State.

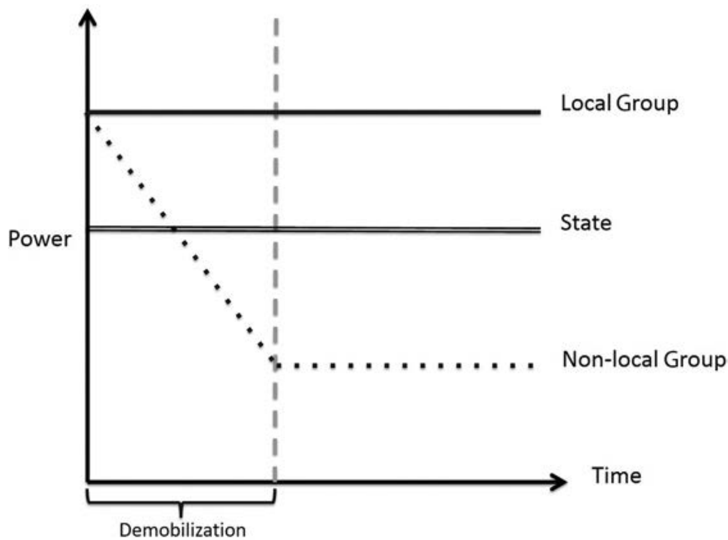


FIGURE 2.2. Configuration of Local and Non-local Groups and State.

Information Asymmetries within Organizations

The bargaining theory of war and peace assumes that private information and incentives to misrepresent exist only between, but not within, armed organizations, and that these asymmetries narrow and even disappear over the

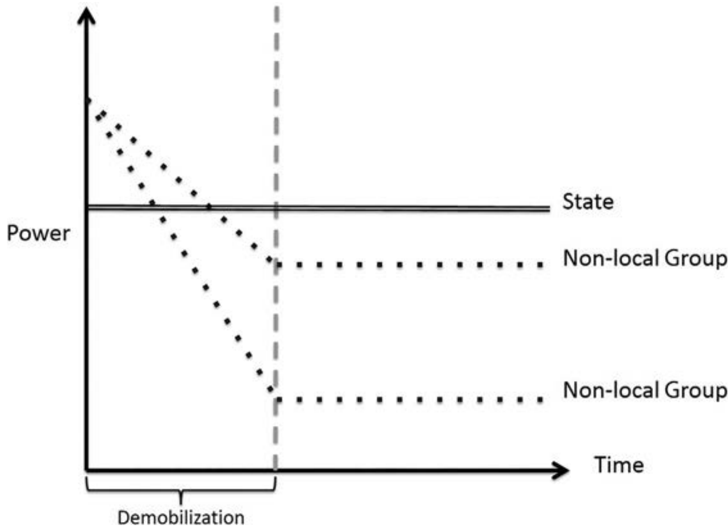


FIGURE 2.3. Configuration of Non-local Groups and State.

course of a civil conflict as information about each side's resolve and capabilities reveals itself to the other on the battlefield (Fearon 2004). By treating the armed organization as a black box, these accounts miss the private information and incentives to misrepresent that which exist *within* armed organizations. The literature on the economics of organization and, more recently, Jeremy Weinstein's powerful insights into the role of adverse selection during rebel recruitment, highlight the importance of information problems within armed groups (Weinstein 2007; Williamson 1975).[28] Information asymmetries occur because "the knowledge of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form, but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess" (Hayek 1948, 78). Only the individual participants know their true value, commitment, and intentions and especially their individual willingness to remilitarize as part of the group; these are unobservable and can be estimated only by rough indicators (Coase 1960; Miller 1992; Moe 1984). The fighters' true "types" are manifested during the war as leaders observe their followers' behavior in and out of combat, but these asymmetries tend to resurface during the transition period. Leaders return to a situation in which they cannot know the individuals' dedication to the organization; only the individuals themselves possess this knowledge, and they face incentives to misrepresent it. Specifically, because refusal to show up to fight again (defection) may be punishable, often by death, rank-and-file combatants have incentives to feign

[28] Weinstein shows how, through this process, commanders of resource-rich groups end up attracting less committed recruits.

loyalty, and midlevel field officers have incentives to overstate their control over their subordinates.

I argue that local groups' strong social bonds and the geographic proximity of their combatants reduce these information asymmetries. The networks and face-to-face monitoring provide leaders with more accurate intelligence about participants' continued commitment to the organization and thus allow greater certainty around estimates of the group's postwar capacity and its ability to pull its combatants back into violence (McAdam 1986; Petersen 2001). In contrast, non-local groups' dispersion and their thinner social ties hinder the effective transmission of information up the hierarchy about their members' dedication and loyalty (Gates 2002). Leaders of these units may know that their organizations' capacity is reduced, but they cannot estimate the extent of this change without significant uncertainty. These non-local groups are therefore themselves unsure about their own relative strength, rather than simply holding private information about their strength, unavailable to other warring factions (Blainey 1988; Fearon 1995).

We might expect rational leaders to take into account the fact that their midlevel officers and foot soldiers might mislead them and, given the high levels of uncertainty, make pessimistic estimates of their capacity, concluding in effect that: "I'm not sure of my organization's strength so I do not wish to take risks, as I may be less powerful than I think I am." Instead, however, I find that their calculations are often optimistic. This is likely because the commanders tend to use as a reference the last-known data point of their military power, which was before the demobilization and thus before their group's decline. They also tend to receive only optimistic information from their field officers, whom they tend to trust. Because of cognitive biases, commanders are unwilling to accept or believe the unfavorable turn of events (Jervis 1976). They do not wish to admit to losses and prefer to gamble on being overoptimistic rather than to concede more than might be required.

Local groups not only have better lubricated channels of information within their organizations, providing more accurate intelligence to the commanders about their groups' strength, but they also prove better equipped to gather quality information about neighboring factions. They have a comparative advantage in surveillance over their territory and especially the periphery of that territory. This comparative advantage stems partially from their intact organizational structures and loyal former fighters who continue reporting on what is happening in their regions.

This comparative advantage also derives from the nature of these local ex-combatants' relationships with the civilian communities and their ability to extract neighborhood intelligence from members of those communities. Local groups tend to be more embedded in the noncombatant population after demobilizing than non-local groups. Embeddedness does not mean that the civilians "support" or endorse the local groups. These are not warm, fuzzy relations suggested by the armed groups having won the population's hearts and minds;

in fact, the local groups usually conducted campaigns of terror and violence against the noncombatants.[29] Instead, this embeddedness may be thought of as tolerance and nonresistance by, and sustained authority over, the communities.

This embeddedness stems from four mechanisms. One, local combatants who operate and demobilize where they originated tend to be linked to some sections of the civilian population through what Granovetter (1973) calls "weak ties" of kinship, friendship, neighborhood, business, and other networks, creating a web of direct contacts that are linked to other segments of the population through similar bonds (Kalyvas 2006). Two, given the high cost of displacement, the community members recognize that the combatants will continue to reside in their neighborhoods for some time, thereby extending the shadow of the future. Three, evidence suggests that, surprisingly, anger levels of the civilian population are reduced when the ex-combatant perpetrators are deemed part of the in-community, and when their violence is perceived to be justified by the motive of protecting that community. Knowledge of the offender's identity and motivations mitigates anger, not via the ability to know whom to punish (Goldberg, Lerner, and Tetlock 1999), but because it alters the information available to the victims.[30] Four, institutions of authority are slow to change and thus civilians continue to look to the ex-combatants who operated in their communities as the local power. The extent of embeddedness likely further varies according to the level of control the armed group exercised over the territory, the duration of the group's presence, the nature of its rule, and whether it brought positive changes to the neighborhoods, sparking a sort of "retrospective voting" (an evaluation of the group based on its past performance).[31]

Local groups' embeddedness provides more abundant and higher-quality intelligence from the neighborhoods after demobilization. This proves key to the former militants' continued control over their regions and to overcoming information asymmetries vis-à-vis the other actors in their strategic sets. In contrast, combatants of non-local groups become returnees to their regions of origin, squatters in their zones of military operation, or displaced individuals to new localities. In all cases, to varying extents, they are likely to be less embedded in the civilian communities (Daly 2011). They therefore have thinner surveillance of their territories and poorer-quality information about their neighboring belligerents.

[29] Humphreys and Weinstein (2008a) find armed groups no less likely to use violence against civilians in their places of origin than in those to which they are "non-local."

[30] See Bodenhausen, Sheperd, and Kramer (1994); Petersen (2006); Petersen and Daly (2010a, 2010b). By individualizing the perpetrators and showing their humanity, information can enable victims to overcome stereotypes brought on by anger. If anger lowers victims' threshold for assigning blame and causes them to remember selectively and to desire revenge, then acquaintance with the perpetrator, by providing information, can alter the victims' cognition that the perpetrators have committed harms against them, reducing anger, and offsetting the "action tendency" to seek punishment.

[31] Ex-combatant No. 2, interview by author, Cúcuta, 28 May 2008.

Renegotiation and Remilitarization

As described earlier, regional configurations involving both local and non-local armed groups as well as the state tend to experience a change in relative power after demobilizing because, while the local groups and the state remain cohesive, the non-local groups weaken. This sparks renegotiation of the informal peace arrangements, which fails because the actors have incongruent perceptions of the shift in power. The local groups and the state can calculate the shift more accurately than can the non-local groups (Fey and Ramsay 2012). As a result, the actors are unable to agree on the "orderly ladder of power" and the territorial and material transfers required to rebalance power without a return to violence (Blainey 1988, 119). Non-local factions prove unwilling to cede sufficient land or assets to reflect the new balance of power. Local groups remilitarize their strongly intact organizations to invade the non-local groups' territory and lay claim to these groups' endowments. The government may engage in state-building to take advantage of the power shift and to assert its authority in the non-local groups' fiefdoms. The non-local factions remilitarize their rump structures defensively in response.

In configurations involving no local groups, only non-local groups, the distribution of power may change or may be maintained depending on how much each unit deteriorates, itself tied to the proportion of non-local members each unit recruited. However, all of the non-state actors, being non-local, tend to suffer information problems, rendering resumed violence likely, albeit on a more muted scale given the non-local groups' diminished capacity. If the state is present, it will also confront these actors.

Finally, in systems involving only local warring factions and the state, the balance of power is maintained and all sides have good information bases for efficient bargains short of war. The peace accords between these actors tend to hold. We should observe the state respecting the local groups' sovereignty and collaborating with these groups in its state-building efforts. The local groups' embeddedness in the civilian communities should enable them to maintain their territorial leverage without the use of manifest coercion. Accordingly, in the aftermath of peace accords, these local groups initially mute their guns; over time, they can be expected to fully demilitarize.

HYPOTHESES

From the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization detailed earlier, I derive the following observable implications:

Step 1. Hypotheses on Dynamics within Organizations

1.1 Local groups (L) should recruit in a more geographically concentrated way than non-local groups (NL).

1.2 Combatants in local groups should possess stronger prewar networks than those in non-local groups.

1.3 After the war, local groups' combatants should tend to cluster geographically in their zones of operation, whereas non-local groups' fighters should disperse away from the places in which they fought.
1.4 Local groups should preserve their networks and capacity, whereas non-local groups' networks should erode and their power should weaken.
1.5 Local groups should face reduced information asymmetries and should be able to update estimates of their power more effectively than non-local groups.

Step 2. Hypotheses on Interactions between Organizations

2.1 If local organizations (L) are in strategic interactions with non-local armed groups (NL), and the state (S), the local organizations should remilitarize.
2.2 If local organizations are in strategic configurations only with other local armed factions, and the state, they should demilitarize.
2.3 Non-local organizations should remilitarize in all cases.
2.4 The remilitarization of non-local organizations should be weaker than that of local organizations.

These "Step 2" dynamics between organizations generate the following hypotheses at the regional level:

Step 2. Hypotheses on Regional Dynamics

2.5 Regions in which, apart from the state (S), only local organizations (L) operated during the war, which I call L-L-S configurations, should be less likely to experience the incidence of remilitarized violence than regions in which combinations of local groups and non-local groups (L-NL-S), or only non-local groups (NL-NL-S), operated.
2.6 In terms of intensity of violence, regions with L-L-S sets should experience the lowest level of remilitarized violence; regions of NL-NL-S sets should experience intermediate levels of remilitarized violence; and regions of L-NL-S sets – those involving both local and non-local groups as well as the state – should be expected to experience the highest levels of remilitarized violence.

Step 2. Hypotheses on Mechanisms between Organizations

2.7 We should expect configurations involving non-local groups to experience a power shift after demobilization, whereas sets involving only local groups and no non-local groups should preserve the distribution of power.

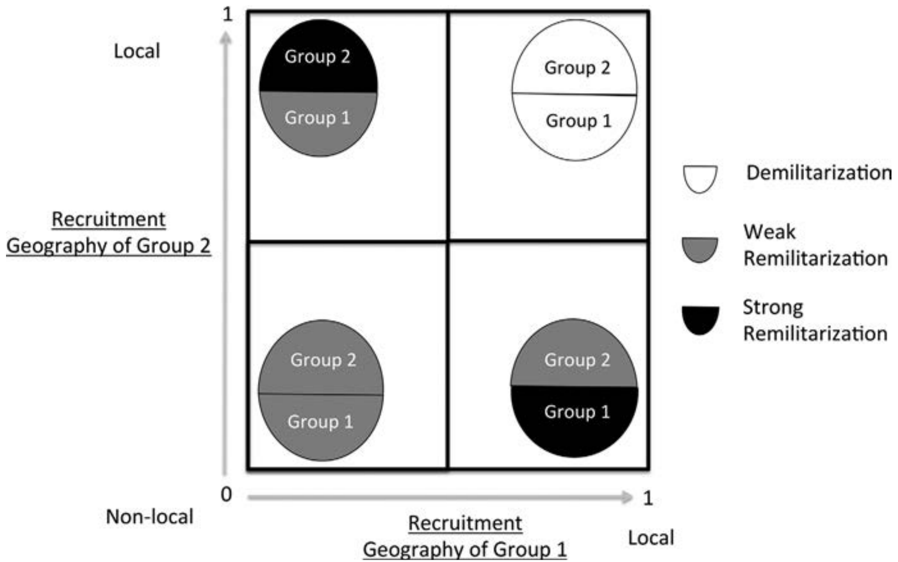


FIGURE 2.4. Remilitarization Predictions.

2.8 Local groups should be better able to renegotiate their peace bargains than non-local groups.
2.9 Power shifts and information problems should be associated with remilitarization whereas sustained power balances should be associated with demilitarization.

Figure 2.4 – a theoretical heat diagram – illustrates the remilitarization predictions. On the x axis is the proportion of local combatants in Group 1. The y axis shows the proportion of local combatants for Group 1's strategic configuration: here, for ease of illustration, shown as its dyadic interaction with Group 2. The bottom part of each circle reflects Group 1's predicted trajectory and the upper part of the circle Group 2's trajectory. Black indicates strong remilitarization, gray shows weak remilitarization, and white denotes demilitarization. Figure 2.4 illustrates that if Group 1 is highly local, and its strategic relations are only with other local groups (top right-hand quadrant), it will demilitarize. It retains a strong organizational capacity. As a result, if instead it is engaged in strategic dynamics with non-local groups at the time of demobilization (lower right-hand quadrant), it will remilitarize in a powerful fashion, shown by the black in the bottom part of the circle. If Group 1 is a non-local unit it will remilitarize in a weak fashion given its diminished capacity as a "rump group" (bottom part of the circles in the two left-hand quadrants).[32]

[32] If the non-local group has no local recruits, it will likely disappear entirely. In this case, not illustrated in Figure 2.4, it leaves a power vacuum, which the state and other non-state actors will seek to fill.

COMPLICATING THE MODEL

For the purposes of theoretical parsimony and clarity of exposition, I have focused on the extremes of recruitment patterns: local and non-local. I have also emphasized the circumstances, in which Colombia falls, where many mechanisms move together and where interactions between demobilizing non-state actors dominate outcomes. I have centered on the medium-term timeframe in which my theory has explanatory leverage: five years after the signing of peace accords. Before turning to the research design, it is worth rendering these facets of the argument more nuanced, if more complicated.

Mixed Recruitment Strategies

A conceptual possibility that exists empirically is an armed group that mixes local and non-local recruitment strategies and falls in the middle of the local–non-local spectrum. This intermediately local group does not prove challenging with respect to the predictions of Step 1 of the theory, the geography of recruitment and its effect on organizational capacity. I anticipate that, postwar, these organizations will weaken to the extent that they recruited non-locally. There is potential nuance to this hypothesis that is derived from the ranks of the local and non-local members. For instance, if all of the commanders of an intermediate group were non-local, there might be greater organizational erosion than if the non-local recruits were predominantly foot soldiers. For the most part, the mechanisms determining such a group's evolution and trajectory are consistent with those specified earlier. We should expect the local faction of the intermediate organization to follow the predictions of local groups and the non-local component to follow those pertaining to the non-local groups. The effects of recruitment on social ties, geographic clustering, and information are expected to be essentially linear in the proportion of local combatants.

The groups that fall in the middle of the recruitment continuum pose a more interesting nuance to Step 2 of the theory, which looks at the strategic interactions between armed organizations, and between the organizations and the state. A threshold may exist below which information problems kick in. For example, a large group composed of a significant share of both local and non-local recruits is predicted to weaken postwar in proportion to its share of non-local recruits. However, given its local share of recruits, it should still retain a sizable structure with intact social networks and physically proximate leaders and subordinates. This should provide it the informational capacity to effectively renegotiate bargains. Accordingly, in regional configurations involving local groups, "intermediate" groups, and the state, we should anticipate that demobilization will shift the distribution of capabilities and prompt a renegotiation of the terms of the territorial divisions. However, these negotiations should yield successful new arrangements and transfers short of war. As a result, the local and intermediate groups will both demilitarize. Configurations

involving non-local groups, intermediate groups, and the state will follow the same predictions as for all configurations involving non-local groups: bargaining will fail because of information problems within the non-local groups, and the non-local and intermediate groups will remilitarize. The analysis up until now has focused predominantly on shifts in relative power. The intermediate groups highlight the potential importance of also looking at absolute power. The intermediate groups may weaken significantly, but they might still remain more powerful in absolute terms than other nearby armed actors, reducing the opportunities for exploitation by these actors.

When Mechanisms Generate Divergent Outcomes

A second nuance to the theory comes when we consider cases in which the mechanisms of the model generate divergent outcomes. In the Colombian case, as the analysis in Chapter 4 illustrates empirically, many components appear together. "Local" therefore is nearly synonymous with recruiting a high concentration of fighters from the same locality, possessing dense networks from the fighters' past lives and, postwar, maintaining most members of the unit in the area where they operated. In other contexts, these factors may not move together. For example, networks and deployment may not overlap. Dense social networks may not draw on residents from the same locality: a church with a great deal of social interaction, for instance, may attract members from multiple localities. A strongly networked organization without local deployment will tend to exhibit intermediate levels of postwar capacity with a faster erosion rate because of the lack of postwar geographic clustering of the members in the group's zone of operation. A local group's ex-combatants might also disperse in search of better employment opportunities, diminishing their geographic proximity. Non-local group members, meanwhile, may have complex geographic origins. The non-local group may recruit exclusively in one locality where it draws on a particular social network, yet deploy elsewhere; it may recruit clusters of combatants drawing on local networks in several localities, but deploy in none of them; or, more commonly, it may recruit "randomly" across multiple regions without significant regard to networks. As a result, after demobilizing, a non-local group's fighters will not necessarily disperse as described above; they might instead return to one place as a "returnee" organization, or they might all remain in the war theater where they operated militarily, or they might collectively displace to a new zone, enhancing the non-local fighters' postwar proximity. Taking into consideration the strategic configurations to which these units return or displace can generate predictions about their likely postwar trajectories. In Chapter 7, I trace the paths of two partial "returnee" organizations. I find them challenged to maintain collective action outside of their spheres of military influence and unlikely to remilitarize, given their lack of wartime assets such as contacts, finances, and sanctuaries. Where a non-local group instead relocates all of its former combatants to a

new territory, the predicted trajectory would likely mirror that of a returnee organization, but with an even further reduced endowment given that the group would enjoy no ties to the location or its population. The ex-combatants would tend to go their own separate ways, given the stigma of being labeled an ex-combatant in the new locality. Their organization likely would be unable to obtain power in the new place without remilitarizing, a costly step given that, by demobilizing, they signaled that they were satisfied with their status-quo level of power (Schweller 1996). All of these outcomes are empirically rare and, in their pure form, do not exist in the Colombian landscape, potentially excluding them from the scope conditions. Chapter 7 examines two quasi-exceptions in Colombia, and Chapter 8 explores these possibilities beyond Colombia's borders.

Long-term Dynamics

My account explains the onset of remilitarization in some cases and not in others in the medium term: five years after the peace accord. Although I offer some insights into the longer-term dynamics in the qualitative case studies, it is beyond the range of my theoretical argument to account for these dynamics. Demilitarization and remilitarization in the medium term prompt an endogenous process of further conflict, power shifts, and state-building that is beyond my theory's scope to explain, but may be accounted for by existing logics of military expansion, civil war, and state formation. Aftershock waves from initial remilitarization may reverberate through the system, with violence occurring in zones neighboring the initial sites of demobilization-induced power disparities as the rearmed actors, now back at war, seek to extend their presence and increase their power. Meanwhile, weak, remilitarized non-local factions may tend to disappear over the long run. Depending on the form the demilitarized groups' structures of collective action assume, they may maintain, erode, or grow their capacity over time. Where they erode, the state may become emboldened to renegotiate the terms of its informal pacts with these groups to bring local groups' territories under the state's control. These longer-term trends in the war to peace transition merit further study.

What about the State?

This discussion raises a further conceptual possibility: that the state itself increases or decreases in absolute power during the transition from war to peace, perhaps because of security-sector reform, power-sharing arrangements, or external support. This would result in shifts in its power relative not only to the non-local groups, but also to the local groups. If the state increases in power at the regional level, we should expect the government to assume more combative state-building tactics, deploying its forces and institutions rather than collaborating with the local actors to provide security, order, and governance.

If the state instead decreases in power at the regional level, the local actors may seek to take advantage of the power shift. I explore these possibilities in the empirical Chapters 6 and 7.

The preceding discussion also raises the broader subject of whether the state may be treated as equivalent to the non-state actors in the regional configurations. In the model, all actors respond to changes in the distribution of capabilities and the opportunities provided by these changes. The state, however, responds to several additional motivations and constraints. It uses state-building priorities to decide where it will seek to extend its presence. Accordingly, some weakening non-state actors may face a greater challenge from the state than others. Decaying armed groups in the depths of the jungle may be less likely to experience the state's incursion into their zones of former control than those situated in locations considered strategic by the government. The government also may face pressure from opposition parties or the international community to break its informal bargains with local decommissioned armies, irrespective of the power dynamics.

Specifying all of the possibilities of the complex state–non-state actor relationships, ranging from collaboration to hostility, and the implications of these relationships, is beyond the scope of this book. I take this variation as given, and complicate the narrative of the state only in the case study chapters (Chapters 6 and 7). However, engaging and evaluating the state-militia relations should certainly be the subject of a future book.

Partial Peace and Armed Non-state Actors

The discussion above focuses on the dynamics between groups that have signed peace accords and the dynamics between these groups and the state. However, if peace is partial, other non-state actors may remain outside of the peace accords (Nilsson 2008). In Colombia, after the thirty-seven militia groups signed peace accords with the government, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) and Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) guerrillas remained at war, the former entering negotiations with the state only later, in 2012 (still ongoing as of mid-2015); the drug cartels, while in decline and increasingly factionalized, also remained active. For theoretical parsimony, I do not explicitly include these still-armed non-state actors in the theory. Such actors tend to render the landscape even more complicated, but do not alter the predictions (Cunningham 2006; Esteban and Ray 2001).

The absolute power of still-armed actors that have not signed peace accords remains unchanged during the disarmed groups' transitions from war to peace. If the still-armed actors are in configurations of all-local demobilized structures (L-L-S), they tend to be deterred by the intact local structures. Their tacit territorial agreements with the local structures thus tend to hold. These still-armed non-state actors are, however, opportunistic and will take advantage of any power shift. Accordingly, if they are in strategic sets that include non-local

demobilized groups, the still-armed actors will try to exploit the weakening of the non-local demobilized groups to enter and make a grab at these groups' territories. They become yet another faction contributing to the power struggle in these configurations. I elaborate on these dynamics in the empirical chapters (Chapters 5 through 7) when I discuss the FARC and ELN guerrillas, and the cartels' strategic interactions with the demobilizing militias. It should be noted that, over the time period with which this book is concerned, these guerrilla armies and narcotrafficking cartels were in steep decline everywhere in Colombia. Accordingly, for the most part, they were not on the offensive or expanding to new territories; rather their territorial reach was shrinking.

Alliances and Hostilities during the War

An additional nuance to the theory centers on the nature of the strategic relations between armed groups. Here, I treat these relations as uniform and neutral during the conflict, but they often assume the forms of allies or foes. Importantly, there may be path dependency whereby, even if the distribution of power shifts, actors who were previous collaborators during the conflict will not remilitarize and fight one another. Similarly, we might expect that, even if power does not shift after demobilization, prior enemies will nonetheless resume their fight. I explore these possibilities explicitly in Chapter 5.

Power Transition Predictions

Finally, it is worth considering how the hypotheses in this chapter diverge from existing theories of power transitions in international relations. Existing conceptualizations posit two mechanisms whereby shifting power leads to interstate war. In the first one, the preventive war mechanism, Jack Levy and others hypothesize that the falling group will attack the rising one to prevent its own decline and to exploit a shrinking window of superiority before it closes (Levy 1987). Following this same line of reasoning, credible commitment logic predicts that the falling group will remilitarize to "lock in a higher payoff while it still has the chance," because it cannot trust the rising power not to renege once it strengthens in relative terms (Powell 2006, 181). In the intrastate context explored in this book, I find instead that it is the strengthening actor that initiates violence and the weakening one that remilitarizes defensively.

In a second mechanism, Organski (1968) and Gilpin (1983) posit that the rising power will initiate the offensive to boost its ascent when it nears parity in capabilities with the weakening power. I find, however, that incentives to fight do not occur only as groups near parity and that the relatively strengthened group seeks to take advantage of any change in the balance of power to grab the territories of relatively eroded groups. Each such group seeks survival and seeks to maintain the power it had when it demobilized but, if the opportunity

arises, it will also expand its territorial reach. Such groups are rationally predatory; they do not expand irrationally, but they do so when they believe they can win.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The ideal research design for this study would randomly assign local and non-local recruit bases to groups so we could estimate the causal effect of recruitment geography on remilitarization. Of course, we are limited to studying observational data. Recruitment choices, made in different ways by different groups, are not this study's principal puzzle. The book nonetheless undertakes a variety of analyses to find factors that might be driving variation in recruitment and which might also drive demilitarization and remilitarization. I find no evidence of a spurious relationship or that my argument is driven by the selection of recruitment. Although recruitment patterns during the war are not random, treating them as exogenous provides powerful analytic leverage for understanding the divergent evolution of organizations after hostilities end.

To evaluate my argument requires detailed information about where armed organizations recruit and deploy, their inner workings, strategic interactions, and postwar trajectories. Collecting this information from secretive organizations can, as a practical matter, proceed only one country at a time.

The observational data for this study comes from contemporary Colombia, which provides an ideal setting to examine factors that affect remilitarization and demilitarization because of the tremendous variation in its armed organizations' postwar trajectories. Thirty-seven militia organizations, composed of 35,310 fighters, signed peace accords with the government between 2003 and 2006. The terms of all of the peace agreements were the same. However, the armed units diverged in the agreements' aftermath: some demilitarized, while others returned to organized violence.

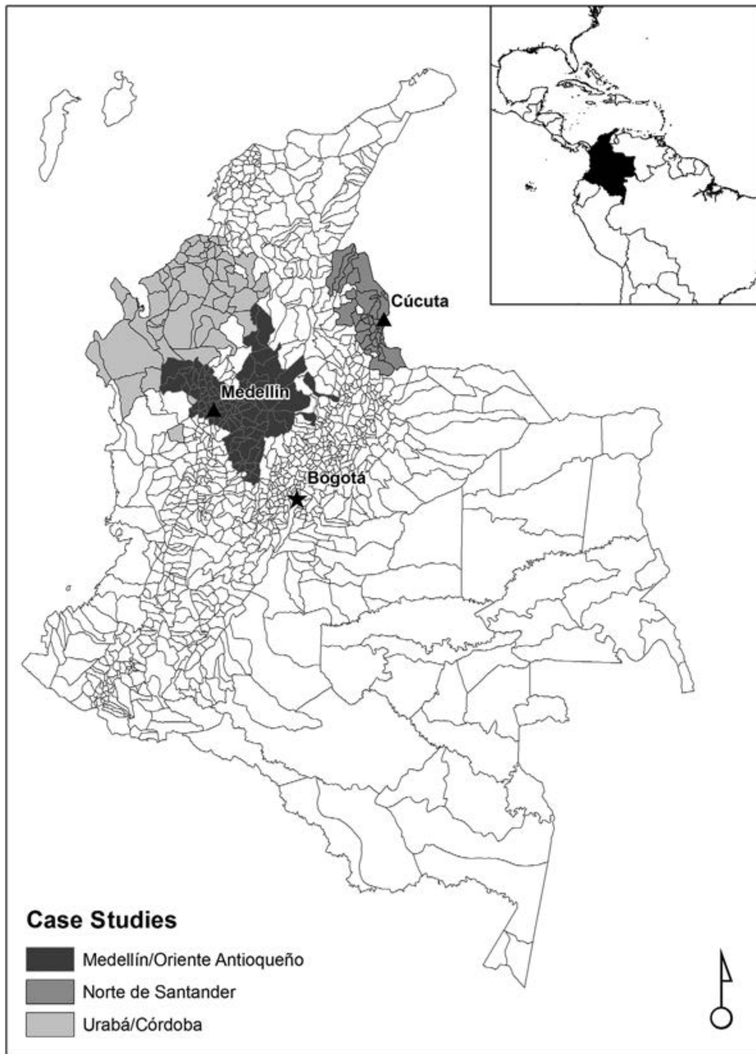
To study this puzzling variation, between 2006 and 2014, I carried out detailed case studies in three parts of Colombia, engaged in extensive in-depth interviews, constructed organizational and municipal-level datasets on remilitarization, and analyzed a series of eleven surveys. These diverse data are complementary and enable me to test every step of the proposed causal chain.

My research began with a study of the dynamics of the violence that had transpired in Colombia a half century earlier. I became struck by variation in the trajectories of the guerrilla groups in the aftermath of Colombia's civil war known as *La Violencia* (1948–58). Some of these units disappeared, others deteriorated into roving groups of bandits, and still others became the powerful revolutionary rebel groups that would plague Colombia to the present. Fascinated by the organizational legacies of war – the robust networks and structures of collective action that could be deactivated to restore peace or reactivated to wreak havoc on a country – I conducted several months of fieldwork to gather daily data on 7,729 violent events in the aftermath of *La*

Violencia from 1964 to 1984. I sought to trace the causal mechanisms underpinning the dark side of power-sharing: how it could produce peace between the Liberals and Conservatives while it simultaneously bred a new generation of violence of a left-wing character. While I was conducting my fieldwork in 2006, the militias were engaged in their own peace processes. Again, there emerged strong variation in postwar outcomes despite common peace terms. The numerous militia factions were transitioning from war to peace, rendering them amenable to surveys, interviews, participant observation, and network tracing. This provided the rare opportunity to get inside the minds of the commanders, midlevel officers, and rank and file, while minimizing issues of long-term memory and recall. These contemporary cases thus presented a natural extension to my *La Violencia*–era investigation and near-laboratory conditions in which to explore why groups remilitarize and demilitarize in the aftermath of peace agreements. I returned to the field for eighteen months from 2007 to 2009 to carry out this analysis, conducted follow-up interviews in Colombia in 2011, and undertook a related collaborative research project on individual ex-combatant recidivism and reintegration with Laura Paler and Cyrus Samii from 2011 to 2014.

I first conducted preliminary research in five of Colombia's thirty-two administrative departments and semi-structured interviews of nearly 100 Colombian experts on the armed conflict, including academic researchers, international organization and military personnel, government officials, journalists, and clergy.[33] I then selected several places for in-depth fieldwork, specifically Norte

[33] I interviewed professors at national and regional, private and public universities, in the fields of political science, economics, sociology, history, and anthropology. I spoke with researchers at Colombia's major think tanks including Fundación Seguridad y Democracia, Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP), Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz (CINEP/PPP), Centro de Recursos Para el Análisis de Conflictos (CERAC), Centro de Estudios Sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE), Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales (IEPRI), Fedesarrollo, Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (CODHES), and Fundación Progresar. I also spoke with analysts and practitioners at the international organizations present in Colombia: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz – Organización de Estados Americanos (MAPP-OEA or OAS Peace Mission), World Bank, International Crisis Group, and International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). I interviewed a wide range of Colombian government officials from the intelligence branches (Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad [DAS], Dirección de Inteligencia Policial [DIPOL], Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación [CTI], Policía Nacional de Colombia [SIJIN]), the security forces (Ministry of Defense, Police, Army, and Navy), the justice and human rights sectors (Fiscalía, Personería, Defensoría del Pueblo, Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar [ICBF]), and policy makers (ex-presidents, senators, governors, and mayors). I met with journalists from several of Colombia's national newspapers and magazines – *El Espectador, El Tiempo, Revista Semana*, and *Voz* – and regional newspapers – *El Heraldo de Urabá*, *Urabá Hoy*, and *La Opinión*. These interviews with experts had high response rates. I conducted the interviews in the Colombian departments of Antioquia, Córdoba, Chocó, Bogotá, Cesar, Norte de Santander, Valle de Cauca, Magdalena, Bolívar, La Guajira, Atlántico, and Meta. I conducted the interviews in Spanish and English.



MAP 2.1. Case Study Areas.

de Santander on the Venezuelan border, Urabá and Córdoba on the Panamanian border and northern coast, and Medellín and its surroundings in northwestern Colombia (see Map 2.1). Each of these three areas is a large and varied space, and should not be thought of as a single case, but rather as the locations in which I engaged in in-depth research of several case studies. I selected these places because they provided important variation in the geography of recruitment and in the outcome variables. Security and accessibility were other considerations. I also wished to study places where the Organization of American

States (OAS) Peace Mission had regional offices given their strong relationships with diverse stakeholders and extensive documentation of the process of transition at the micro level.

I found that outcomes in these three areas varied. The militia faction in Medellín endured, transforming into a powerful demilitarized proto-state organization with a monopoly of "social work" in the territory's neighborhoods. It silenced its guns and, over time, demilitarized. The militia organization in Norte de Santander eroded significantly after demobilizing, generating a power shift on the border, which quickly attracted a miscellany of non-state actors from the illegal world including neighboring militia factions and preexisting criminal mafias, as well as state-building efforts by the government. A rump cadre of this organization weakly remilitarized as a group called the Águilas Negras. In Urabá and Córdoba, the militia armies powerfully remilitarized their structures as the Urabeños and Paisas, which by 2009 had become grave threats to contemporary Colombian security.

The case studies offer the detailed accounts necessary to evaluate the proposed explanatory factors, intervening variables, and complex causal processes. Using these qualitative methods, however, requires intimate familiarity with and nuanced understanding of the cases. Therefore, I went inside the armed organizations to reconstruct and map their trajectories, relying on extensive participant observation and interviews of more than 150 ex-combatants, including both demobilized fighters who had demilitarized and those who had remilitarized, as well as a large number of victims, local military and police officers, civil society leaders, community members, representatives from indigenous and Afro-Colombian organizations, reintegration psychologists, ombudsmen, mayors, attorneys general, journalists, researchers from NGOs, owners of banana, palm, and wood plantations, cattle ranchers, ex-EPL, FARC, and ELN guerrillas, politicians of the Juntas de Acción Comunal (Community Action Committees, JAC) and the Juntas Administradora Locales (Local Administration Boards, JAL), Catholic priests, families of former commanders, and international organization personnel, among others. Wherever possible, I aimed to cross-check the information given and to reconstruct social histories from many different perspectives. Individuals from diverse sectors of society proved surprisingly willing to be interviewed. They wished to share their painful stories so that these stories could be woven into a narrative that would shed light on a complex war and thus generate improvements in the peace process.

Careful qualitative tracing of case studies and statistical analysis allow me to illustrate the argument and evaluate the observable implications of the theory. Specifically, I nest the qualitative data in quantitative models to test the main hypothesis, associating divergence in recruitment geographies with the breakdown of peace. The models analyze a series of original organizational and municipality-level databases on remilitarization that I constructed with information from Colombian government intelligence agencies, the Attorney

General, National Police, Institute of Forensic Medicine, National Penitentiary Institute, and National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation, as well as from the OAS Peace Mission and various Colombian think tanks. (These databases are described in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.)

In addition, I gained access to survey data and administered my own surveys of ex-combatants, resulting in a series of eleven surveys spanning ten years:

(1) a baseline census survey of all 54,583 ex-combatants (guerrillas and paramilitaries) at the moment of their demobilization, conducted by the IOM;
(2) a follow-up IOM survey of 11,703 former paramilitaries conducted between 2005 and 2006;
(3) an IOM survey of 5,004 civilians living in communities with a significant demobilized presence, conducted between 2005 and 2007;
(4) a survey in collaboration with the High Council of Reintegration (ACR, later called Colombian Agency for Reintegration) from 2007 to 2008 of 14,090 ex-combatants;
(5) a survey in collaboration with the ACR in 2007–08 of 2,245 nuclear families of demobilized soldiers;
(6) a survey conducted in collaboration with the ACR in 2007–08 of the psychologists working with 2,817 ex-paramilitaries and guerrillas;[34]
(7) a survey I designed and administered in 2008 to all of the 226 psychologists working with the reintegration program;
(8) a survey of 1,485 former combatants conducted by the FIP in 2008;
(9) a survey of 120 former combatants who had reengaged in violence after demobilizing and had been arrested and imprisoned, which I designed and conducted between 2008 and 2009 in collaboration with the OAS; I personally interviewed forty of these individuals in high-security and medium-security prisons in Bogotá, Medellín, and Cúcuta;
(10) administrative surveys of all ex-combatants in the reintegration program (approximately 30,000) conducted periodically, 2003–14, by the ACR; and
(11) a survey of 1,158 ex-combatants both in and out of prison conducted by myself, Laura Paler, and Cyrus Samii in collaboration with the FIP in 2012–13.

All of these survey data may be merged, to present not just a snapshot of one moment in time, but a longer-term vision of reintegration that follows

[34] These reintegration program professionals administered monthly stipends, schooling, training, and psychological and social aid to the demobilized fighters. The psychologists made house visits to the ex-combatants (and their families) once per month and carried out weekly workshops with the program's beneficiaries; they therefore had intimate knowledge of and valuable insights into the ex-combatants' trajectories.

ex-combatants from 2003 to the present. The appendix provides information on the sampling strategies and biases of each of the surveys.

To complement the surveys and remilitarization data, I gained access to the commanders' confidential, voluntary depositions (*versiones libres*) under the Justice and Peace Law,[35] engaged in participant observation in twenty-one of the thirty-seven militia brigades' zones of operation, and interviewed several of the top militia commanders. I conducted content analysis of the armed organizations' records and gathered additional relevant academic, think tank, and government data and research. I compiled articles from ten national and regional newspapers from 2002 to 2010 that documented the peace negotiations, demobilization process, and rearming phenomenon, and I coded the stories about the war and peace phases of the armed groups. This work involved searching the few newspapers that had online presences, and also visiting Colombia's national library and regional newspaper offices to read the physical copies of the newspapers page by page, photographing the relevant articles. I also drew on a geo-coded municipal-level violent-event database of forty-nine years of militia, guerrilla, and state violence (1964–2013) that includes approximately 29,000 events. It combines a dataset I created by photographing and coding 7,665 newspaper-days from 1964 to 1984 with a dataset compiled by Fabio Sánchez and CEDE (Sánchez 2013).

These diverse data enable me to test the different steps in the causal chain. The survey data prove especially useful for evaluating the mechanics of Step 1 of my theory. I use these surveys to understand the geography of recruitment of each armed organization (where they enlisted and deployed their participants), their members' postwar geography (where the fighters migrated after decommissioning), and the relative geographic clustering or dispersion associated with these two patterns. The surveys also enable me to consider alternative explanations centered on different recruit types (such as "investors" or "consumers," i.e., motivated by ideology or by material gains) and the role of socialization (Weinstein 2007; Wood 2008). The information derived from the ex-militia surveys and those of the civilian populations in which the ex-militia resided shed light on the armed groups' embeddedness and their intelligence-gathering capabilities. The survey data of former combatants, triangulated with that of their families and psychologists, facilitate analysis of the social networks that predated the war and those that endured after demobilization. I also employ these survey data to investigate the durability of the command-and-control structures and to probe the difficult-to-test mechanism of information asymmetries. Here, I use information on the extent of communication between

[35] The Justice and Peace Law (Law 975), passed on 1 June 2005, established the legal regime governing the peace agreements. The law mandated that individuals guilty of crimes against humanity make free and full confessions of their actions including clarifying the circumstances surrounding the formation and expansion of their illegal armed groups. These voluntary depositions (versiones libres) provided a valuable source of information for this study.

different levels of the armed group hierarchy. Given the challenges of surveying the ex-combatant population, the sensitive nature of many of the interview questions, and the likely extent of the resulting biases, use of multiple surveys provides important robustness checks.

The qualitative data, in-depth interviews, case studies, and participant observation allow me to evaluate whether the empirical reality is indeed congruent with my theory's predictions. This information proves particularly valuable for testing hypotheses pertaining to perceptions, which are not amenable to quantitative operationalization, allowing me to see whether people spoke and acted as the theory would predict.

In order to code remilitarization, I rely on the extensive geo-coded violent-event data from 1964 to 2013, on data from Colombian intelligence agencies and other government entities, and on the monthly reports of all of the regional offices of the OAS Peace Mission charged with verifying the paramilitaries' demobilization and monitoring any remobilization. The historical violent-event data and the municipality-level information on economic, social, political, and military conditions over time allow me to test for selection bias and to control for other contextual factors that might affect the outcomes.

Finally, lengthy interviews with those present at the peace negotiations, including militia commanders, government officials, and third parties, offer me a window into the strategic decisions to bargain, agree to peace accords, demobilize, and then either remilitarize or demilitarize.

Through this multilayered research strategy, employing diverse qualitative and quantitative data, and combining my personal experiences in the field with the testimonies of experts and the protagonists themselves, I am able to reconstruct a formerly unwritten chapter in Colombia's history, to weave a narrative of the complex dynamics of postwar trajectories, and to illustrate and evaluate the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization in the aftermath of peace accords.

Chapter 3 provides the prologue to the period explored in the remaining chapters of the book, offering the backdrop of the conflict and negotiation process that preceded the militia groups' demobilization and subsequent transition back to or away from organized violence.

3

Violence and Peace in Colombia

Over the past five decades, violence in Colombia has swept over "desert and plain, in burning valley and Andean crags,"[1] leaving more than 220,000 dead in its wake. It has uprooted and displaced 4.7 million, the equivalent of twenty-six people every hour. Since 1981, Colombians have suffered 23,154 assassinations and 1,983 massacres that killed more than 400 children. They have witnessed 27,000 kidnappings, 10,189 casualties due to landmines, 5,000 forced disappearances, and tens of thousands of cases of torture, rape, and forcible recruitment. The militias have been found responsible for a majority of these atrocities, which often targeted unarmed civilians, indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations, women, children, and other vulnerable members of society (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013). In 2002, negotiations began to end the militias' reign of terror; peace bargains, signed between 2003 and 2006, led to the decommissioning of these powerful illegal non-state armies (Table 3.1 summarizes this history).

This chapter presents the tangled historical narrative of this violence, its right-wing and left-wing armed protagonists, and the peace accords that are the jumping-off point for the study presented in this book. It describes the social and human terrain on which the belligerents formed and the dynamics of their violent expansion, but focuses particularly on the negotiations that led to the disarmament and demobilization of the militia forces. Although this chapter primarily provides the historical backdrop for the subsequent chapters, it also uncovers additional analytically interesting puzzles: first, why would extremely powerful non-state armed forces agree to peace bargains without robust guarantees and with terms far inferior to their strength when, as a result, some of their organizational structures would subsequently weaken, the government would renege on its formal peace promises, and thousands of their

[1] Bailey (1967, 3).

TABLE 3.1. *A Brief History of Violence in Colombia since the Mid-twentieth Century*

April 1948: The assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, liberal presidential candidate, sparks a ten-year civil war between Liberals and Conservatives known as "La Violencia."

1948–58: La Violencia partisan violence and land conflicts cause approximately 220,000 fatalities.

1949–55: Mobilization of Conservative armed civilian groups with links to police forces. In response, liberal and communist guerrilla armed groups emerge in self-defense.

1953: General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla mounts a successful coup d'état to restore order, aided in part by politicians, both Liberal and Conservative.

1953–54: Rojas Pinilla offers amnesty to the liberal guerrillas for political crimes. Some accept the offer and surrender their arms.

1955–57: Some liberal guerrillas, having rejected the offer of amnesty, continue to fight, and consolidate their power in parts of Colombia.

1957: The Liberal and Conservative Parties broker a negotiated settlement to the political violence called the National Front, which stipulates parity in government offices and bipartisan alternation in the presidency for sixteen years. Rojas Pinilla is forced to resign.

1958: Additional amnesty is offered to armed groups; rehabilitation (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, DDR), reconstruction, and truth commission programs are created.

1958–74: The National Front agreement holds for over a decade and a half, but its administrations declare war on communism and implement repressive measures against the remnants of the left-wing self-defense groups.

1964: President Guillermo León Valencia orders an attack on a group of peasants who organized around self-defense and land distribution. In response, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) emerges as a revolutionary guerrilla organization aimed at state takeover.

1965: Influenced by the Cuban Revolution, the Marxist Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) guerrilla group forms, recruiting radicalized Catholic clergy, urban students, and peasant movements.

1967: The Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL) guerrilla group is created in the departments of Córdoba and Sucre as an independent armed faction of the Marxist–Leninist Colombian Communist Party.

1968: With the objective of countering insurgent threats, Decree 3398 of 1965 and Law 48 of 1968 provide legal grounds for the creation of civilian "self-defense" (militia/paramilitary) forces.

1970: Creation of the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19) guerrilla group in response to alleged electoral fraud by Conservative Party candidate Misael Pastrana Borrero against General Rojas Pinilla's National Popular Alliance (ANAPO).

1970–90: Drug-trafficking expands as a result of the marijuana boom and later a growing global demand for cocaine. The Medellín and Cali Cartels gain prominence in the international cocaine markets and actively oppose the state's attempt to extradite cartel members to the United States on trafficking charges.

(*continued*)

TABLE 3.1 (*continued*)

1974: The National Front comes to an end with Misael Pastrana's administration amidst accusations of electoral fraud and a general atmosphere of corruption and clientelism. Liberal candidate Alfonso López Michelsen is elected president.
1981: Creation of the Muerte a Secuestradores (MAS) militia group financed by narcotraffickers.
1982: President Belisario Betancur, breaking with his predecessors' more aggressive approach toward the insurgency, initiates peace negotiations with the major left-wing guerrilla groups FARC, EPL, ELN, and M-19.
1984: Creation of the Quintín Lame guerrilla group by indigenous communities in Cauca as a response to FARC and state violence.
1985–90: As part of the peace negotiations, the FARC creates a political party, Unión Patriótica (UP), in 1985. During the next five years, 3,000 members of the UP (including its presidential candidates) are murdered by narcotraffickers, militias, and state security forces. Peace negotiations with the FARC and ELN guerrillas break down. Militia groups with ties to the military, large landowners, and the emerald trade emerge in regions across Colombia.
1989: Law 48 of 1968, which legalized "self-defense" (militia/paramilitary) groups, is overturned by presidential decree 815 of 1989 during Virgilio Barco's administration.
1990: The M-19 signs a peace accord and forms a political party. A militia group led by Fidel Castaño, active in Córdoba and Antioquia, demobilizes.
1991: Quintín Lame and the EPL both sign peace accords and form political parties. However, the EPL brigade in Norte de Santander remilitarizes.
1990–2002: Militia/paramilitary groups proliferate and expand across nearly all of Colombia's territory, supported by drug-traffickers and landowners. Guerrilla groups expand across the country and increasingly rely on extortion, kidnapping, and drug-trafficking. FARC becomes the largest insurgent group, followed by the ELN.
1992: Peace negotiations with the FARC in Tlaxcala, Mexico, are a failure.
1993: Death of Pablo Escobar and fall of the Medellín drug cartel.
1994–95: Under the administration of Ernesto Samper, private security groups (known as Convivir) are legalized with the purpose of helping state armed forces gather information and counter insurgent violence. Several Convivir groups later join militia forces.
1996: Arrest of key leaders and dissolution of the Cali drug cartel, which is succeeded by the Norte del Valle cartel.
1997: Dissolution of Convivir by Colombia's Constitutional Court.
A confederation of most militia groups, the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), is created, but its constituent bloques retain considerable autonomy.
1999–2002: Peace process between Andrés Pastrana's administration and the FARC fails.
2002: Álvaro Uribe elected president. Peace negotiations with militias begin.
2003–06: Thirty-seven militia bloques sign separate peace accords and demobilize.

2005–mid-2015: Some demobilized militia groups remilitarize; others demilitarize.
2012–mid-2015: Ongoing peace negotiations between Santos government and FARC, which enter into a bilateral cessation of hostilities; despite some violations of the ceasefire by both sides, peace talks continue.

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ex-combatants would be assassinated? So a second puzzle is: why did these demobilized armies not then return to war?[2]

To begin the story of Colombia's right-wing belligerents, I briefly introduce the actors, describe their relationship with the state, and place them within the larger typology of armed actors in civil wars. In Spanish, they call themselves *autodefensas* (self-defense forces), whereas their critics and English translators call them militias or, more commonly, paramilitaries.

Although their legal status has varied over time, after 1989 these organizations became illegal.[3] They were non-state actors. In their post-1989 manifestations, they did not fall directly under the control or direction of Colombia's armed forces and they retained autonomy and independent agency.[4] In that sense, their character differs from that of "para-militaries" in the traditional sense of the word. As Gutiérrez Sanín (2010, 24) writes, "the [Colombian] paramilitaries have enjoyed a large measure of autonomy. Although they were tolerated, financed, and supported by many forces that were formally within the bounds of the law – state agencies, businesses, and also workers' organizations and neighbors, etc. – they did not become the puppets of any." Unlike death squads or terrorist groups, the paramilitaries were highly territorial in nature; their power was tied to the land on which they operated, and they mostly used the tactics of irregular guerrilla warfare rather than perpetrating sensational acts such as car bombings or suicide attacks.[5] They financed themselves through illicit means, most importantly through drug-trafficking, which placed them toward the criminal end of a spectrum of armed groups running from purely political, such as El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), to the purely criminal, such as Mexico's Sinaloa cartel.

Unlike many village patrols or vigilantes, the Colombian paramilitaries were usually staffed with full-time members; especially in rural areas, they tended to patrol dressed in camouflage, to operate heavily armed with assault weaponry,

[2] See Daly (2013).
[3] The legal status of the paramilitary groups has varied. In 1968, self-defense forces (opposing the rebels) became legal. In 1989, this law was reversed, rendering them illegal. 1994 and 1995 saw the legalization of vigilante organizations, called Convivir. These decrees were overturned in 1997.
[4] Camilo Echandía, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.
[5] The paramilitaries did, however, appear on the U.S. list of terrorist groups starting in 2001.

and to engage in both offensive and defensive campaigns (Jentzsch 2014). Although not highly ideological, the paramilitaries advocated a conservative, right-wing platform centered on the "natural right of legitimate self-defense," emphasizing the state's responsibility to defend its citizens and the right to private property. Their own historical narrative of their origins portrayed them as victims of the state's inability to provide security against rebel (guerrilla) hostility. This explanation for their existence built on the common argument that the Colombian state historically has been weak and incapable of governing its own territory or fighting the insurgency (Waldmann 2007, 72). The key paramilitary political objectives cited included opposing left-wing guerrilla organizations, both politically and militarily; filling the vacuums left by the state in terms of security, social order, and justice; and participating actively in local political life. As I explain below, these paramilitaries did not operate just as armies; rather they constituted multifaceted organizations with extensive social, economic, and political influence. They ranged over most of Colombia's territory, and had a strong presence both in urban and in rural areas. By the start of the twenty-first century, they maintained approximately 35,000 men and women in their ranks.[6]

The Colombian paramilitaries based their claim of legitimacy on providing the lesser of two evils, where the alternative was the left-wing revolutionary guerrillas who sought a complete reconfiguration of power in the country. In this sense, the paramilitaries aligned with the state more than did the guerrillas, and they fought the same enemy as did the state. However, this did not mean that the paramilitaries sought the same goals as the state.

The attitude of the state toward the paramilitaries ranged from active collaboration, to passively turning a blind eye toward the groups, to active hostility, with variation across segments of the state, variation across time, and variation across regions (Romero 2003). Active collaboration involved state funding, training, and joint operations with the paramilitaries against the rebels. Passive collaboration assumed the form of parallel operations by state and paramilitary brigades. At times, the state merely ignored the activities of the paramilitaries, adopting a "live and let live" mentality; at other times, it actively fought these irregular armies.[7] Over their five decades in existence, the paramilitaries have been called a variety of names: militias, self-defense forces, "right-wing guerrillas or right-wing rebels,"[8] mercenaries, warlords, parastate

[6] This figure refers to the number of paramilitaries that officially demobilized. "False demobilized" – individuals who were not really combatants, but demobilized to gain access to reintegration benefits – may have swelled these numbers (Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, February 2008).

[7] Commander Diego José Martínez Goyeneche, Bloque Tolima, and Commander Luis Eduardo Cifuentes, Bloque Cundinamarca, interviews by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[8] Jose Antonio Ocampo, "Seminar on Building Peace in Colombia," Columbia University, 28 January 2013.

armies, village patrol forces, vigilantes, and narcotrafficking organizations. Mapping and evaluating the complex relations between these armed organizations and the state deserves further research, and should feature in a future project. In this book, however, I take the variation in these relations as given and, for its remainder, call these armed organizations "paramilitaries," as is the convention in speaking of these Colombian groups in English. However, their character should be kept firmly in mind.

A LONG HISTORY: PARAMILITARIES IN COLOMBIA SINCE 1948

I turn now to recounting these violent organizations' origins and evolution, and the process of their attempted pacification. The paramilitaries have a long history in Colombia. A surge in right-wing militia activity occurred during the mid-twentieth-century partisan civil war, *La Violencia* (1948–58), with the rise of armed organizations tied to the Conservative Party.[9] After the 1958 National Front settlement of La Violencia, some of these groups evolved into private security forces or went dormant. Additional right-wing, self-defense militias surfaced in the 1960s in the face of emerging revolutionary movements, most prominent among them the guerrilla armies: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC), the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (the National Liberation Army, or ELN), and the Ejército Popular de Liberación (the Popular Liberation Army, or EPL).[10] During this period, the right-wing militias gained legitimacy with the passage of counterinsurgency measures, such as Law 48 of 1968, that allowed private citizens to create "civil defense" patrols for security and protection of private property (Romero 2000a).[11]

With the emergence of the drug economy in Colombia in the late 1970s, the FARC, ELN, EPL, and other left-wing guerrillas adopted kidnapping and extortionary financing tactics, and began to seriously threaten those with a stake in the status quo. For example, in Córdoba in the 1980s, "harassment against the ranchers reached extreme levels. The contributions demanded [by guerrillas] grew so arbitrarily that one of the ex-commanders of the EPL [guerrillas] recalls that 'a man with fifty cattle or a medium sized farm, already was classed as rich.'… The groundwork was laid for the radicalization of the political identities of elite ranchers" (Romero 2000b, 92). The guerrillas posed a challenge to the military, landowning elite, drug barons, and political class. Facing a common enemy, these diverse sectors of society came together to revive

[9] Roldán (2002). These organizations were known as *pájaros* and *chulavitas*. On *La Violencia*, see Deas and Gaitán Daza (1995); Guzmán, Borda, and Umaña (1962); Henderson (1985).

[10] On the origins of the FARC, see Alape (2004); Arango (1984); Arenas (1985); Pizarro Leongómez (1991). On the ELN, see Aguilera Peña (2006); Villamarín Pulido (1995). On the EPL, see Calvo (1985); Villarraga and Niño (1994).

[11] See also Decreto Legislativo Número 3398 of 1965.

regional "self-defense" militias or to form new ones.[12] These right-wing forces were highly regionalized, forming in different parts of the country to repel rebel thefts, extortion, kidnappings, and intimidation. As journalist Juanita León described them: "Each group emerged autonomously in response to very different regional realities" (León 2002).

The question arises why these paramilitary groups emerged in the precise localities in which they did. Few quantitative studies shed light on geographic variation in paramilitary or militia mobilization (Jentzsch 2014). Counterinsurgency presumably arises in response to insurgency, making patterns of rebellion potentially predictive of patterns of paramilitarism. However, existing models of civil war onset, derived using cross-national data, provide relatively poor predictions of where insurgency will emerge at the subnational level.[13] Accounting for precisely which locations witnessed a counterinsurgent movement requires an understanding of the very particular social histories of each of the locations and insights into the movements' leadership.[14]

The paramilitary units that emerged across Colombia included rural armies, self-defense peasant patrols, urban militias, and drug cartel franchises (see Table 3.2). Some paramilitary groups (*bloques*) were sponsored by traditional local elites, landowners, and cattle-ranchers, who equated peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the guerrilla groups in the 1980s with surrender of the country to the leftist rebels, an outcome that threatened the elites' control, status, and livelihoods. They thus supported the rise of rural self-defense forces to protect their interests and to derail or spoil the peace processes.[15] Other paramilitaries emerged as a strategy by the inhabitants of an area to protect their own zone (Medina Gallego 1990). For instance, Autodefensas de Ortega centered on defending its community's lands and properties (Indepaz 2003b).

Some paramilitary factions benefited from the patronage of drug-traffickers, who needed security for their illegal businesses and for extensive lands they had bought with laundered monies.[16] For example, the 1981 kidnapping of Martha Nieves Ochoa, the sister of a drug kingpin, by the M-19 guerrillas sparked the Medellín cartel to create a militant group called "Muerte a Secuestradores" (MAS, Death to Kidnappers), aimed at executing anyone

[12] Duncan (2006); López (2010); Rangel Suárez (2005).

[13] Models of civil war onset based on cross-national data include Collier and Hoeffler (2004); Fearon and Laitin (2003); Hegre and Sambanis (2006). Studies by Barron, Kaiser, and Pradhan (2004); Chandra and García-Ponce (2014); Daly (2012) question the validity of these correlates of civil war at the subnational level in the cases of Indonesia, India, and Colombia, respectively.

[14] García (1996); Medina Gallego (1990); Romero (2003).

[15] Romero (2003); Stedman (1997).

[16] See Reyes Posada (2009) for an excellent account of this "counter agrarian reform" whereby drug-traffickers and paramilitaries acquired vast expanses of land through illicit deeds, forced displacement of peasants, and laundered money. See also Gutiérrez Sanín and Barón (2005).

connected to kidnapping. Similarly, in Córdoba, "Fidel Castaño, a former drug trafficker from Antioquia and one of the department's new investors in land" created a paramilitary organization, obtaining "legitimacy" from the "political sectors, newspapers from the capital and even ministers [who] defended the right to armed defense" (Romero 2000b, 92). Meanwhile, many urban paramilitary forces originated from organizational apparatuses of drug cartels, criminal infrastructures, and gangs that converted to paramilitaries to fight the guerrilla militias in the cities.

TABLE 3.2. *State and Non-state Armed Actors in the Colombian Conflict*

State
Fuerzas militares: Ejército, Armada, Fuerza Aérea (armed forces: army, navy, air force)
Active duty personnel 2002: 203,283; 2006: 267,354; Current number: 280,190
Policía Nacional (National Police)
Active duty personnel 2002: 110,123; 2006: 139,386; Current number: 179,127
Guerrillas
Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, Ejército del Pueblo, FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, People's Army). Initiated 1964
Number of combatants 2002: 21,000 approx. – Current number of combatants: 9,000 approx.
Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN (National Liberation Army). Initiated 1965
Number of combatants 2002: 4,250–4,500 approx.; 2012: 1,500 approx.
Movimiento 19 de Abril, M-19 (April 19 Movement). Initiated 1975
Number of demobilized combatants in 1990: 900
Ejército Popular de Liberación, EPL (Popular Liberation Army). Initiated 1967
Number of demobilized combatants in 1991: 2,077
Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores, PRT (Revolutionary Worker's Party). Initiated 1982
Number of demobilized combatants in 1991: 204
Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame, MAQL (Quintín Lame Armed Movement). Initiated 1984
Number of demobilized combatants in 1991: 157
Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo, ERP (Revolutionary People's Army). Initiated 1985
Number of demobilized combatants in 2007: 186
Corriente de Renovación Socialista, CRS (Socialist Renewal Current). Initiated 1991
Number of demobilized combatants in 1994: 650

(*continued*)

TABLE 3.2 (*continued*)

Guerrillas

Ejército Revolucionario Guevarista, ERG (Guevarista Revolutionary Army). Initiated 1992

Number of demobilized combatants in 2008: 148

Paramilitaries

Groups that demobilized between 2003 and 2006; number of demobilized combatants: 35,310

Note: For more detail on the paramilitary organizations, see Table 5.1

Bloque Cacique Nutibara	Frente Vichada
Autodefensas Campesinas de Ortega	Bloque Tolima
Bloque Bananero	Frentes Nordeste Antioqueño, Bajo Cauca y Magdalena Medio
Autodefensas del Sur del Magdalena e Isla de San Fernando	Frente Héroes y Mártires de Guática
Autodefensas de Cundinamarca	Bloque Vencedores de Arauca
Bloque Catatumbo	Bloque Mineros
Bloque Calima	Autodefensas Campesinas de Puerto Boyacá
Autodefensas de Córdoba	Autodefensas del Sur de Bolívar
Frente Suroeste Antioqueño	Bloque Resistencia Tayrona
Frente Mojana	Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio
Frente Héroes de Tolová	Frentes Próceres del Caguán, Héroes de los Andaquíes y Héroes de Florencia
Bloque Montes de María	Frente Sur del Putumayo
Bloque Libertadores del Sur	Frente Julio Peinado Becerra
Bloque Héroes de Granada	Bloque Norte
Autodefensas de Meta y Vichada	Frente Héroes del Llano
Bloque Pacífico	Frente Héroes del Guaviare
Bloque Centauros	Bloque Élmer Cárdenas
Bloque Noroccidente Antioqueño	

Paramilitary Groups that did not Demobilize

Frente Cacique Pipintá: Number of combatants: approx. 150

Autodefensas Campesinas del Casanare: Number of combatants: approx. 200

Cartels

Cartel de Medellín (Medellin Cartel), active from 1970s; dissolution in 1993.

Cartel de Cali (Cali Cartel), active from 1980s; dissolution in 1995.

Cartel del Norte del Valle (North of Valle Cartel), active from late 1990s; dissolution 2008–10.

Microcarteles (Microcartels), initiated after decline of major cartels.

Other groups

Convivir (Cooperativas de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada): Number of members: 400; dissolution in 1997

Muerte a Secuestradores (MAS) (Death to Kidnappers): dissolution with the end of the Medellín Cartel in 1993

Some self-defense groups surfaced around the contested emerald mines of Boyacá and the coastal drug plantations of Sierra Nevada and La Guajira.[17] Others were rooted in the "self-defense" militia forces of the 1950s with strong connections to the Conservative political party. For example, as paramilitary commander Diego José Martínez Goyeneche explained: "There is a strong relationship between the [contemporary] paramilitaries and the former self-defense forces in the 1950s.... The people who were in the Bloque Tolima were the children, grandchildren, nephews ... of these people that began in the 1950s in ... southern Tolima."[18]

Political corruption and a history of state-sanctioned private security facilitated still other paramilitaries. In these cases, the army trained and organized the groups, despite the fact that, in 1989, the Colombian Supreme Court had declared the self-defense Law 48 of 1968 unconstitutional and President Virgilio Barco had issued Decree 1194 that prohibited the creation, promotion, or organization of paramilitary or self-defense groups, and declared such activities illegal. An infamous example of military collaboration was the XIV Army Brigade's promotion of a paramilitary project of the Middle Magdalena region in the early 1980s (Medina Gallego 1990). Another was the assistance of General Rito Alejo del Río in the consolidation of the forces of notorious paramilitary leader Carlos Castaño in Urabá (Valencia Agudelo 2007). In the mid-1990s, government authorities also trained the Cooperativas de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada (Convivir), which helped fuel the paramilitary phenomenon across Colombia.[19] Despite the variety in the paramilitary groups' origins and sponsorship, there appears to be little observable difference between the prior organizational foundations of local units compared to non-local units.[20] Whether the groups derived from drug cartels, agrarian associations, past

[17] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2005).

[18] Diego José Martínez Goyeneche, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, 15 September 2008.

[19] President Ernesto Samper's Decrees 356 of 1994 and 368 of 1995 created the Convivir program. The Convivir were private armed organizations for surveillance and intelligence, composed of civilians trained and tasked by the government to protect their neighborhoods against violence and crime (*El Tiempo* 2010) and to "maintain public order" (Romero 2003, 36). By 1997, the year when these groups were dissolved, there existed more than 400 organizations operating across Colombia (*Revista Alternativa* 1997).

[20] The heterogeneous nature of militias' origins and recruit bases seems a feature common to other contexts. For example, in Peru, "the enormous diversity of the [multiple Rondas Campesinas] origins, organizational forms, greater or lesser dependence on or autonomy from the armed forces ... and so forth make it difficult to describe a single reality" (Basombrio 1999). Similarly, in the Philippines, some factions emerged as private armies of local political elites, sugar barons, and business tycoons; others were created as anti-Communist or anti-insurgency organizations; still others formed originally as religious, specifically Christian, organizations; and Kuratong Baleleng and others began initially as criminal organizations, acquiring "legitimacy" when they proclaimed themselves to be anti-Communist (Kraft 2010; Van der Kroef 1988).

militia movements, vigilantes, or urban gangs does not seem to correlate with whether they were composed of local or non-local recruits.

The paramilitaries emerged through complex processes of splitting and joining of subunits and the extension of "franchises." Both commanders and combatants transferred between groups, and some groups deployed to several regions over the course of the war. Groups allied at times and fought at other times. They became dominant, subordinate, or equals, at times implementing policies laid out by other groups, at other times determining policy independently.[21] The dynamics within and between the groups were frequently in flux with any moment in time freezing a snapshot of this evolution.

In the 1980s, the Colombian government began a series of attempts to disarm the left-wing guerrilla groups through peace agreements. The Betancur administration passed Law 35, an amnesty law. It recognized the guerrilla organizations as political actors, and facilitated the demobilization and reconstitution of the FARC as a political party called the Unión Patriótica (UP). However, the FARC quickly abandoned the peace process and returned to fighting after paramilitary forces assassinated as many as 3,000 UP members and its 1990 presidential candidate, Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa (Dudley 2004). In the early 1990s, the smaller guerrilla groups entered into separate peace agreements with the government, disarming in exchange for amnesty, political opening, and the promise of a new constitution.[22] Having accepted similar peace terms, these rebel groups nonetheless diverged in their postwar trajectories.[23] Most of the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19) structure became a political party, Alianza Democrática M-19, electing to various high-level government posts Navarro Wolff and Gustavo Petro, among others. Local recruits staffed its largely urban brigades. However, a small cadre of M-19 fighters "deployed to rural areas in the south following the group's plummeting support after the Palacio de Justicia siege."[24] This non-local faction returned to arms in the region of Valle del Cauca.[25] Quintín Lame (MAQL), an indigenous self-defense guerrilla group, also transitioned to legal politics during the 1990s. Highly local to their zone of operation in Cauca and Tolima, they "retained a very strong social organization that protected them from the encroachment

[21] Commander Édwar Cobos Téllez, Bloque Montes de María, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[22] Castro, Arenas, and Bateman (1980); Villamizar Herrera (1995) provide histories of the M-19. More than 7,300 former guerrillas disarmed between 1990 and 2002 (Small Arms Survey 2006). For details on this reintegration process, see Dirrección General para la Reinserción (2000); Turriago and Bustamante (2003).

[23] Jorge Mario Eastman (Vice Minister of Defense), interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

[24] Rafael Pardo (Colombian senator), interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006. In 1985, members of M-19 attacked Colombia's Palacio de Justice and held the Justices hostage; this led to the deaths of half the members of the country's Supreme Court.

[25] Jaime Bustamante (ex-M-19 commander and Colombian senator), interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

by other armed actors."[26] La Corriente de Renovación Socialista (CRS), a dissident faction of the ELN local to the Atlantic coast, formed a sociopolitical organization and think tank called la Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris after the peace accords.[27] A local brigade of the EPL in Urabá created a successful political party called Esperanza, Paz y Libertad (Hope, Peace, and Liberty) (Comisión de Superación de la Violencia 1992). However, one of EPL's battalions in northern Urabá, EPL-D, defected to the FARC rather than demobilize (Daly and Steele 2013). This shifted power in the region, bolstered FARC's Frente 5, and emboldened the FARC to enter EPL's historical stronghold in Urabá's "banana axis" that stretched from Chigorodó to Turbo. In response, the EPL remilitarized as the Comandos Populares, allying with the right-wing paramilitaries and with the state.[28] In contrast, in Norte de Santander and in Putumayo, the largely non-local EPL brigades, Frente Libardo Toro Mora and Frente Aldemar Londoño, returned to their left-wing armed struggle. These cases further underscore the significant variation in warring factions' postwar trajectories.[29]

Although some paramilitary forces also engaged in a brief decommissioning in the early 1990s, they too quickly returned to war, extending their influence to areas of strategic importance and economic value, especially in places where state power was absent. Exactly where the paramilitaries expanded proved endogenous to the conflict.[30] As they expanded, each faction had to decide where to recruit the soldiers to staff its armies deployed away from its initial stronghold. Among a variety of tactics, they could take recruits from their "homelands" and station these fighters in the new zones, rendering them non-local. Frente Vichada adopted this strategy. Alternatively, only the commander and a small cadre could deploy away from "home," and then staff the rest of the force locally in the new war theaters. As Elmer Cárdenas expanded into Chocó, for example, it opted to man the front there with new recruits native to the region. As a third tactic, the non-local unit might ally with or co-opt an existing armed structure (local or non-local) in the region of expansion, if one existed. For example, as the Bloque Norte sought to extend its presence along the Atlantic coast, it found allies among illegal "protector" groups present in most sectors of the region. Thus, it spread its sphere of influence by co-opting

[26] Camilo Echandía (Professor, Universidad Externado de Colombia), interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

[27] Analyst, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006. See also *El Tiempo* (1993).

[28] Alias "Melaza," interview by author, Urabá, July 2008; Alias "Negro Tyson," interview by author, Bellavista Prison, Medellín, June 2008; Luis Fernando (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje, SENA), interview by author, Riosucio, June 2008; Alejandro Toro (Director, Construpaz), interview by author, Necoclí, 3 July 2008. See also Valencia Agudelo (2007).

[29] Defensoría del Pueblo (ombudsman), interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[30] Predicting exact patterns of expansion with any precision is challenging, but merits future research.

the local embedded fronts of the Autodefensas del Sur del Cesar (AUSAC), subsuming the power structure of the Rojas family clan and the Autodefensas de Palmor in Ciénaga, negotiating an accord with Chepe Barrera's Autodefensas in central Magdalena (granting it a mini-independent republic in exchange for the rest of its territory) and, after confrontation, subjugating Hernán Giraldo and his Autodefensas de Mamey in la Sierra Nevada and Santa Marta. Similarly, when the Bloque Centauros deployed to the eastern plains with a large battalion of non-local soldiers from northwestern Colombia, it fiercely battled several existing embedded groups, but it also negotiated alliances, albeit tense ones, with other local structures, those of fighters known as "Cuchillo" and "Pirata."[31] A paramilitary organization might even sell its ideological "brand" as a franchise to those able to recruit, combat, raise funds, and control territories in the places to which the organization wished to extend its influence (Guáqueta and Arias 2008). For example, since efforts to create a self-defense force in Arauca had failed, the "autodefensa" franchise was outsourced to the so-called narco twins, los Mellizos, who relocated an armed apparatus to the region, dubbing it the Vencedores de Arauca. Many groups opted for a mixed strategy and, for this reason, variation exists across the full local–non-local recruitment spectrum.

As the paramilitaries expanded, the organizations often split. The deployed brigades operated with high levels of autonomy, to the extent that they usually became independent armies that ended up signing separate peace agreements with the government.[32] Thus local and non-local units, at times, shared a prior organizational structure, but diverged in their postwar outcomes. For example, Ever Veloza, alias "HH," commanded one of the battalions of the local Bloque Bananero, Frente Turbo, in the northern and eastern zones of Urabá's banana axis during the 1990s. In 1996, part of his battalion deployed to the Pacific Coast state of Valle del Cauca.[33] There, HH met with narcotraffickers and business elite to strategize how they might replicate the successful "self-defense" model of Urabá.[34] The Bloque Calima, a new paramilitary force, was the result. It constituted an "expeditionary" force, built partially on the same organizational foundation as the local Bloque Bananero; however, after leaving Urabá in the mid-1990s with a small core of combatants, it continued to recruit as it expanded, generating a largely non-local force. Similar narratives could be

[31] In the end, there was mutiny in this arrangement; the local units of commanders "Cuchillo" and "Pirata" rebelled and slaughtered Bloque Centauros' top command (Miguel Arroyave). The three brigades of Cuchillo, Pirata, and Arroyave ended up following independent trajectories and signing separate peace agreements thereafter (Commander Jorge Pirata, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008).

[32] Paramilitary commanders, interviews by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[33] Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (2008).

[34] Gersen Arias (Fundación Ideas para La Paz), interview by author, Bogotá, 17 July 2008.

told about the Bloque Central Bolivar's Bajo Cauca faction and the Bloque Libertadores del Sur.[35]

In their recruitment and deployment strategies, commanders faced constraints and incentives. Ultimately, choices by each paramilitary group among different recruitment options seem to have been determined by idiosyncratic social histories and by "leadership, ideology, and strategy" (Weinstein 2007, 51).

As the paramilitaries expanded, they achieved significant military successes against the FARC and ELN rebels, expelling the guerrillas from broad territories. Nonetheless, the guerrillas remained undefeated. In the late 1990s, Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) was elected president, promising a negotiated settlement to the conflict. During these peace talks, Pastrana's government ceded to the FARC a safe haven in southern Colombia to which the military was denied access. The FARC did not bargain in good faith; it exploited this territory to train its troops and to traffic drugs. As a result, the talks broke down. The failure of conciliation with the rebels meant that public opinion turned against the FARC, and in 2002 the Colombian citizenry elected a hawk – Álvaro Uribe – who ran on a platform of seeking a military rather than a negotiated end to the conflict with the guerrillas.[36] Uribe proved steadfast in his desire to combat the rebels and to bring peace to Colombia by forcing the guerrillas to surrender. During his time in office, he would succeed in significantly weakening the guerrillas, reducing the FARC from nearly 21,000 combatants to roughly 9,000 fighters (see Figure 3.1). This no doubt contributed to the FARC's decision to enter peace negotiations with President Juan Manuel Santos in 2012. However, Uribe viewed the disarming of the paramilitaries as the essential first step to ending the country's four-decade civil war.

To justify their growth throughout the 1990s, the paramilitaries pointed to the strengthening of the guerrilla armies and the latter's decision to fund themselves through drug-trafficking and indiscriminate kidnappings. By the end of the 1990s, FARC battalions had reached the outer city limits of Bogotá; the majority urban anti-insurgent population feared that the "revolution" might actually succeed. Accordingly, the paramilitaries made the case that Colombians "needed" their help. Their ranks and coffers filled. By 2002, the year of Uribe's election, the paramilitary brigades had expanded across nearly three-quarters of Colombia's territory, amassing significant power.

[35] I was able to investigate more generally whether local and non-local units were constructed on different types of prior collectivities by means of the "versiones libres," the confidential testimonies of the paramilitary commanders under the Justice and Peace Law. Although the commanders varied widely in the veracity and comprehensiveness with which they told these "free versions" of the truth, they tended to be fairly honest when recounting the origins of their organizations. I find no significant divergence between the two types of groups, local and non-local.

[36] Andrés Pastrana Arango (former president of Colombia), interview by author, Washington, DC, June 2006.

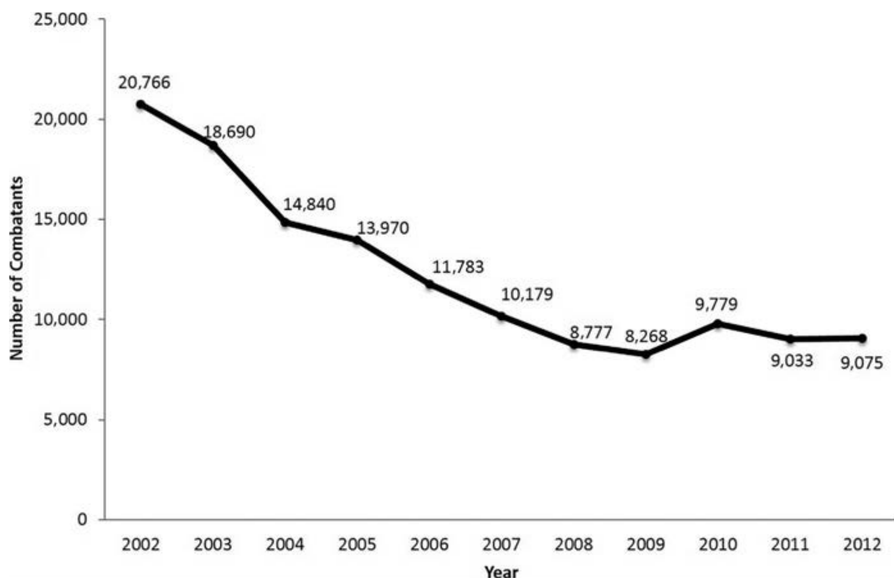


FIGURE 3.1. FARC's Military Strength.
Source: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.

In 1997, attempts to unify the autonomous self-defense factions under a single command with a political identity resulted in the creation of a paramilitary confederation called the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, (AUC).[37] While ostensibly operating under this umbrella organization, the paramilitary bloques retained a high degree of sovereignty and self-sufficiency, to the point that sometimes they fought amongst themselves more than they battled the guerrillas.[38] In an interview with the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*, commanders Salvatore Mancuso and Carlos Castaño confessed, "They were fruitless, our efforts … to save the name and existence of the AUC [confederation], which was our creation. It was not possible; we found ourselves with a series of atomized groups … which, in many cases, moved from confederation to anarchy."[39] In his testimony under the Justice and Peace Law, commander "El Alemán" admitted that "Castaño was the head of the paramilitaries, but that they did not receive direct orders from him.… The AUC was organized as a confederation.… While in Castaño's statements, it appeared to be an organized structure, that was not the case

[37] Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá (1998); Constitución de las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (1997). Other confederations were attempted in the late 1990s: Autodefensas Campesinas de Colombia, which included Bloque Central Bolívar; Alianza Oriente; and Autodefensas Independientes.

[38] Fredy Rendón Herrera, alias "El Alemán," versión libre, Medellín, 5 June 2007.

[39] *El Tiempo* (2002).

in practice. Each bloque was autonomous in its decisions." In his testimony, Mancuso stated that, "Carlos Castaño always wished to give the impression to the public of a cohesive, strong and hierarchical movement, [but] the reality was that it was an atomized and diffuse [set of] organizations that had no unified high command which gave orders."[40]

During the 1990s, the paramilitaries had two objectives: political legitimation and power expansion.[41] They sought political status that would pave the way for an eventual negotiation with the government to gain amnesty and legalization of their power. In 1990, the paramilitaries began to signal that they were *politically* oriented organizations. To do so, they made public statements and adopted "statutes" that referred to their "ideological platform" based on "fundamental principles" such as the right to self-defense. The paramilitaries also drafted a historical narrative of their origins centered on their victimhood at the hands of the guerrillas and on their grievances generated by the state's failure to protect them.

As to the objective of expanding their power, in addition to fighting counterguerrilla battles and amassing military might across the country, the paramilitaries sought to permeate all facets of Colombia's society, politics, and economy. They significantly modified the political geography of twelve of Colombia's thirty-two federal departments, partially transformed others, won substantial parliamentary support (gaining control of 35 percent of the bicameral Colombian Congress), influenced presidential elections, and captured local governance.[42] In 2001, the top paramilitary commanders met in Santa Fe de Ralito with politicians and members of the national legislature to sign a secret document calling for the "refounding of the country." Politicians saw the paramilitaries as advocates in their electoral competitions (Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos 2013). The paramilitaries enjoyed the ability to offer politicians success by restoring order and "peace" in their districts and affording the politicians retrospective votes based on this positive past performance. They also possessed the capacity to intimidate and buy off voters, eliminate political rivals, coerce voter abstention, and transport voters between districts.[43] Although the links between politicians and paramilitaries proved extensive and deep, it is important to note that not all of the Colombian state was in collusion with these illegal non-state actors. Variation existed in the paramilitaries' relations with the state bureaucracy, armed forces, political class, and social elite.

In addition to their influence over formal politics, the paramilitaries managed to exert control over informal political and social transactions in their bastions and to gain "immense spaces of legitimacy" (Duncan 2006). For example, they mediated disputes among inhabitants over land boundaries, old

[40] Salvatore Mancuso, versión libre, Medellín, 19 December 2006.

[41] Guáqueta and Arias (2008). See also *El Colombiano* (1997).

[42] López (2010); Romero (2007b).

[43] Defensoría del Pueblo Reports 2002.

debts, and marriage, regulated and extracted "tributes" from economic activities, engaged in "social cleansing" of prostitutes, criminals, and social "undesirables," dampened labor organizing, and constructed an alternative order in many localities where they came to be recognized effectively as the "state."[44]

Drug-trafficking became entwined with their right-wing platform: the paramilitary groups sought not only to cleanse territories of guerrillas, but also to gain control over strategic regions of coca cultivation, trafficking routes, drug laboratories, and shipment locations. Over time, the paramilitaries developed into multidimensional organizations with widespread regional alliances with the civilian population, armed forces, businesspeople, multinational corporations, judges, social elite, narcotraffickers, peasants, and politicians.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS: "CONCEDING WITH AN INTENT TO THRIVE"

By the early years of the twenty-first century, the paramilitaries possessed extraordinary military, economic, social, and political strength and exorbitant resources from drug-trafficking and extensive investments, both licit and illicit. They were extremely powerful. But by 2002, they also perceived themselves to have passed their apex of power and to be likely to decline in the future, both militarily and in their ability to translate their military power to gains at the bargaining table.[45] This perception derived from a series of "ominous setbacks" that suggested that their decline was imminent (Slater and Wong 2013). Under pressure from the terms of the U.S. "Plan Colombia," the Colombian military and establishment began to distance themselves from the paramilitaries, and to combat them more actively.[46] This signaled that the militia forces' military might would lessen as they began to face a more explicit two-front war, battling both the guerrillas and the state (Guáqueta 2007). The large flows of U.S. aid also strengthened the Colombian armed forces, rendering the paramilitaries "redundant" in the counterinsurgency fight, and undermining their raison d'être. One commander explained, "We were absolutely not militarily defeated. We had no problem continuing the war. None." However, "with the development of the state and the armed forces, we were completely convinced that the paramilitaries in the country were becoming superfluous … and it was the moment, or rather, the opportune moment to demobilize."[47] Meanwhile, geopolitically, many countries began to designate the

[44] Paramilitary commander, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[45] Andrés Restrepo (Professor, Universidad Nacional), interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006. See also León (2002).

[46] Plan Colombia is a U.S. aid package for Colombia aimed both at combating drug cultivation and trafficking and at strengthening the Colombian armed forces. From 2000 to 2012, Colombia received nearly $8 billion in U.S. aid. See Shifter (2012).

[47] Commander Jorge Pirata, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

paramilitaries as terrorist organizations; when the United States placed them on its list of such enemy groups in 2001, this marked "the beginning of the end of the paramilitaries" (León 2002). This shift in both international and domestic stances meant that the paramilitaries saw their ideological support eroding. Paramilitary commander Castaño "quickly understood this" (León 2002).

The paramilitaries also believed themselves to be at the peak of their political power. By 2002, they controlled 35 percent of the legislature; these legislative allies, motivated by their own "skeletons in the closet," proved willing to advocate on the paramilitaries' behalf.[48] Fear of disclosure of their intimate links with the illegal paramilitaries rendered many members of the legislature willing to support the paramilitaries' negotiation position. If the links were revealed, however, these political allies might be imprisoned, negating the paramilitaries' strategy of blackmail and significantly eroding their political lobby. The paramilitary commanders were "walking a tightrope and realized that if they didn't comply with this peace process, they could say goodbye to a political process.... They would lose their legitimacy."[49] Finally, with the eradication of drug crops, increases in interdiction efforts under Plan Colombia, and shifts in trafficking profits to Mexico, the paramilitaries' financial strength also seemed likely to decline in the future. Trimming their expenses on major armed apparatuses to focus on their business pursuits and launder their assets appeared advisable. At this moment in time, therefore, the paramilitaries preferred preventive peace: to bargain for peace while still in positions of great power and able to gain maximum concessions, rather than to bargain at a future time when their hand would be weaker.[50] According to one commander, "I demobilized [when I did] because it would be very sad to demobilize when I was losing and had my head down."[51]

The pinnacle of power of the Colombian paramilitary factions coincided with a government that was aligned with their interests – fighting the guerrillas. The paramilitaries saw an ally in President Álvaro Uribe and trusted him

[48] Nalepa (2010) finds that the threat of revealing the "skeletons in the closet" of anti-communist politicians in post-communist Europe helped ex-communist parties transfer power without violence.

[49] Hernando Corral (Colombian journalist), interview by author, Bogotá, 20 July 2006.

[50] This decision to negotiate from a position of strength appears more common than the conflict resolution literature's "ripeness for resolution" or "costs of war" logic of negotiating from positions of weakness would lead us to expect (Mason and Fett 1996; Walter 2002; Wittman 1979; Zartman 1985). In the Hartzell (2014) dataset, in eighteen of forty-seven cases between 1945 and 2006, rebels opted to initiate negotiations when they were at parity with or stronger than the government, measured using the rebel strength variable of Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan (2012). For example, UNITA entered the Lusaka talks controlling more than 70 percent of Angolan territory, arguing, "We think we are not on a path of weakness, but a path of strength," but recognizing that "UNITA's military fortunes might soon reach their zenith" (Weigert 2011, 114, 120).

[51] Commander Manuel de Jesús Pirabán, Bloque Héroes de los Llanos, interview by author, La Picota prison, Bogotá, 15 September 2008.

on a personal level. As governor of the state of Antioquia in the 1990s, he had showed himself to be sympathetic to the paramilitary cause. One ex-combatant told me, "We turned ourselves in to *Uribe*, not the state, not the Attorney General, to Uribe."[52]

In sum, the paramilitaries entered peace talks with the Uribe administration because they were convinced of their power, but also of the forthcoming slow decline in that power, and they preferred to bargain from a position of strength. There existed little selection into the peace process; only two of the thirty-nine paramilitary factions eventually opted out.[53] Critically, the paramilitaries also believed that they would be able to maintain cohesive units, control the peace process, and translate their power at war into power at peace.[54] They believed they would concede in order to "thrive" during and after the transition (Slater and Wong 2013).[55]

The paramilitary commanders arrived at the negotiation table in Santa Fe de Ralito with the firm expectation that they would not go to jail because, in their words, they had come to the table *voluntarily*, as an undefeated army, and at the peak of their military expansion and power. They envisioned the peace process preserving their economic fortunes and legalizing their power, transforming their entire organizational machine into a politically legitimate one. These armed organizations wished to continue "ruling" – maintaining their economic, social, and political influence and territorial control gained at war – but did not necessarily need to remain overtly militarized. Commanders Jorge 40, Mancuso, El Alemán, and other leaders imagined themselves making the leap from a privileged position in the criminal underworld to a commensurate position within the law. Specifically, they intended to become high-profile elected officials (governors or senators).[56] Their formation of the political organization Movimiento Nacional de Autodefensas Desmovilizadas speaks to this fact.[57] These paramilitary leaders possessed the robust social

[52] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Santa Marta, 13 April 2008.

[53] The two groups that opted out of the peace process were the Bloque Cacique Pipintá, which had essentially ceased to exist after military decimation by the army and police (Romero 2007a, 42), and the Autodefensas Campesinas de Casanare, which was embroiled in a bitter war against other paramilitary armies in the eastern plains (Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y DIH 2006b). These other armies in the plains, however, did enter the accords, as did other militarily weakened groups such as Bloque Tolima and Autodefensas de Meta y Vichada. I test the military weakness hypothesis explicitly in Chapter 5.

[54] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Bogotá, January 2008.

[55] Slater and Wong's "conceding to thrive" argument pertains to authoritarian states, but their argument also has important implications for non-state armed actors' transitions from war to peace.

[56] Commander Manuel de Jesús Pirabán, Bloque Héroes de los Llanos, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[57] Initially, the paramilitary commanders envisioned involvement with just local and regional politics, but over time, they believed they would gain positions of national stature (Juanita

bases, bank accounts, and political recognition necessary to do so. When they rode through coastal Colombia, crowds of civilians cheered them on. When they looked in the mirror, they saw heroes basking in the gratitude of citizens for "saving Colombia" from the insurgents. Millions of dollars were hidden under their floorboards and they had entangled civil servants from all levels of political life, from state health workers to members of the legislature, in the far-reaching "paramilitarization" of politics. The commanders were fundamentally certain that they would win a very favorable deal that would institutionalize their power and provide them with robust guarantees (Rangel Suárez 2005). "We had very large projections," summarized one of the paramilitary commanders.[58] They were further convinced that their organizations would remain cohesive and that, as an insurance plan, were the deal to be derailed and the government to renege, they could remobilize their intact organizational structures and return to war.[59]

This belief in their ability to maintain cohesive units, control the process, and translate their power at war to power at peace – to thrive – derived from their exceptional stream of resources, a robust support base, and a political machine able to influence and "win" elections. They possessed faith in their militarily effective and powerful organizations, characterized by relatively low levels of defection, and trusted in a long shadow of the future with their negotiating partner, the Uribe administration (an immensely popular administration set on gaining three terms in office) and in this administration's ability to manage political stability and to protect their interests during the transition.[60] Importantly, both local and non-local groups held these expectations. Non-local groups did not foresee their organizations' substantial decay or loss of power that would result from demobilization.

External observers shared these expectations and had no doubt that "in the future, it will be very difficult to apply a canon of justice or lessen the influence the [paramilitaries] have conquered in the regions" (Valencia Agudelo 2005).[61] Analysts of the process believed that the paramilitary forces and power were shielded, elusive, and untouchable, and that the structures would all endure intact and thus easily redeployable for war. They did not anticipate disintegration of any paramilitary group or loss of its social, political, economic, or military leverage (Rangel Suárez 2005).

At this point, at the beginning of the negotiation process, the bargaining actors were unitary: the government was represented only by a peace negotiator

León, Colombian journalist, interview by author, Cambridge, MA, 11 April 2007). See also Constitución de las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (1997).

[58] Commander Edwar Cobos Téllez, Bloque Montes de María, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[59] Paramilitary commander, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[60] Niera (2003); *Revista Semana* (2003b).

[61] See also García Peña (2005).

appointed by the executive branch.[62] Each paramilitary group was represented only by its commander. The bargain acceptable to the government and to the paramilitaries at this stage reflected the power of the paramilitaries. The deal proposed by the government provided robust guarantees of political power, intact structures, physical security, and preserved resources (*Revista Semana* 2003a). The government's "Alternate Judicial" bill offered amnesty: it would exempt the paramilitaries from standard sentences for a variety of crimes, including human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, and drug-trafficking. It promised not to dismantle or neutralize the paramilitaries' political, economic, or social structures of influence; in other words, it offered everything the paramilitaries wanted and expected.

THE PEACE PROCESS UNFOLDS WITH UNANTICIPATED TWISTS AND TURNS

In the end, the paramilitaries agreed to peace accords without guarantees; they accepted terms far inferior to their immense power. Even non-local armed groups signed such accords, when for them, the agreements contained the seeds of disaster.

I suggest that the process of bargaining exposed differences among the various parties and interests on each side of the negotiating table. As predicted by social movement theory, opportunities arise during peace negotiations for the mobilization of diverse stakeholders seeking to determine a country's future. Opposition actors and third parties – civil society and international stakeholders – joined the government's side of the table with their own agendas. Neither President Uribe nor the paramilitary commanders anticipated this explosion of social mobilization.

In 2000, these diverse actors objected that "the paramilitaries did not deserve generous peace terms." They pressured the Uribe administration to shift its bargaining range. They pushed Uribe to tell the paramilitary commanders that they must convince the country and the people that they deserved the peace terms, and that the judicial benefits (such as exemption from prosecution and extradition) would be decided by the court and legislature, not by the peace negotiations.[63] The Uribe administration and the paramilitary commanders did not, initially, expect any difficulty with the peace accord's passage. After all, the paramilitaries controlled more than one-third of the legislature and enjoyed substantial support in their regions. The paramilitaries had already entered the

[62] William Quintero, interview by author, Bogotá, 14 July 2011. Uribe, no multilateralist, opted for a "government" policy rather than a "state" policy, which would have required building consensus with Colombia's civil society and opposition parties.

[63] Paraphrased from Acosta (2008). I am very grateful to Daniel Acosta for his excellent insights into this process and for sharing with me his working paper on the subject.

peace process when this new stipulation was made: they could not have foreseen this first twist in the process (Rangel Suárez 2005).

The peace process then took another unanticipated turn as the paramilitarization of Colombian politics, previously accepted as the norm, began to be seen as a scandal ("*para-política*").[64] Contrary to the expectations of easy passage of the peace agreement, a hurricane of national and international criticisms instead hit.[65] These waves of criticism came as a rude awakening to the paramilitary commanders (and most likely to President Uribe as well). The commanders were shocked to learn that their societal support had limits. Antisubversive heroes in their regions, they found themselves portrayed as villains, narcotraffickers, and heinous human rights abusers in the national and international media. Their political allies in the legislature began to distance themselves. As one commander put it: "We are like prostitutes, by night [while in clandestinity] we are the most sought after, whereas by day, [we are rejected]".[66] In the light of day, an expert on the conflict added, "many politicians, business elite and citizens [feel] the need to dissociate publicly from [paramilitary] 'contamination' or hush about existing contacts" (Guáqueta 2007, 432).

Next, under intense pressure from the international community, public opinion, and the opposition, the government declared that paramilitaries found guilty of crimes against humanity would not be allowed to participate in elections or form political parties. The government then called for the demobilization of the paramilitary forces. Over the course of the next iterations of bargaining, the government rescinded each of the other guarantees that it had promised. This was not the process the paramilitary commanders had envisioned.

At this point, given that the ranges of acceptable bargains on the two sides no longer coincided, negotiations should have broken down, with the paramilitaries leaving the table to remobilize. However, while the peace process was fragmenting the government's side, it also began to challenge the unity of the paramilitary's side, exposing divergence between the interests of the commanders and those of the midranking officers and, to a lesser extent, the foot soldiers.

Prior to initiating the peace bargaining, these interests had been aligned: actors at the various levels of the armed groups' hierarchies pursued the

[64] The paramilitaries' penetration of Colombia's legal political arena later became the subject of many investigations. As of May 2009, thirty-nine of the 268 members of the legislature were official suspects, thirty-six were in jail awaiting trial, and eleven had been convicted of links with the paramilitaries (Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos 2013). The effects of the scandal on support in the regions varied significantly. Responding to a 2007 survey question, "Would you vote for at least one of the politicians accused of paramilitary connections?" only 3 percent of the population said yes in Barranquilla and 12 percent in Bogotá, but 42 percent said yes in Valledupar (*Revista Semana* 2007c).

[65] See Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (2007).

[66] Iván Roberto Duque Gaviria, alias "Ernesto Báez," interview, Itagüí, 2006.

organizations' goals of military, territorial, economic, political, and social power. The more powerful the organizations, the better off their members became, irrespective of position within the organizations. However, the peace negotiations drove wedges between actors of differing ranks because the new terms served these various ranks in different ways.[67] Certain negotiating points served the interests of the "organizations" to which the midranking officers' welfare remained tied. These terms included translating the groups' power at war to power at peace, securing legal political influence, averting the dismantling of the structures, and guaranteeing the security of the troops. The stronger and more cohesive the organization remained, the better able its officers were to maintain their regional fiefdoms during the transition. In contrast, other items on the agenda – such as amnesty, no prison time, no extradition, and legalization of assets – served only the interests of the commanders. Only the high-ranking commanders faced particularly dire judicial risks such as accusations of crimes against humanity, International Criminal Court charges, and orders of extradition to the US for drug-trafficking and money laundering. To reduce the risks from "spoilers" and to create incentives for cooperation, the peace terms offered by the government sought to give paramilitary leaders greater economic benefits from peace than those they would obtain from war.[68] These "peace profits" were, in practical terms, available only to the commanders. Critically, the commanders proved willing to make concessions on items that would have served the interests of the groups or midlevel leaders, in exchange for guarantees that satisfied their own individual interests. The leaders prioritized their individual benefits over those of the organizations and their members.[69]

We might have expected the paramilitaries to flex their muscles to move the bargaining back in their favor. Indeed, initially, they were committed to exiting the negotiations and returning to war if the process were to "get out of hand" and to jeopardize their organizations' interests.[70] However, later in the process, such a display of force would have worked contrary to the commanders' personal interests; it would have provided ammunition for their critics who accused them of violating the ceasefire and being unworthy of lenient judicial terms of amnesty and no-extradition.[71] In effect, if the paramilitary

[67] Commander Diego José María Goyeneche, Bloque Tolima, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[68] See Collier (2000); Keen (1998); Stedman (1997).

[69] This dynamic can be seen in other cases. UNITA leaders in Angola, similarly rewarded with houses and cars, betrayed their rank and file (International Crisis Group 2003b). Tajik rebel commanders were co-opted by the government (Driscoll 2012). In Myanmar, the government "awarded controversial car import licenses to some ethnic leaders, raising fears that personally lucrative deals may be reached at the top level that do not benefit the majority" (Lewis 2013).

[70] William Quintero, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2011.

[71] Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH), and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights were especially vocal critics of the judicial terms.

commanders had sought to use coercion to tilt the process back in their favor, it would have only pushed the government's bargaining range even further away from the commanders' ideal range. Anything the commanders could do to strengthen their organizations and fulfill their midlevel leaders' interests, by redeploying rather than conceding, would have made the commanders worse off.[72] They were trapped.

Therefore the commanders, facing increasingly adverse situations that were contrary to their original beliefs about the process, concluded that it would be yet more costly for them, on a personal level, to withdraw from the peace process and lose the benefits that they had achieved than to remain within its bounds and watch it unfold. One can only understand this shift in the commanders' bargaining range, which may seem irrational from an organizational point of view, if one disaggregates the interests of the organizations' various constituent actors.

Thus, the commanders decommissioned their troops as an act of good will, an "apology for the excesses committed during the cessation of hostilities," to demonstrate their dedication to the process, to sway local and foreign opinion in their favor, and to guarantee their own judicial and economic benefits (Acosta 2008, 3). They concentrated their troops, registered them, disarmed them, and allowed them to migrate to the towns of their choosing to reintegrate into civilian life.[73]

The final bargain included no security commitments; what transpired over the subsequent years did not reflect the bargaining strength and power held by the paramilitaries when they entered the negotiations. The legal regime governing the peace agreements, called the Justice and Peace Law (Law 975),[74] was approved on 21 June 2005.[75] It provided no guarantees of paramilitary power: no power-sharing, no military integration, and no territorial autonomy. The accords also prohibited members of the paramilitaries from running for political office, and gave no exemption from prison. The next year, in August 2006, the government terminated the commanders' special permits that had allowed them to move freely around the country; instead it concentrated them in a detention center in La Ceja, Antioquia.

[72] Daniel Acosta, interview by author, Bogotá, April 2008.

[73] The reintegration program was first under the Ministry of Interior; in August 2006, it became a separate agency, the Alta Consejería para la Reintegración (now the Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración, ACR). The reintegration program provides the ex-combatants with monthly stipends, education, occupational training, and psychological counseling. Andrés Dávila, Director, Ministry of Interior Reintegration Program, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006; Jaime Polanco, Ministry of Defense, Disarmament and Demobilization Program, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006; Frank Pearl, Colombia's High Commissioner for Reintegration, interviews by author, Bogotá, August 2007–May 2009; Alejandro Eder, Colombia's High Commissioner for Reintegration, interviews by author, Bogotá, August 2007–May 2014. For more information on the reintegration program, see Daly, Paler, and Samii (2014).

[74] For an excellent review of Colombia's transitional justice process, see Díaz (2007).

[75] See Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (2007); Kalmanovitz (2010). 2,700 paramilitary members registered under the Justice and Peace process.

Next, in December 2006, the government transferred the paramilitary leaders to the maximum security prison in Itagüí (Rubini 2008). They had to confess the full truth, engage in monetary and symbolic reparations, and commit to nonrepetition of violence. In exchange, they were offered "alternative" sentences of five to eight years in prison.[76] While at the beginning of the negotiation process, the prospect of jail time had been inconceivable to the paramilitary commanders, by 2006, they would accept this decision with little resistance.

The Justice and Peace Law made paramilitary activity a seditious crime in Colombia and eliminated the threat of extradition to the United States or transfer to the International Criminal Court. The Uribe government nonetheless decided unilaterally in 2008 to extradite thirteen of the top paramilitary commanders to the United States under the premise that they had failed to comply with the peace terms.[77] These military commanders were immediately flown to the United States; there was nothing they could do to oppose this fate.

Rather than leaving the paramilitaries' structures intact, the final peace accords disarmed, demobilized, and sought to reintegrate the ex-combatants. The reintegration program did not preserve the organizational infrastructure; it ignored prior military rank, downgraded the status of the midranking commanders, and undermined their authority and legitimacy.[78] Far from providing robust security guarantees to the paramilitary troops, the final peace terms granted them recourse only to the same assistance, in matters of public safety, available to any Colombian civilian: they could file a complaint with the police. Alonso Salazar, Secretary of Government of Medellín in 2004 attested to this lack of safety guarantees: "We want to warn about the improvisations in this process; schemes of security for the demobilized have not been contemplated"

[76] The sentences normally associated with their crimes were suspended if the beneficiaries of the law complied with these terms. Failure to refrain from all illegal activity would result in a return to the original suspended sentences associated with the charges while failure to confess to the full truth raised the sentences by 20 percent. The truth-gathering element of Law 975 relied on confessions (called "versiones libres"), in which ex-combatants clarified the dates and locations of any crimes and illegal acquisition of property and goods. Reparations under Law 975 took the form of restitution of assets, payment of compensation, and access to rehabilitation procedures. Members of the irregular armed groups with no pending charges of crimes against humanity (mostly foot soldiers) fell under Law 782 of 2002 (subject to Decree 128 of 2003 and later revised as Decree 1106 of 2006), which granted them legal benefits and reinsertion assistance. Law 1424 of 2010 allowed these ex-combatants their liberty in exchange for committing to tell the full truth, promising nonrepetition of their violent acts, and engaging in reparations and social services as dictated by the ACR. See Laplante and Theidon (2006).

[77] Some Colombian analysts contend that Uribe extradited the commanders because their "confessions" under the Justice and Peace Law were getting too close to Uribe's inner circle. See *El Nuevo Siglo* (2008); *El Tiempo* (2008).

[78] Commander Édwar Cobos Téllez, Bloque Montes de María, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

(*El Colombiano* 2004). Between 2003 and 2015, 3,200 ex-paramilitaries were assassinated.[79]

The peace process poses a fascinating puzzle: the paramilitary organizations entered the peace negotiations in 2002 extremely powerful. Fast-forward several years: only roughly half of the paramilitary brigades – those that had comprised local recruits – remained cohesive and preserved some of their power. The rest – those staffed by non-local recruits – had significantly weakened or disappeared altogether. More than 3,000 ex-combatants had been assassinated, 9,741 had been arrested, and many others faced security concerns and threats from remilitarized groups, criminal gangs, guerrillas, and other former foes from the underworld. When the government reneged on its initial offers, the paramilitaries did not return to war, but instead signed and implemented peace terms incompatible with preservation of their power. The top paramilitary commanders who had initially received promises of nonextradition and no prison time found themselves extradited and facing life imprisonment in the United States, an outcome they saw as even worse than "a Colombian grave."[80] We can only understand this final arrangement if we acknowledge a significant role for the effects of the process itself and how it generated unanticipated twists and turns. As one commander summarized: "From there, we realized that we had committed a big mistake, but I kept complying and we all kept complying. Until, look where we are today!!"[81]

We might presume, with Barbara Walter, that "combatants who wish to end their war in a negotiated settlement will look down the road, anticipate the opportunities for abuse after a treaty is signed, and shy away from seeking peace unless they are certain their opponent will comply with the terms of the agreement. [Such] dangers are clear to everyone involved" (Walter 2002, 21). In the Colombian case, however, we find paramilitary commanders saying to themselves "*We are the stupidest*!"[82] Although in theory the future is accurately incorporated into the present (backward induction), in practice such rational expectations may be absent and information may be incomplete, especially under the conditions of high uncertainty and rapid change that characterize peace processes and transitions. In these cases, political actors may not perfectly anticipate future sequences of moves. Although they act rationally at every moment in time, conditions evolve in unexpected ways such that what seems a rational move in the present is irrational when considered in retrospect. In Colombia, "a comparative analysis of only two time cuts – before demobilization and post-demobilization – would miss a whole chain of events and contexts that were crucial in driving the leaders of these powerful armies to demobilize"

[79] These data are based on triangulating information from the Colombian Department of Forensics (Medicina Legal) with the list of former combatants from the ACR.

[80] William Quintero, interview by author, Bogotá, February 2010.

[81] Paramilitary commander, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[82] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, February 2010.

(Acosta 2008, 4). The paramilitaries agreed to a bargain never previously envisioned by the parties on either side and not the result of any strategic plan designed in advance. Rather, it resulted from a series of junctures and crises that were resolvable only through further concessions and shifts in the paramilitaries' acceptable bargaining range. These shifts recurred until they were forced to accept a suboptimal agreement without guarantees. The peace negotiations with the paramilitaries should not be interpreted as a leap into the abyss, but rather a process, an unpredictable one that mobilized third party opposition and that forced a wedge between the commanders' personal interests and those of the organizational structures, and thus tied the commanders' hands.

In this sense, peace processes may resemble democratic transitions. Autocrats would never initiate liberalization if they knew it would lead to their demise. Similarly, the paramilitary commanders would not have entered negotiations if they had known it would lead to highly compromised outcomes and in some cases, their downfall. Dictators often have no intention of relinquishing power when they take moderate steps to liberalize their political systems, but those decisions can have a "lock-in" effect that takes the country down a path determined more by process than by agency. Autocrats liberalize under the assumption that they can control the process, but they may lose control as mobilization raises the costs of using violence (in this case, repression) and as members of the autocratic elite are bought off. As in transitions from war to peace, there exist high levels of uncertainty and indeterminacy surrounding democratic transitions: unexpected events, insufficient information, hurried and audacious choices, multiple nonunitary actors with potentially incompatible interests, and confusion about others' and one's own motives and interests (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). These may render backward induction inoperative. The puzzle of the paramilitaries' negotiations thus suggests a fruitful area for research on how bargaining occurs under such circumstances, a possibility to which I return in the book's conclusion. The puzzling story of the paramilitaries also may provide insights into why roughly half of warring factions around the world that were serious about peace nevertheless signed bargains that lacked the external guarantees necessary to prevent the peace from later failing (Walter 2002, 85).

By 2006, the paramilitaries had disarmed and demobilized. Some factions then remilitarized, whereas others demilitarized. This is not explained by the government's noncompliance with its formal peace promises; this noncompliance was uniformly applied to all of the factions. Rather, as Chapters 4 through 7 illustrate, it was due to power shifts and information asymmetries, derivative of divergent network structures stemming from the armed groups' varying recruitment geographies. These changes in power and information problems caused the bargains between the non-state groups, and the informal agreements between these groups and the state, to break down in some cases but not in others. The next two chapters evaluate the book's explanation for this variation and the specific hypotheses laid out in Chapter 2 in statistical

breadth: Chapter 4 builds on the historical backdrop developed in this chapter to trace the geography of the paramilitary factions' recruitment and its effect on the internal dynamics of the armed organizations. Chapter 5 then examines the external dynamics between armed groups with varying recruit bases and how different regional configurations generated variation in remilitarization and demilitarization in the aftermath of the peace accords.

4

Geography of Recruitment and Postwar Organizational Capacity

The quantitative analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5 compares the book's predictions with actual empirical observations. It provides evidence on all of the paramilitary organizations and all of the regions in Colombia to demonstrate that the geography of recruitment and strategic interactions between armed organizations made up of different types of recruits significantly affected the risk that the organizations would remilitarize and violence would resume.

This chapter explores Step 1 of my theory, the geography of recruitment and its effect on organizational capacity. It studies variation in armed groups' recruitment patterns and the implications of these patterns for the groups' network structures and postwar cohesion. I look inside the armed organizations at how their members are connected to each other in relationships and in space. I find, in confirmation of the book's proposed theory, that the geographic mapping of recruitment, in large part, influences the social webs among a unit's combatants, their post-conflict proximity, the survival of their organization after decommissioning, and the resolution of information and principal-agent problems within their unit. More specifically, this chapter provides evidence to support the plausibility of the following hypotheses outlined in Chapter 2:

1.1 Local groups (L) should recruit in a more geographically concentrated way than non-local groups (NL).
1.2 Combatants in local groups should possess stronger prewar networks than those in non-local groups.
1.3 After the war, local groups' combatants should tend to cluster geographically in their zones of operation, whereas non-local groups' fighters should disperse away from the places in which they fought.
1.4 Local groups should preserve their networks and capacity, whereas non-local groups' networks should erode and their power should weaken.

1.5 Local groups should face reduced information asymmetries and should be able to update estimates of their power more effectively than non-local groups.

The chapter first introduces the empirical variation in the geography of recruitment in Colombia. The second section probes the effects of these recruitment patterns on the networks that predated combatants' entry into the war. In addition to considering divergence in local and non-local groups' social structures, I evaluate whether these groups comprise combatant types that differ in other observable ways that might also cause them to differ in their proclivity to remilitarize. The data suggest a high degree of similarity between local and non-local recruits in those respects. Before leaping to the post-demobilization period, the chapter pauses to consider the conflict experience of the combatants and whether local and non-local organizations diverged in their military effectiveness or engaged in differing socialization and indoctrination programming that might have translated into variation in their postwar cohesion. On the basis of available data, I find little evidence of these alternative mechanisms in the case of the Colombian paramilitaries.

Convinced that the impact of recruitment geographies operates through the book's proposed pathway, the fourth section turns to the postwar phase to investigate the effect of the recruitment patterns on the ex-combatants' migration patterns, specifically their physical proximity and their continuing presence in their brigades' former zones of military deployment. In the fifth section, I map the ex-combatants' social connections with their former militant peers and with their superiors in the aftermath of demobilization. This exercise aims to shed light on the extent to which the organizational capacity is preserved or eroded. Closely related to the subject of such sustained vertical ties is that of principal-agent problems and information asymmetries within the organization: the extent to which the groups' leaders can monitor their subordinates and gather accurate intelligence both about their own units' members and also about their neighboring factions' capabilities. To approximate this surveillance capacity, I explore the lines of communication between the levels of each organization's hierarchy.

This chapter provides systematic evidence for every step along the causal pathway shown in Table 4.1. It uses the individual ex-combatant and armed organization as the units of analysis, while Chapter 5 zooms out to examine the armed organization in its strategic interactions with other armed actors and the implications of these interactions for remilitarization and demilitarization. Thus, Chapter 4 outlines the step that is causally prior to the argument set forth in Chapter 5. The geography of recruitment tells us whether each armed group will weaken or remain intact after decommissioning. To understand the second step – whether the group will remilitarize or demilitarize – requires examining the armed group in its neighborhood configuration of armed groups that have differing recruit bases, the analytic task of Chapter 5. Together, the

TABLE 4.1. *Recruitment Patterns and Postwar Organizational Capacity*

Local Group	Non-local Group
Concentrated recruitment	Dispersed recruitment
Dense combatant and commander prewar networks	Thin combatant and commander prewar networks
Physical proximity of combatants in zone of deployment after demobilizing	Geographic dispersion of combatants away from zone of deployment after demobilizing
Maintenance of networks and command and control	Decay of networks and command and control
Postwar cohesion	Postwar erosion
Accurate information about group's capacity	Information problems within group

Note: This reflects the logic outlined in the first half of Table 1.2.

evidence in these two chapters proves extremely suggestive of the proposed logic and process.

GEOGRAPHY OF RECRUITMENT

For the purposes of theoretical development and parsimony, Chapter 2 focuses principally on the extreme cases of local and non-local groups. However, no armed unit recruits only local or only non-local recruits; rather, recruitment spans the entire spectrum, as leaders mix and match these recruitment strategies while building their organizations.

No data have formerly been gathered to understand the nature of recruitment in Colombia; indeed, this is the first research project, to my knowledge, to generate large-scale data that map recruitment patterns. To operationalize the key explanatory factor required knowledge of where ex-combatants enlisted and where they operated militarily. For the former, I employed survey data of all 35,310 ex-paramilitaries' self-reported locations of origin. From the survey data, I also determined to which paramilitary organization each individual ex-combatant belonged. Next, I gathered municipality-level information on each armed group's zones of operation at the time of demobilization. Experts often contest these mappings, so I triangulated information from three different classified sources: Colombia's Fiscalía General de la Nación (Attorney General), Justice and Peace Division, which generated these data using the confidential testimonies of 2,700 former top and midranking paramilitary commanders; the Colombian High Commissioner for Peace; and the Organization of American States' (OAS) Peace Mission (Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz, MAPP); plus one open source, the "Verdad Abierta" project of the Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP) and the Colombian magazine *Revista Semana*. Merging these sources of information with the survey data, I was able to estimate

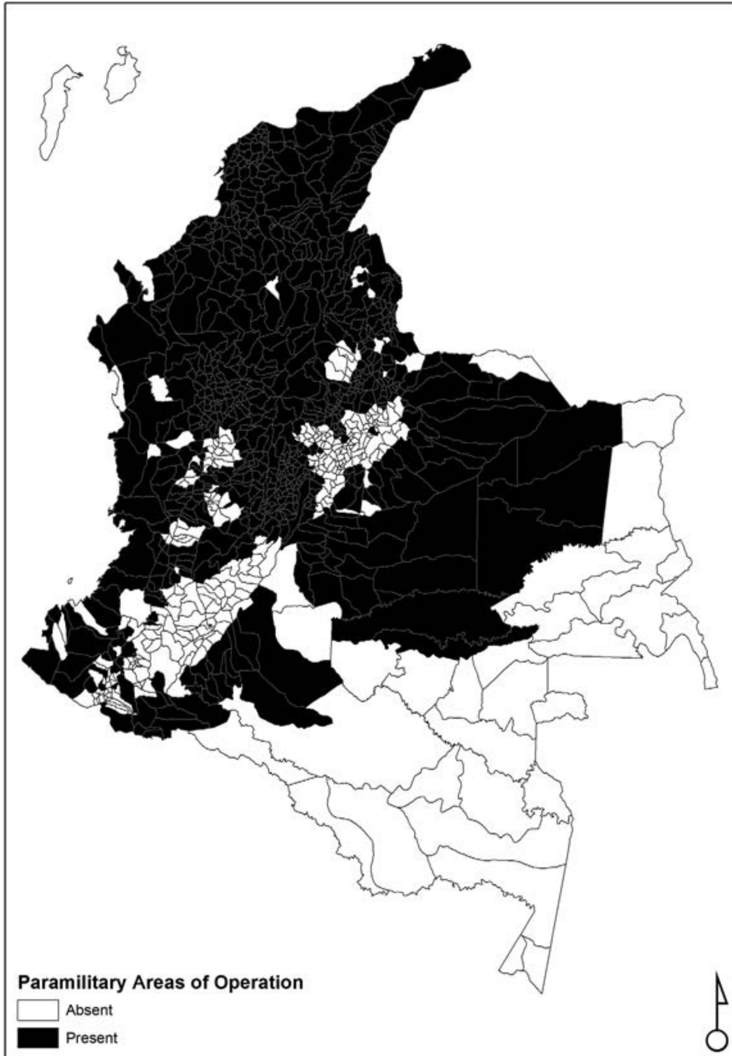
whether each individual was stationed "locally" by whether the zone of operation of his or her armed faction corresponded with his or her place of origin. I coded each individual in this binary way – local or non-local – and then calculated the proportion of local combatants at the organization level, dividing the number of local combatants by the total force size of the armed brigade. This generated a continuous measure of the proportion of the armed group that was local to its place of military deployment. One challenge with this measure is that it captures "local" at the municipal level. Although for certain subpopulations, I can generate more disaggregated measures – for example, I have information for *barrio*, *comuna*, *vereda*, or *corregimiento* levels – for the entire population of ex-combatants, I employ the more aggregated measure.[1]

From this indicator, I determined that, in Colombia, the paramilitaries recruited from 733 of Colombia's 1,111 municipalities and operated in 785 municipalities. They enjoyed a nearly complete national presence: the municipalities that escaped their violence were mostly in the depths of the jungles and other remote, unpopulated territories of Colombia. Map 4.1 illustrates the presence (by municipalities) of the paramilitaries prior to demobilizing.

Forty-five percent of the 35,310 individual combatants in the paramilitary groups operated where they were from; 55 percent deployed outside of their places of origin. Among the thirty-seven paramilitary organizations, the share of their units that were local to their war theater ranged from 11 percent to 89 percent, covering nearly the full spectrum of recruitment geographies. In most of the analyses in this chapter, I use this continuous measure. At times, however, it is useful to refer to a dichotomous version of the recruitment patterns: simply local or non-local. I constructed this binary version of the variable by grouping together local and intermediate groups, using a threshold of one-third local combatants. Where at least one-third of the structure's members remain networked and geographically proximate postwar, we can expect the leaders of these units to preserve the informational capacity necessary to renegotiate bargains effectively. Groups with fewer than one-third local members I coded as "non-local."

These recruitment patterns were manifest in the anticipated geographic fashion: local groups' recruitment was more geographically concentrated than that of non-local groups (hypothesis 1.1). To capture these spatial trends and approximate geographic dispersion, I collected the longitudes and latitudes of the center of each municipality in Colombia to construct a matrix of pairwise distances. I then determined the distance between the towns of origin for every pair of combatants within each organization and took the average at the organizational level. This average pairwise distance between unit members' towns of origin ranged from 0.37 miles to 274 miles, with a mean of 135 miles. The

[1] In Colombia, a *barrio* is an urban neighborhood; a *comuna* (commune) is an urban administrative unit that comprises multiple neighborhoods in larger cities; a *vereda* is a rural hamlet; and a *corregimiento* is a rural area that includes a population center.



MAP 4.1. Paramilitary Zones of Operation.

proportion of local combatants in a unit and the average pairwise distance between their places of recruitment correlated strongly (−0.8). A sense of the differences in these patterns is suggested by the extreme ends of the spectrum: a group with 89 percent local combatants had an average recruitment dispersion level of less than one mile, whereas a group with just 14 percent local combatants had a dispersion level of 208 miles. In Colombia, the geographic concentration of the group's recruitment and its degree of "localness" are thus nearly synonymous, justifying the assumption made in Chapter 2. In later chapters,

I explore whether this is unique to Colombian recruitment and what the implications might be were these facets of recruitment not to move together.

PREWAR NETWORKS

On the basis of the geography of recruitment, it is anticipated that a variety of preexisting network structures exist within armed organizations. Local groups are hypothesized to be more embedded in prewar social webs and their combatants are predicted to share a higher density of networks from their past lives than non-local groups' fighters (hypothesis 1.2). These strong ties, together with local factions' geographic clustering after war, serve to resolve collective action problems and help sustain the organizations after demobilizing (Taylor 1988). Such networks vary in nature, ranging from bonds based on former membership in other coercive structures – such as drug cartels, guerrilla factions, vigilante groups, or army battalions – or association in legal entities such as labor unions, ranching organizations, or social movements. Ideally, one would gather drawings and diagrams of the prewar networks of each ex-combatant at each level of the command chain. These would document the density and also the character of these networks, so that they could be mapped onto the organizational structures. While it is practically impossible to collect these prewar network data for the entire population of more than 35,000 combatants, two of the surveys offer quantitative approximations of the strength of the social ties that predated the war. These surveys enable me to evaluate the proposed relationship between recruitment and networks in a way that extends beyond my interviews which, although extensive and triangulated from different perspectives, do not constitute a random sample of individuals. (Chapters 6 and 7 offer detailed and more nuanced probes of the nature of the network structures in the three case study areas, using qualitative information.)

The first of these two surveys is the subsample of paramilitaries in a study of recidivism I conducted in 2011–14 in collaboration with Laura Paler and Cyrus Samii. In this "recidivism survey," 683 ex-paramilitaries responded about the extent of social connectivity in their units. The responses generate two measures: the proportion of individuals in each armed group who knew people in the unit at the time of entering; and the proportion who joined the group as a result of these social networks.[2] This is a relatively small sample on which to generate conclusions at the level of the armed organization. However, it is possible from these data to observe the broad preexisting network patterns that held across local and non-local groups.

This survey is remarkable for its sample, which was nationally representative and drew respondents from both within and outside of prison. Given

[2] Respondents indicated whether they knew all members, more than one-half of the members, less than one-half, or almost no members at the time of joining the group (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2014).

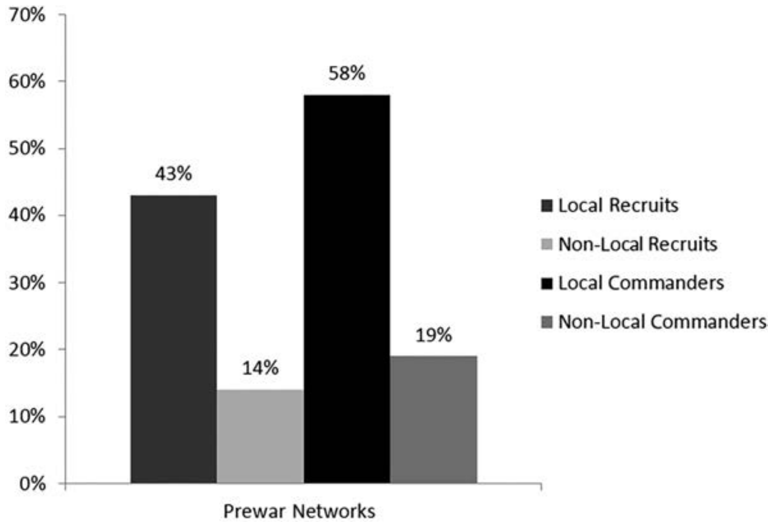


FIGURE 4.1. Prewar Networks by Levels of Command.

the nature of its sampling strategy, the survey allows me to draw inferences about the entire population of ex-combatants. Accurate recall of the time period before the respondents joined the war always constitutes a concern, and potentially more so for this survey as it was administered several years after the peace agreements, in 2012–13. Although answers about networks after demobilization present a higher risk of distortion (for reasons explained subsequently), there is no reason to expect that individuals would deliberately misrepresent their prewar networks. The results of this survey suggest that 43 percent of local recruits had prewar networks with members of their unit, whereas only 14 percent of non-local fighters possessed such preexisting bonds. (See Figure 4.1.) With the sample-size considerations in mind, I aggregate these data to the paramilitary bloque level to see whether units that were made up of local fighters had higher levels of social connectivity. I find that they did.

Are these patterns observed at different levels of the command chain? It might make a difference if commanders had social relationships among themselves. Unfortunately, the survey did not ask precisely whom the individuals knew prior to joining, nor the rank of the members of their preexisting networks. Therefore, I can assess only whether local commanders proved more likely than non-local commanders to have ties to members of their faction prior to joining.

Estimating respondents' rank posed an additional challenge in the Colombian context. Responses tended to be edited because former combatants believed that, if they admitted to holding rank, they might be tried for crimes against humanity. Midranking commanders, especially, sought to avoid being recognized by claiming to have served as foot soldiers. The countervailing desire to

boast to the survey enumerators somewhat counteracted this potential source of bias: the commanders often wished to intimidate and, given that they came from a world in which power equated with violence, their tendency to brag about violent escapades often revealed itself. It did so on several occasions during my in-depth interviews. One former midranking paramilitary officer offered to bring me to the hill where he had brought civilians to rape, torture, and kill them. Another boasted of multiple crimes he had committed for which he had not been charged. Despite this pattern of flexing their muscles displayed by midlevel leaders, the tendency to understate their rank often proved dominant.

Meanwhile, low-ranking combatants "hope[d] the commanders [would] accept guilt for all of it so that they [wouldn't] have any problems." The foot soldiers were "scared to talk until their commanders talk[ed] and assume[d] the guilt."[3] The tendency among the rank and file (and even among the commanders) was to lie not only about their rank, but also about their roles in the armed group, claiming that they operated in a support capacity and that their responsibilities in the organization did not involve combat duties, but only informant, medical, financing, logistical, cooking, or similar noncombat functions. These roles and responsibilities indicated whether the individuals were likely to have employed violence as part of their jobs. Although the respondents wished, for judicial purposes, to deny using violence, this was offset by the fact that they also feared that, were they to claim they were only "supporters," even their participation in the paramilitaries might become subject to doubt; if they became labeled "false combatants," they would lose their reintegration benefits.

Given these biases in the responses about position, I estimated rank using responses to multiple questions rather than relying on a single indicator. These included the following: (1) What were your main activities while you were in the armed faction? (2) Did you have people under your command while in this unit? How many on average? and (3) What was the highest rank you attained while in the unit? Using these criteria, in the recidivism survey sample, I identified eighty-two commanders of high or middle rank (commander of a brigade, battalion, company, or squad). Of the commanders who operated locally, 58 percent had prewar ties with members of their group, whereas only 19 percent of the non-local commanders exhibited preexisting social relations. (See Figure 4.1 for these prewar network results at the different levels of the command chain.)

As a secondary evaluation of the relationship between the geography of recruitment and preexisting networks, I exploit data from the survey of 885 ex-paramilitaries conducted by the FIP in 2008. Observing these patterns across surveys conducted by different enumerators with different samples at different times and with alternative, but compatible, question wording offers support to the validity of the findings from any single survey. The FIP survey is potentially less vulnerable to issues of recall, given that the survey was

[3] Ex-paramilitary, interview by author, Tibú, 6 June 2008.

TABLE 4.2. *Combatants' Prewar Networks*

		Geography of Recruitment	
		Non-local Group	**Local Group**
Preexisting social networks	No social ties	48%	34%
	Social ties	52%	66%
	Total	100%	100%

conducted closer in time to the combatants' demobilization. However, it exhibits several limitations as a result of its sampling design: it drew respondents only from the population of reintegration program participants in seventeen of Colombia's thirty-two departments and, when enumerators could not locate many of the sampled individuals, it became essentially a convenience sample.[4] Although subject to potential bias, the FIP survey results are largely consistent with those of the recidivism survey. I examine whether the individuals came into contact with the armed factions or were recruited into them through friends, family, or members of their community. I find that if a combatant belonged to a local armed group, the odds that the combatant had been introduced to the armed group by someone he or she knew were double, compared to a combatant participating in a non-local group. Thus, local groups seem to have enjoyed stronger prewar networks among their combatants, and also to have attracted members through these social ties as one of their forms of recruitment. This is not to say that all members of non-local factions were introduced to their armed groups through strangers or by seeking out the factions themselves, but that the latter forms of recruitment proved more common among non-local groups than among their local counterparts. We can see in Table 4.2 that, according to the FIP data, roughly half of non-local group members enlisted through social networks. Instead, the difference between local and non-local groups was that, although individuals of a non-local faction may have come into contact with their armed faction through a social connection, this tended to be a single individual, such as someone with whom they had served while completing their military service. In the recidivism survey, 85 percent of non-local group members reported that almost none of the members of their unit were people they knew before joining the armed group. In contrast, all local combatants responded that they knew at least a minority and nearly 22 percent of local combatants knew more than half or almost all members of

[4] Maria Victoria Llorente (FIP Director), interview by author, Bogotá, February 2011. A convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling strategy whereby respondents are selected because of their convenient accessibility to the researcher. Although the FIP sample suffers from bias, the distribution of combatants from local and non-local groups in the sample is roughly proportional to that in the population of inference: neither "type" was less easily located or less willing to participate.

their unit before joining. So although both local and non-local groups engaged in recruitment through social ties, the density and structure of their preexisting networks differed. These differences in prewar networks do not extend to the combatants' *reasons* for joining the armed groups. In the recidivism survey, local and non-local recruits proved equally likely to have chosen to enter their armed factions because of social networks.

It is worth taking a moment to explore whether, in general, different types of individuals self-selected into local or into non-local groups; these different types might then also be more or less likely to remobilize after disarming. We may suspect, for example, that those who joined for ideological or other non-material interests might be less likely to remilitarize after demobilizing. If these types of recruits were also less likely to join non-local factions, this means that the motivations of the member base, rather than the members' recruitment mapping, are what matter and could help explain variation both in recruitment and in remilitarization. (Recall, however, that both types of groups may remilitarize, depending on their strategic configurations.)

Using data from the FIP survey, I constructed a variety of indicators to explore whether local groups' combatants differed from those of non-local groups on a number of prewar observable traits. These included gender, year of birth, pre-recruitment household wealth, urban or rural character of residence, political preferences, military service, marital status, and parents' educational attainment and political participation. I also examined combatants' reasons for joining the armed units, building on the motivation-centric literature that differentiates combatants in binary ways: "consumers" versus "investors" or the "greedy" versus the "aggrieved."[5]

In this analysis, I find that local and non-local groups' recruits differed little in terms of their motivations, socioeconomic backgrounds, ideological convictions, or demographics. I observe no divergence in conditional mean differences at even the 10 percent significance level for any of the observable indicators (see Table A.1 in Appendix). This accords with my qualitative findings. My interviewees who belonged to local factions differed little from those who opted into non-local units. They tended to be young males who were risk-prone, poor and, at times, "greedy" – seeking material rather than ideological gains. Many faced personal security problems and needed protection. Some were veterans of service in the Colombian armed forces or in another illegal armed faction, and had no marketable skills besides their expertise in violence. Many were victims of the cultures of violence stemming from Colombia's chronic criminality and from human rights abuses committed by paramilitaries, rebels, and the military. These profiles varied only slightly as I journeyed across Colombia's paramilitary-swept territory conducting interviews. Whether such an individual joined a local or a non-local warring faction seemed fairly arbitrary or random. (This does not imply that a group's leaders' choice to recruit locally or not was

[5] Collier and Hoeffler (2004); Weinstein (2007).

also random; I return to this point in Chapter 5.) Interestingly, evidence from other contexts around the world and at other times in history is consistent: in Sierra Leone, Humphreys and Weinstein (2008b) find little divergence between the recruit types that fought in the non-local rebel forces versus those that enlisted in the local militias. Studying nineteenth-century France, Gould (1991, 720) similarly concludes that "aside from the fact that Guards in volunteer units were recruited without regard to residence, differences between these two types of battalions [the non-locally-deployed volunteer Guard and the locally-deployed Paris National Guard] were minimal." Investigating the American Civil War, Costa and Kahn (2003) find little evidence of selection into army companies that exhibited homogeneity versus heterogeneity in terms of birthplace. I return to these cases in Chapter 8.

In sum, Colombia affords significant variation in the geography of recruitment patterns. In this context, local groups that drew their recruits from their zones of operation tended to recruit in more geographically delimited areas and to benefit from social ties between their combatants that predated their entry into the war.

DYNAMICS DURING WAR: SOCIALIZATION AND MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS

The book's theory leaps from this recruitment phase to the demobilization stage of the conflict and peace cycle, with little explanatory weight resting upon the conflict phase. First, however, it is worth pausing on the conflict experience of the armed actors and on a very specific element of that experience: socialization. This book proposes that the links between recruitment and enduring organizational capacity center on prewar networks and postwar geographic proximity. Local and non-local organizations, however, may instead diverge in an alternative and yet equally meaningful way that affects the likelihood of sustained cohesion: they might differ in their war experience, and specifically in the nature of their indoctrination, training, and fighting. For example, if local armed groups are socialized into more cohesive and militarily effective units during the war than non-local units, they should be better able to retain the capacity to act collectively after the war. Socialization can construct strong solidarity, shared identities, and commitment to the group; the experience of war-fighting can produce strong normative bonds of mutual obligation and cooperation.[6] Recent research has demonstrated the importance of socialization in accounting for a variety of outcomes, including strong variation in repertoires of violence.[7] These indoctrination methods may link individual members' self-interests and self-identities to the organizations after disarming, reducing the collective action problem inherent in remobilizing armed groups. This would lead us to expect local groups to remain more cohesive than

[6] Checkel (2014). See also Heckathorn (1988); Shils and Janowitz (1948).

[7] Cohen (2013); Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood (2014); Hoover Green (2011); Wood (2008, 2010).

non-local units after war not because of stronger preexisting bonds or geographic clustering, but because of the relationships forged during war through their initiation, bonding, and training programs and their combat experiences.

However, several pieces of evidence suggest that the indoctrination and conflict experiences and the nature of the bonds developed during wartime of local and non-local groups did not diverge significantly in the Colombian case. First, I find that the fact that the non-local groups' combatants returned to different places and dispersed after demobilizing generated immediate decay in the structures irrespective of the extent of socialization or wartime cohesion. One commander of a largely non-local group summarized this dynamic: "Up until the day of demobilization, there was cohesion, there was unity of command," but after demobilizing, "everyone went their way, chose their own destinies."[8] Meanwhile, non-local groups, whose ex-combatants remained in close proximity after disarming, preserved their collective capacities, again regardless of how they indoctrinated their fighters. Additionally, non-local units proved to be some of the most militarily effective armed groups during the conflict, a point I return to below.

To further evaluate the proposed socialization mechanism, I used survey evidence to inquire whether local and non-local units varied in their wartime cohesion or engaged in different forms of indoctrination. The recidivism survey data suggest that local units proved no more cohesive than non-local units *during* the war. This survey used an index made up of a battery of questions derived from Griffith (1988)'s psychological study of military unit cohesion. The questions measured the quality of instrumental and affective relationships among soldiers, the quality of relationships between the junior soldiers and their leaders, internalization of group values, confidence in leaders and in unit combat effectiveness, group social climate, and the effectiveness of teamwork. The mean of this index for local groups was 0.07 and for non-local groups was −0.02, not a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.29$).

The FIP survey data also suggest a high degree of similarity in the extent of indoctrination and of training in these two types of organizations. (See Figure 4.2.) Specifically, combatants from local and non-local units reported having participated in similar forms of military training and political/ideological indoctrination.[9] They also had been subject to similar forms of discipline during their time in the belligerent factions.

[8] Paramilitary commander, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[9] Respondents were asked whether they received any training before combat. Separately, they were asked if they received each of eight specific forms of training. In addition to the results of the military and political training shown in Figure 4.2, respondents also reported similar training in finances, communication, intelligence, administration, and propaganda. For ideological training, respondents were asked, "How often did you attend meetings in which you discussed the political objectives of the group or its ideology?" I coded ideological training as "1" if respondents reported attending meetings at least a few times per year (few times per year, monthly, biweekly, weekly, or daily), and "0" if they reported attending almost never or never.

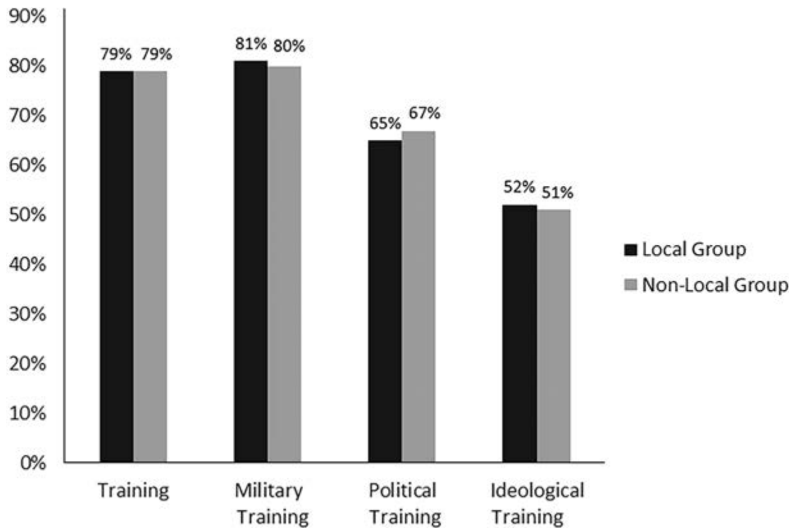


FIGURE 4.2. Socialization and Training by Recruitment Type.

The recidivism survey data suggest that, if anything, local groups proved less likely to engage in organizational practices such as socialization: 36 percent of combatants belonging to local groups reported never having participated in discussions or political training about the reasons for fighting compared to 28 percent of non-local fighters who answered this way.

Local groups' tight bonds likely played a substitution effect, rendering formal socialization and indoctrination practices less necessary for these groups. It is, moreover, important to note that similarity in the quantities of training in the same categories does not necessarily mean that the content of the ideological and political training or extent of socialization were the same across the groups. The surveys did not measure the nuances of group socialization, making it difficult to fully engage socialization as an alternative explanation. Additionally, it may be that the paramilitaries in general did not indoctrinate their soldiers, providing insufficient variation on which to evaluate this explanation. Paramilitaries certainly engaged in less extensive political and ideological training than did the guerrillas.[10] However, the responses of the former paramilitaries indicate that roughly one-third participated in political training often or sometimes, one-third did so rarely, and the remaining one-third never engaged in political training, suggesting that both socialization and variation in socialization existed in the case of the paramilitaries.

Conflict experience undoubtedly shaped the inner characters of the armed organizations in critical ways not captured with the survey data. For example,

[10] In the survey, 85 percent of the guerrillas reported having political training often or sometimes.

as Wood (2008) demonstrates, war experience may powerfully affect identities and networks, and social ties among combatants often evolve endogenously over the course of conflict.[11] However, in Colombia, I do not find a difference between local and non-local groups in how the war influenced their social networks. The data cast doubt on whether conflict experience might constitute the key mechanism linking recruitment patterns and postwar cohesion in the Colombian case. Chapter 8 considers socialization in the context of other armed organizations around the world. In Sierra Leone, for example, I find that combatant socialization during the war altered the bonds of non-local groups, suggesting a scope condition to the book's theory.

Military Effectiveness

As noted earlier, local and non-local groups did not diverge significantly in their military effectiveness. Some non-local paramilitary armies, such as Bloque Catatumbo and Bloque Centauros (discussed in Chapter 7), were among the most powerful. One commander of Bloque Centauros explained: "Many people arrived with a great deal of experience; 'ancient' people came and we obtained very good commanders this way. Not that we couldn't find good [local] commanders [in the department of Meta,] because there were commanders … but some good high-ranked commanders came from elsewhere."[12] In contrast, a commander of a predominantly local unit related how "a native man, born in the heart of the Montes de María, assumed the general command. As a result, the [Montes de María bloque] began to grow. This enabled [the faction's] presence, having a man in charge from the region, who knew the region like the palm of his hand, who knew the communities."[13] From strategic and tactical perspectives, local and non-local commanders and rank and file seem to bring different assets and liabilities to their units. These may balance each other out.

We can measure military effectiveness in at least three ways: the size of the armies, the size of the military sphere of influence, and the level of defection from the group prior to demobilization. On all three accounts, non-local groups proved comparable with local groups. The average force size of the local and intermediate factions equaled 1,019 combatants; non-local groups contained, on average, 880 fighters. The average size of the territory in which they operated did not diverge to a statistically significant degree because of the large variation within each category. Non-local groups controlled,

[11] Other scholars of contentious politics document similarly endogenous networks in their cases of mobilization. See, for example, Goodwin (2001); McAdam (1986). Gould (1991, 719) writes: "Mobilization does not just depend on social ties; it also creates them. Although members of a protest organization may have joined because of a pre-existing social tie to an activist, they also form new social relations while participating in collective protest."

[12] Interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

[13] Commander Édwar Cobos Téllez, Bloque Montes de María, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

on average, 4,350 square kilometers; local groups operated in areas averaging 1,860 square kilometers. The average percentage of the group that defected in the year prior to demobilization was 9.7 percent for local groups and 8.9 percent for non-local ones. Military effectiveness did not seem to correlate with recruitment geography. This also suggests that the commanders were not "looking down the game tree"; what drove their recruitment strategy was not what would preserve their capacity after the war, but what they believed would work during the war. Additionally, I find no evidence of shifts in recruitment strategies as the peace agreements drew closer, when we would expect endogeneity issues to intensify; this further suggests that leaders' expectations about their groups' post-demobilization trajectories did not influence their recruitment decisions.

POSTWAR GEOGRAPHY

I turn now to the impact of recruitment on geographic settlement patterns, maintenance of social networks, and unit cohesion after the peace accords. According to my theory, we should expect local groups' combatants to cluster geographically postwar and remain where they fought, and non-local groups' fighters to disperse and displace away from their zones of deployment (hypothesis 1.3). Recruitment should strongly influence these postwar migration patterns, determining whether armed groups are able to keep a strong presence in their military spheres of influence after demobilizing or if they instead lose this territorial presence and the assets that go with it.

Before summarizing the aggregate geographic patterns at the organizational level, it is worth considering how individual ex-combatants make their migration decisions after demobilizing. The causal logic in this book suggests that there exists a great deal of path dependence, with relocation determined by recruitment rather than by individual agency or postwar considerations. In particular, individuals should tend to return to where they were recruited, underscoring the importance of the geography of recruitment. The recidivism survey asked the ex-paramilitaries, "Thinking back to your decision on where to first settle after demobilizing, did [...] play a role in your decision?" Response options were being (1) with your family and friends; (2) in the place you were born; (3) close to combatant or ex-combatant friends; (4) where your group operated; (5) where there were the best labor opportunities; (6) where you felt safe; (7) where re-recruitment by an armed group would be unlikely; (8) where you would be far away from the conflict; (9) where the government or the army relocated you; and (10) other. When asked which of these was the most important factor in the respondent's relocation decision, homeward migration far outweighed other considerations, with 71 percent responding that they valued returning home

TABLE 4.3. *Postwar Physical Proximity of Ex-combatants*

Postwar Migration Options	Dispersed Recruitment	Concentrated Recruitment
Return home postwar	Low clustering	High clustering
Remain in war theater postwar	High clustering	High clustering
Displace to new localities postwar	Low clustering	Low clustering

and being with family and friends.[14] This tendency is predicted to be more pronounced among combatants who operated locally than among those who were displaced from their homes by their wartime deployment. Combatants stationed in their regions of origin are unlikely to move away from those regions. Indeed, the survey finds that 84 percent of local combatants remained in or returned to their homes. Although the framework also predicts that this trend will hold among non-local recruits, it should prove less strong because, already far from their homes, these fighters face significantly reduced costs of further displacement and so may be more pulled by the typical logics of migration, such as employment and security considerations. Each combatant may possess a different optimal location based on these considerations. Many non-locally deployed former fighters migrate to large urban centers where employment opportunities are perceived to be greater, they enjoy contacts from their home communities, and they can disappear in anonymity and reduce their security risks. Forty-six percent of non-local recruits returned to their place of origin after demobilizing. These differential patterns render the non-local groups' postwar dispersion more pronounced and highlight why, even if a faction were to recruit from one or several concentrated localities, but deploy non-locally, its members would still tend to disperse after demobilizing. These findings may be mapped onto a table of postwar clustering that combines recruitment and migration patterns (see Table 4.3). Non-local groups tend to engage in more dispersed recruitment, but even if they carry out concentrated recruitment, their combatants tend to choose among the three postwar migration options: returning home, remaining where they fought, or displacing to new zones.

In Colombia, armed units' recruitment patterns largely determined their combatants' geographic dispersion postwar. Local groups' fighters tended to stay highly clustered where they fought – at home – whereas non-local groups'

[14] I also examine the results of the IOM survey of all collectively-demobilized paramilitaries to verify this finding. The IOM survey was conducted at the moment of demobilization and is therefore not so susceptible to recall problems. It captures migration intentions rather than where the individuals actually relocated. In the survey, 86 percent of the 31,473 ex-paramilitaries reported that they planned to return to their families and places of origin.

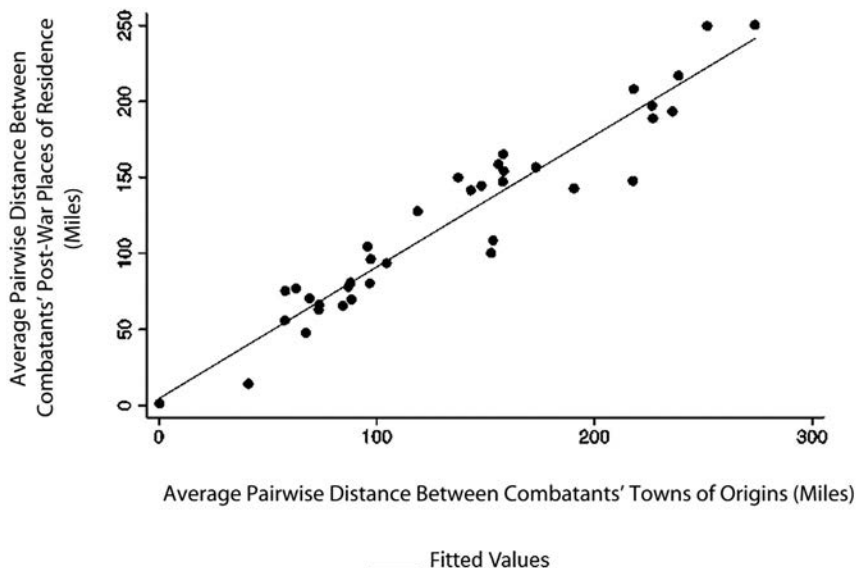


FIGURE 4.3. Recruitment Patterns and Geographic Dispersion Postwar.

members spread out to their heterogeneous places of origin, stayed in their war theaters as rump units, or relocated to new localities, often in urban centers.

I calculated the geographic dispersion of each paramilitary group's fighters, employing the geographic coordinates of where they settled after demobilizing.[15] The average pairwise distance between combatants' postwar places of residence ranged from 1.2 miles – meaning nearly all of the group's combatants were living within about a mile of each other – to 250 miles, with a mean of 121 miles. The average pairwise distance for local groups was seventy-two miles, whereas the average for non-local groups was 162 miles. The correlation between the proportion of local combatants and this average pairwise distance was 0.81, indicating that local groups' members were significantly more physically clustered postwar than non-local groups. Figure 4.3 demonstrates the strong relationship between the dispersion of recruitment and the dispersion of postwar residence.

Local groups' combatants remained not only much more geographically proximate to one another than non-local groups' fighters, but they also tended to remain in their war theaters, enabling them to continue to exercise influence over those territories, to benefit from the organizational assets those territories afforded, such as resources, refuge, intelligence networks, and relationships with civilians, and to retain their power. The correlation between the

[15] Postwar place of residence is measured using IOM and ACR data on all paramilitaries, collected during the year following demobilization.

proportion of the armed group that was local and the proportion that remained in the group's zone of operation was 0.93.

It is worth disaggregating these findings by rank and considering whether local commanders were also more likely than non-local commanders to remain in their areas of military influence and in close proximity to their subordinates. Of the roughly 35,000 ex-paramilitaries, I identified 1,702 that held rank by cross-checking questions about role and rank across all of the surveys and also by employing administrative data from the ACR. I find that 19 percent of non-local commanders remained in the zone where they had fought, compared to 63 percent of local commanders. In practice this meant that these local commanders could continue to control their trafficking routes and extortion rackets, sustaining their stream of finances; could maintain their alliances with regional military and police personnel and judges, providing them refuge and judicial cover; and could preserve their relationships with the social elite, businesspeople, politicians, and civilian population, affording them leverage over the economic, political, and social lives of the territories and block-by-block reconnaissance on what was happening in those territories. Most importantly, the commanders' continued presence where they fought meant that they could continue to keep tabs on their former combatants, most of whom tended to remain in the zone. Because local fighters and leaders did not change social contexts after demobilizing, they continued with their former modes of operating. Their wartime endowments remained intact. Non-local commanders, by contrast, tended to lose these assets.

POSTWAR NETWORKS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

These geographic patterns have strong implications for the postwar survival of the organizational structures. If my argument is correct, we should expect participation in non-local armed organizations to be negatively associated with sustained networks between fellow soldiers and with persisting command and control mechanisms in the aftermath of peace accords (hypothesis 1.4). I draw on Granovetter (1973)'s concept of "strong ties," defined as a combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services that characterize the ties. Using this definition, I probe the horizontal and vertical networks between ex-combatants, relying on data from several surveys. Interviewees were asked about their ties with their former comrades-in-arms: their social networks, face-to-face interactions, norms of reciprocity, and mutual dependence. Former fighters were also questioned about their relationships with and reliance on their ex-commanders and the extent to which the chain of authority had been dismantled. In this section, I first explore the horizontal ties and then turn to the vertical ones.

I begin the exploration with the comprehensive ex-combatant survey administered 2007–08. This was the largest survey, with 10,941 ex-paramilitary respondents; its size enables me to draw inferences at the

level of the armed organization. Questions about postwar networks tended to be somewhat sensitive and answers may have been distorted as a result. Norms of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) advocate breaking up combatant networks and dissolving organizational structures. Accordingly, respondents, cognizant of these pressures, likely downplayed their ties to their former comrades, responding to the "social desirability" of doing so. Given ongoing judicial proceedings, there is also reason to expect that lower-ranking fighters under-reported their continuing relationships with their ex-commanders, many of whom were implicated in human rights abuses and presumed guilty of ongoing illegal activities. Additionally, admitting to ties to commanders likely generated fear among the respondents that they would be asked questions about those superiors. "Tattle-tales" were subjected to harsh reprisals, including death. To avoid any such interrogations, ex-combatants would have denied relationships with their former bosses. Fortunately, the bias works against my argument: if local group commanders retained more power over their recruits than non-local ones, the bias toward denying a relationship with one's former boss should be stronger for local groups, thus masking the extent of the difference. The divergence between local and non-local factions therefore may be even greater than that reported. Given the various potential biases, as additional robustness checks, I triangulate the evidence and employ two alternative sources of information on the social networks between paramilitaries: ex-combatants' families and their reintegration psychologists. As additional robustness checks, I evaluate whether the findings are sustained by evidence from the recidivism survey and the FIP survey.

Horizontal Ties

The comprehensive 2007–08 survey asked ex-combatants about the composition of their groups of friends and the organizations to which they belonged after demobilizing. It also inquired whether the respondents felt that recourse to fellow ex-combatants proved the most effective way to deal with their financial or security problems. In this section, I first explore each question separately and then examine indices that combine the questions.

In the 2007–08 survey, ex-combatants from non-local groups appeared 16 percent less likely than their local counterparts to have retained ex-comrades-in-arms among their networks of friends. Variation was less pronounced than I would have anticipated, likely for two reasons. One, the questions did not specify whether the ex-combatants in their postwar networks were from their own former armed group or from other factions. Two, and closely related to this, reintegration program participants automatically interacted with other ex-combatants in postwar psychological workshops, reconciliation activities, and education and job training programs. Accordingly, a high proportion of all former fighters (66 percent) maintained ex-combatants

in their "groups of friends," whereas 34 percent reported having only civilians in their circle of friends.

Looking to what may be a better measure of organizational cohesion, I find that combatants from non-local groups proved 39 percent less likely than those who belonged to local factions to participate alongside ex-paramilitary comrades in associations (political parties, community action committees, cooperatives, etc.), a much denser form of interaction. This reflects the trend, more common among local factions, of paramilitary organizations transitioning into sociopolitical entities. Indeed, by using the valuable interview data of all of the former fighters' psychologists (who delivered the government reintegration benefits to the ex-combatants, their families, and communities, and observed them frequently), I find that communities in which the ex-combatants were local and embedded to be 2.23 times more likely to witness the successful creation of ex-combatant sociopolitical associations than communities populated by non-local demobilized populations.

As an alternative measure of the ex-combatants' postwar networks, aimed at more directly capturing norms of reciprocity between former comrades, I examine whether the ex-combatants believed that turning to their ex-comrades constituted the best way to resolve their problems. In the 2007–08 survey, I find significant differences between former combatants who belonged to local factions and those who belonged to non-local factions with respect to their likelihood of turning to their commanders, but not with respect to their probability of seeking help from other former combatants of their own rank. This result derives partially from the wording of the questions. The series of questions asked: "if you had [financial/security] problems, to whom would you turn for help?" with respondents able to select up to two responses. Answer options included family, friends, government entities, or no one. The wording of the question reflects the reintegration literature's assumption (and indeed my own assumption upon commencing my fieldwork) that civilian networks operate as substitutes or rivals to combatant ones, and that restoring ex-combatants' links to the noncombatant world through family reunification, employment, and civic engagement would inevitably dilute ex-combatants' affiliations with their former armed comrades. During my time in the field, however, I found that these civilian bonds may instead overlap and coexist with, complement, and reinforce ex-militant ones, rather than replacing and undermining them. Accordingly, former fighters who turn to their family or friends may at the same time be relying on former combatants, something that the question may not be picking up. Social desirability renders the respondents, when asked to name only two sources of support, likely to name the noncombatant ones.[16]

[16] Although with a different population, this interpretation is partially confirmed by the prison survey I conducted in collaboration with the OAS Peace Mission (MAPP) in 2008 in which we used similar question wording, but did not limit the responses to two. The respondents tended to name former combatants after they had named their kin and civilian friend support systems.

In order to identify the common underlying pattern in postwar networks across the questions rather than potentially idiosyncratic noise associated with a particular question, I combine the various indicators into indices. I first use an additive index and then a factor-weighted index. I also examine a binary variable that captures the sustained ties to the organization. The significant differences between the postwar networks of members of local and those of non-local factions are sustained across the various indices, using both continuous and dichotomous versions of the "local/non-local" recruitment geography variable. (See Table A.2 in Appendix.)

As robustness checks of these relationships, I explore the preservation of postwar networks and cohesion using a battery of questions in the recidivism survey of 683 ex-paramilitaries.[17] The first three questions asked about the proportion of the respondent's social network comprising ex-combatants and the frequency of interactions with other ex-combatants. The remaining questions asked about the density of these ties. Specifically, the respondents were asked to identify (by aliases) their three closest friends and three people from whom they could solicit a loan were they in an emergency. The enumerators then inquired if these individuals were ex-combatants or civilians. I find that the proportion of local combatants in a unit significantly correlates with the index of horizontal networks, although only at the 10 percent significance level.

As a further check, I examine the responses to a survey of 1,860 nuclear families of ex-paramilitaries. We might expect this survey to underestimate the extent of the ex-combatant networks, as ex-fighters who are the most likely to be densely tied to their former armed organizations might be the least likely to have families. However, only eighteen cases in the sample frame fell into this category.[18] The responses of the ex-combatants' families were undoubtedly also affected by biases, but likely different ones, providing a useful triangulation of information. From this survey, I extract the answers to two questions regarding postwar networks: (1) who made up a majority of the ex-combatants' friends, and (2) whether the former fighters kept in touch with friends from their armed groups. The findings again indicate similar determinants of postwar networks; ex-combatants proved 70 percent more likely to remain in touch with their former comrades-in-arms if they had belonged to a local faction than to a non-local one, and 29 percent more likely to retain fellow fighters among their postwar circle of friends.

[17] The relationship between recruitment patterns and the survival of the organizational structures holds in the FIP survey of 885 ex-paramilitaries as well. These FIP data suggest that fighters that belonged to local armed organizations were nearly three times as likely to remain linked to their former superiors after demobilizing. The odds of locally deployed fighters belonging to an association composed of ex-combatants was 2.5 times that of non-local combatants.

[18] In these eighteen cases in which the ex-combatants did not have families to interview, the families of the ex-combatants were not surveyed because the ex-combatants lived alone and had no family nearby (sixteen cases) or the family was deceased (two cases).

As an additional perspective, I examine a survey of the reintegration psychologists.[19] Their frequent interactions with the ex-combatant population uniquely positioned them to understand this population. The questionnaire explicitly asked the psychologists about the cohesion of the armed group: "Did the paramilitary structure that operated in the municipality remain intact post-demobilization?" This questionnaire requested that the psychologists respond about circumstances at the municipality level to render the answers anonymous.[20] Of the psychologists answering about places where non-local groups operated, 22 percent assessed that the structures were at least somewhat intact whereas 46 percent of those responding about places where local groups operated judged these organizations to be at least somewhat intact.[21]

Because many variables may affect individuals' social networks, as a final robustness check, I evaluate whether recruitment patterns influence postwar ties and organizational cohesion, even controlling for these other variables. We might expect individuals who belonged to economically well-endowed groups to prove less likely to retain strong combatant networks, because resource-rich groups ostensibly attract opportunistic joiners and suffer greater vulnerability to organizational fragmentation (Weinstein 2002, 2007). At the same time, robust sources of funding could also enable groups to preserve their membership and organizational cohesion through selective incentives, that is, salaries. We also might anticipate that individuals who belonged to paramilitary groups characterized by stronger ideology and commitment to long-term organizational goals would be more likely to retain their allegiance and links to their former comrades.[22] In addition, we might imagine that individual traits affect ex-combatants' likelihood of retaining ties to the members of their factions. For example, if female fighters experienced greater empowerment in the armed

[19] At the time of the survey in 2008, there were 226 psychologists (*tutores*) working with the population of ex-combatants. Each of the former combatants in the reintegration program was assigned to a psychologist, and all of the psychologists responded to the survey.

[20] Anonymity proved critical because of several sources of bias: (1) the psychologists sought positive employment reviews and had incentives to exaggerate the reintegration and reconciliation success in their regions; (2) they wished to uphold "patient confidentiality" and not betray the trust of their human subjects; and (3) they feared retribution by the ex-combatants or new armed groups if they reported on violence and recidivism. The survey generated data for eighty-nine municipalities. Given the municipal-level data, we cannot know to which organization the psychologists are referring and therefore we cannot know whether it was local or non-local. Accordingly, I restrict the analysis to the municipalities where either only one paramilitary group was present or where the groups had similar recruit bases and thus the predictions for the multiple groups are similar.

[21] The survey also asked whether the ex-combatants "moved in groups": 31 percent of the psychologists working in places where non-local factions had deployed responded that at least some of the former fighters moved in groups, whereas 42 percent of the psychologists in places where local groups operated responded this way. The results are similar if I take the average of the responses of the psychologists working in each municipality.

[22] Calhoun (1991); Scott (1976); Wood (2003).

organizations than in civilian society, they might suffer status reversal when they demobilize and, as a result, be more likely to sustain their bonds to their former armed groups (Viterna 2006). At the same time, many female combatants did not directly participate in the armed organizations, but rather "hung around the fighters, slept with the fighters, fed the fighters, or were related to the fighters,"[23] suggesting potentially greater ease in pulling away from the formerly militarized web.[24] Marital status may exercise a similar influence. We might anticipate that age and duration in the faction could affect individuals' decisions to separate from or remain within the network structures of their ex-armed group. The context in which the individuals reside after the war may also matter. Specifically, we might expect ex-combatants facing security threats to be less likely to sever ties to an obvious source of protection: their former armed group. Those residing in areas in which their armed group perpetrated high levels of atrocity might face difficulties gaining acceptance by their communities, strengthening their bonds to their ex-comrades-in-arms. Finally, the imprisonment, assassination, or extradition of the group's leadership might affect the members' likelihood of remaining connected to their former armed faction.

I test whether the significant relationship between the geography of recruitment and the maintenance of combatant networks is robust to the inclusion of these factors. The description of how the variables were operationalized and the full multivariate results can be found in Table A.3 in the Appendix. Figure 4.4 presents the predicted values from the regression of the additive index of postwar networks for the minimum, mean, and maximum proportions of local combatants, controlling for the other factors that might impact social ties. The figure confirms the pattern that local groups retain more intact postwar networks than non-local groups.

Vertical Ties and Information Problems

Organizational cohesion rests critically not only with preserved horizontal ties, but also with the maintenance of the vertical networks between commanders, midlevel leaders, and foot soldiers. To capture persistence of chains of authority, resolution of principal-agent problems, and officers' access to information about their troops, the 2007–08 comprehensive survey asked ex-combatants about their frequency of contact with their former commanders. The results indicate that ex-combatants from non-local groups were 44 percent less likely than their local counterparts to retain interpersonal bonds with former commanders after disarming and proved roughly half as likely to turn to former armed superiors in the event of financial or security troubles.

[23] Ex-combatant woman, interview by author, Comuna 2, Medellín, 6 March 2008.
[24] Annan et al. (2011); Humphreys and Weinstein (2007).

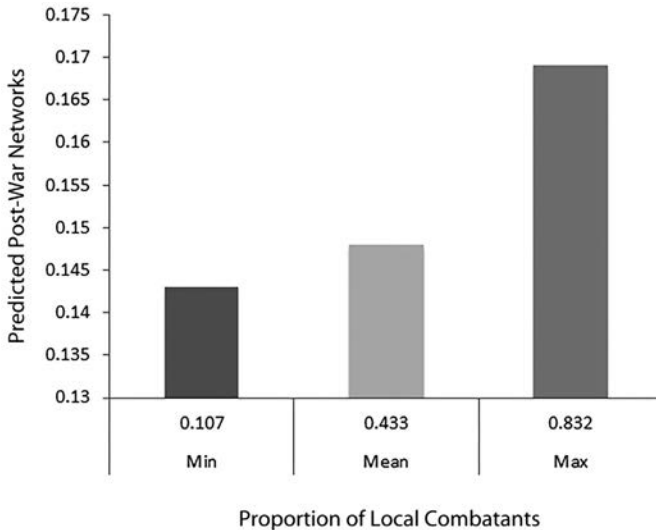


FIGURE 4.4. Predicted Postwar Networks.

To further evaluate these vertical networks, I used the recidivism survey because it went beyond the presence or absence of relationships to probe the informational value of these relationships. We generated an index of a series of questions about (1) the frequency of communication between levels of the hierarchy; (2) the speed of the communication (that is, how long it would take intelligence to travel between levels of the hierarchy); and (3) the degree of obedience (e.g., if their superiors were to request a loan, would the respondents provide it). I find a robust association between local recruitment and the maintenance of the command-and-control apparatus and webs of intelligence with which leaders continued to monitor their groups' members (hypothesis 1.5). Belonging to a local faction increased the likelihood of retaining relations with one's commanders by 50 percent, enhancing the likelihood of effective monitoring, frequent communication, efficient flow of information across levels of authority, and intact norms of reciprocity and obedience.

The survey data on persisting control mechanisms and ties between superiors and their rank and file imply that local leaders should have had better access to intelligence and information on their subordinates' level of commitment than non-local leaders. Tracing how this intelligence translated into perceptions or estimates of cohesion and remilitarization capacity is beyond the scope of the statistical analyses. Causal relationships, especially those involving beliefs, are difficult to establish through observational data. The qualitative Chapters 6 and 7 seek to probe the plausibility of this mechanism and illuminate whether the reality matches this empirical implication of the book's framework.

CONCLUSION

Across the varied data sources and measures, I find striking evidence supporting the proposed pathway from the geography of recruitment to postwar organizational capacity. After accounting for endogeneity and controlling for alternative hypotheses, survey and locational data on ex-combatants demonstrate that local groups' dense networks, postwar clustering, and sustained presence in the regions where they fought render these factions more likely to remain intact and better able to translate their power at war to power at peace. These data illustrate that, in contrast, non-local organizations' weaker bonds, geographic dispersion, and emigration from their places of operation expose them to greater erosion in their capacity and territorial control. The next chapter examines the implications of groups' enduring or diminished postwar power on their strategic territorial arrangements and their trajectories back to organized violence or away from it.

5

Strategic Interactions between Armed Groups and Remilitarization

Chapter 4 empirically traces Step 1 of the book's theory: the process by which armed groups come to vary in their postwar cohesion, monitoring, and intelligence-gathering capabilities. It demonstrates that this variation derives foremost from divergence in the groups' recruitment geographies. This chapter accounts for the resulting pronounced variation in remilitarization and demilitarization. To do so, I turn to Step 2 of the theory: the strategic interactions between groups with varying recruitment patterns. In this sense, the chapter zooms out from the inner workings of each armed group and the relationships between the groups' individual combatants, midlevel leaders, and commanders that I probe in Chapter 4. I now take the armed organizations as unitary actors and explore how local and non-local organizations strategically interact with each other and with the state, and why and how they remilitarize or demilitarize. In essence, this chapter asks: What are the implications for an armed group's postwar trajectory of operating in a neighborhood populated by other armed groups of either local or non-local compositions?

This chapter first maps the locations of the armed groups of varying recruit bases in Colombia and demonstrates that there exist no underlying regional factors that drove variation in the geography of recruitment. I next define and map the configurations of the armed organizations. This mapping assumes the form of a "subway map," which, although situated only approximately in physical space, captures the interactions and relationships in the regional systems of groups. I then investigate the preservation or alteration of the distribution of power associated with the different configurations, and briefly touch on the bargaining implications of these power shifts. Here I explore hypotheses 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9 on the mechanisms between organizations, as outlined in Chapter 2:

2.7 We should expect configurations involving non-local groups to experience a power shift after demobilization, whereas sets involving only

local groups and no non-local groups should preserve the distribution of power.

2.8 Local groups should be better able to renegotiate their peace bargains than non-local groups.[1]

2.9 Power shifts and information problems should be associated with remilitarization, whereas sustained power balances should be associated with demilitarization.

I then undertake the task of measuring armed groups' remilitarization and demilitarization and introduce the data used to capture these concepts. Measuring concepts is an imperfect procedure; some of the indicators described below provide a reasonable approximation of the underlying ideas, whereas others are rougher proxies. I outline potential issues with each of the measures, the solutions I employ, and the remaining shortcomings.

The next section evaluates the book's overall organization-level hypotheses and their related regional implications:

2.1 If local organizations (L) are in strategic interactions with non-local armed groups (NL), and the state (S), the local organizations should remilitarize.

2.2 If local organizations are in strategic configurations only with other local armed factions, and the state, they should demilitarize.

2.3 Non-local organizations should remilitarize in all cases.

2.4 The remilitarization of non-local organizations should be weaker than that of local organizations.

The regional implications of the preceding hypotheses are stated in the following:

2.5 Regions in which, apart from the state (S), only local organizations (L) operated during the war, which I call L-L-S configurations, should be less likely to experience the incidence of remilitarized violence than regions in which combinations of local groups and non-local groups (L-NL-S), or only non-local groups (NL-NL-S), operated.

2.6 In terms of intensity of violence, regions with L-L-S sets should experience the lowest level of remilitarized violence; regions of NL-NL-S sets should experience intermediate levels of remilitarized violence; and regions of L-NL-S sets – those involving both local and non-local groups as well as the state – should be expected to experience the highest levels of remilitarized violence.

The chapter explores whether the book's theory can better account for armed organizations' postwar trajectories than can explanations derived from the

[1] Hypothesis 2.8 is not amenable to quantitative testing. I therefore evaluate it with qualitative data in Chapters 6 and 7.

literatures on war outcomes, correlates of civil war recurrence, or the political economy of violence. Although the factors associated with these theories are largely constant across the armed groups I examine (motivating the book's research design), I probe whether the subnational variation that does exist can account for a share of the variation in remilitarized violence.

I conclude that, although tactical terrain provides refuge for remilitarized actors, topographical features cannot produce the networks and organizations necessary for collective violent action, the key ingredient for remilitarization. Resources continue to play a valuable role after demobilization and indeed imbue territory with importance: former armed actors seek to preserve their financial resources, launder their illicit gains, and protect their opportunities for further gain – their trafficking routes, extortion rackets, and systems of taxation. However, they do not need to remilitarize to do so. Accordingly, abundant resources are present in configurations of actors that demilitarized as well as in those that returned to full-scale militancy and violence. Along these lines, I find that more "criminal" organizations did not prove more likely to remilitarize than more "political" ones, taking into consideration that all groups in Colombia fell on the more criminalized end of the spectrum of non-state actors. Physical and economic geography must be mapped atop the social, human, and organizational geography to make sense of the puzzling patterns in violence observed in the aftermath of peace agreements.

REGIONAL CONFIGURATIONS AND SELECTION

I define regional configurations, sets, or systems as armed actors with overlapping or contiguous zones of operation at the time of demobilization. For each paramilitary organization, I determined the configuration of its strategic relations: all of the actors with which it shared territory or whose territory was adjacent. It is important to view these relations in the context of Colombia's physical geography to assess their salience. For example, although the territory of Bloque Élmer Cárdenas and that of Bloque Pacífico may appear to intersect on a political map, one sees on a topographical or physical map that the boundary between these two groups' domains runs through thick jungle, navigable only by river, with no roads or infrastructure. I have traveled by river launch through this region of waterways. It is so rugged as to minimize strategic interactions between the groups. I render the strategic interactions more nuanced by considering the wartime relations between the armed groups. Rather than assuming all of the relations to be of equal and neutral character, I explicitly examine whether the groups were indeed neutral in their dynamics or were instead allies, or foes.

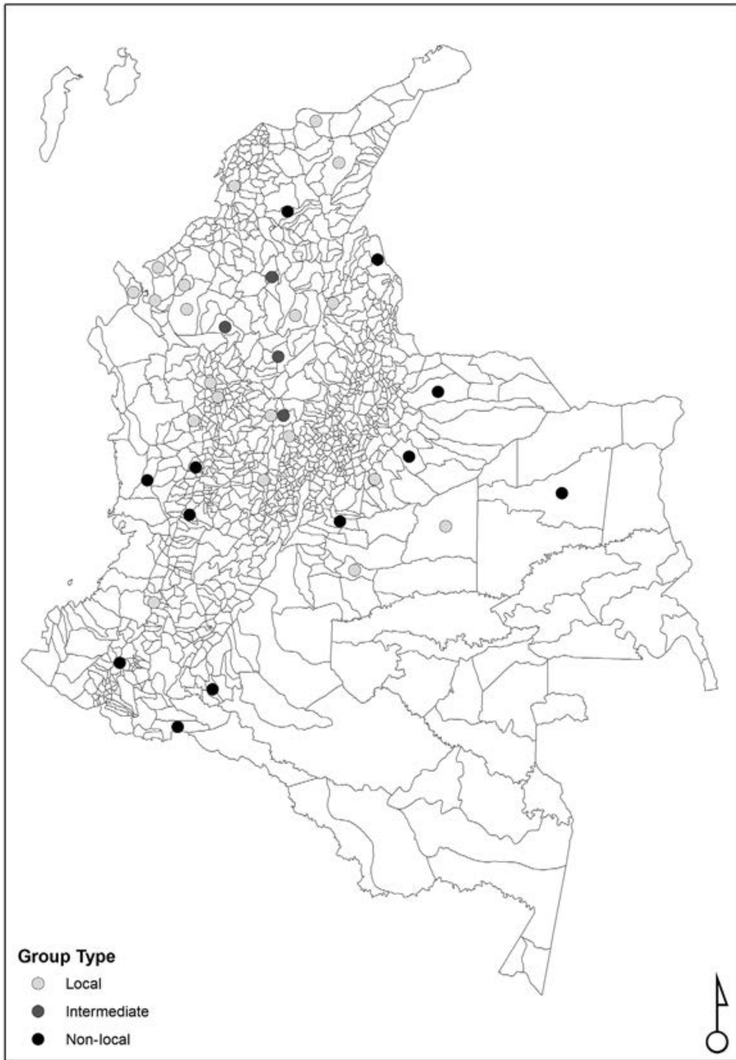
After establishing the meaningful sets of groups and the nature of their relationships, I coded the recruitment type of their constituent members to derive the configurations. For example, if a paramilitary group was made up of 80 percent local recruits and operated in the same region as a faction composed

of 11 percent local recruits, I coded the configuration as "Local–Non-local" (L-NL). If a third group shared this same zone of operation and 60 percent of its recruits were local to the zone, I coded the configuration "L-NL-L." To differentiate "local" from "non-local," I used the one-third threshold discussed in Chapter 4, grouping together the intermediately local with the local groups. As a robustness check, I tested different thresholds of local/non-local based on the mean proportion of local combatants, and on treating the intermediate armed organizations that fall in the middle of the spectrum as non-local rather than local.

Map 5.1 illustrates the location of the thirty-seven paramilitary organizations in Colombia and characterizes the geography of their recruitment as local, intermediate, or non-local. We can see that groups of different recruitment types were present nearly all across the country. This provides evidence against the claim that something about the region or the endowments specific to the region conditioned the type of armed unit and configuration that emerged. Of course, the theory is built around the fact that many regions hosted both types of units. Despite access to similar levels of resources and political, economic, and social conditions, the leaders of armed groups with shared zones of operation in Colombia often diverged in their recruitment strategies.

Nonetheless, extending Jeremy Weinstein's theory, paramilitary recruitment should be constrained by the setting in which it takes place (2007). Actors with access to resources should prove less likely to recruit through networks and thus potentially more likely to exploit a non-local recruit base. Against this prediction, I find that organizations with similar resource endowments are characterized by varying recruitment patterns. Take, for example, the eastern plains of Colombia, a region rich in drug crops, smuggling routes, gold, emeralds, oil, and wealthy landowners willing to pay protection taxes. This same region hosted three largely non-local groups – Bloque Centauros, Frente Vichada, and Vencedores de Arauca – and three local organizations – Autodefensas Campesinas de Meta y Vichada, Autodefensas Campesinas de Casanare, and Héroes de los Llanos y Guaviare – despite having access to the same economic endowments. Similarly, if we look instead at resources in these organizations' "homelands," where the armed groups initially formed, we find that all of these units had similar access to plentiful finances but they diverged in their patterns of recruitment. Differences in their social endowments – strong ties between their leaders and followers – resulted from their recruitment strategies rather than causing these strategies, rendering the endowments endogenous (Weinstein 2007).

Even within microregions, the book's proposed dynamics can be seen. For example, nearly all of the battalions that operated in Medellín and the surrounding area were highly local. As shown in Chapter 6, these structures remained cohesive postwar, their power distribution held, and the groups demilitarized. Only to one of Medellín's localities, Comuna 13, did the paramilitary force deploy mostly non-local recruits. The combatants of Comuna 13's battalion



MAP 5.1. Geographies of Recruitment.

dispersed postwar; as a result, their structure weakened, the local power balance was destabilized, and renewed violence erupted. Similarly, in Norte de Santander, as shown in Chapter 7, after demobilizing, the Catatumbo combatants remained clustered only in Puerto Santander and Ocaña. Although most of the Catatumbo battalions disintegrated, the proximity of the ex-combatants in these two localities permitted the battalions there to endure and power shifts caused them to remilitarize.

To explore the relationship between differential premobilization regional conditions and recruitment further, I coded the localities along several dimensions: licit and illicit resource richness, state absence, and activity by guerrilla groups (e.g., FARC, ELN, EPL). These conditions capture economic endowments and also provide proxies for social endowments. We may anticipate "a marked resistance to and thus very limited recruitment of locals" by paramilitaries in regions of guerrilla control where the population is "believed to be infiltrators and active collaborators of the guerrillas,"[2] whereas places cleared of guerrillas may prove more sympathetic and linked to the paramilitary cause. Following this logic, we would predict that factions that formed and operated in guerrilla strongholds would prove more likely to recruit non-locally.[3] Additionally, we might expect recruitment into illegal armed groups to rise as the geographical and ideological distance between the potential recruits and their national government increases (Gates 2002). Communities with few ties to the state should have greater political affinity and geographic proximity to the non-state armies and should thus prove more willing to fight for them. Accordingly, armed units operating in regions of state weakness may be more likely to recruit locally than those deployed closer to the centers of administrative power. Finally, the nature of recruitment may relate to the size of the armed organization's territory. Groups operating in a small, delimited region may exhibit elevated levels of local recruitment compared with those deployed across the entire country.

I seek out proxies for these variables in the period prior to paramilitary group formation. For a measure of resources, I include the number of hectares of drugs; royalties from hydrocarbons, emeralds, precious metals, carbon, and iron; gold, emerald, sapphire, and aquamarine mines; oil fields, pipelines or refineries; per-capita taxes; and the proportion of the population with "unsatisfied basic needs" (necesidades basicas insatisfechas, NBI), the conventional poverty indicator in Colombia.[4] To measure guerrilla presence, I employ data on Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC]) and Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army [ELN]) activity (attacks, ambushes, takeovers of towns, roadblocks, military bases, and taxation) in each paramilitary group's zone of operation prior to its rise. For state presence, I use the distance to the department capital, road density, rough terrain, proximity to an international border, and population density. Last, I include a measure of the size of the armed group's zone of deployment.

I first use the armed organization as the unit of analysis and compare local and non-local groups on these pre-recruitment conditions in their zones of

[2] Defensoría del Pueblo analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008. The Defensoría del Pueblo is Colombia's Ombudsman's Office.

[3] The ability to recruit in any given territory is highly dynamic, especially given that displacement constituted a pervasive war tactic. Although territories firmly under enemy control may seem unlikely to yield recruits, there are still often individuals willing to defect (Kalyvas 2008a; Staniland 2012c).

[4] See Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística.

operation using logit regression.[5] This exercise seeks to probe the conditions constraining how a group's leader recruited and to analyze whether there might be anything about why leaders selected non-local versus local recruitment that may relate to the book's dependent variable. I then code the municipalities as "1" if they produced configurations with non-local units (either L-NL or NL-NL) and "0" if they generated sets of only local groups (L-L). For this analysis, I again use a logit model (Table A.4 in Appendix). The data suggest little if any relationship between premobilization resource richness, state presence, or guerrilla activity, and the type of recruitment geography. In both the results with the organization as the unit of analysis and those using the municipality unit, none of the premobilization factors prove highly significant predictors of group or configuration type. The factors that come closest are international border, land area, and royalties from resource extraction in the organization-level analyses. However, none of these pass the 10 percent significance level. This corresponds with the research of Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos (2013) which finds no evidence that the paramilitary groups "selected" into particular areas based on those areas' characteristics.

As mentioned earlier, both local and non-local organizations benefited from plentiful resources. Similarly, both types of armed units operated in areas that were traditional guerrilla strongholds. The highly local Bloque Élmer Cárdenas, for example, patrolled Urabá and Chocó, regions that since the 1960s and 1970s had constituted an epicenter of guerrilla activity and control, particularly by the strong Bloque Noroccidental of the FARC (Frentes 5 and 57). Similarly, a non-local paramilitary group operated in Putumayo, a bastion of FARC's Southern Bloque (Frentes 32 and 48). The paramilitaries, as a counterinsurgent force, tended to emerge in and expand to places where the insurgents were strongest. Guerrillas and resources, although not constant across the territories of the paramilitary factions, were present in nearly all. Local and non-local warring paramilitary brigades also operated in areas of state weakness and in places of state strength. Local groups controlled the vast eastern plains of Vichada where the state had little presence, as well as Colombia's second-largest urban center, Medellín. Non-local factions deployed in the depths of the anarchic jungle along the Ecuadorian border and also in the capital city of Bogotá. Local and non-local groups do not seem to diverge in these observable sources of prewar endowments or their regions of operation. Below, I use propensity score matching to address potential selection in recruitment patterns further.

Figure 5.1 provides a "subway map" of the configurations of the paramilitary bloques. Differences in shading indicate the groups' geographies of recruitment. This figure illustrates the strategic interactions among the groups, with lines indicating which groups were involved in meaningful engagement, and the type of lines illustrating the nature of these interactions at the time of demobilization. The

[5] Given the small number of observations, I test the bivariate relationships.

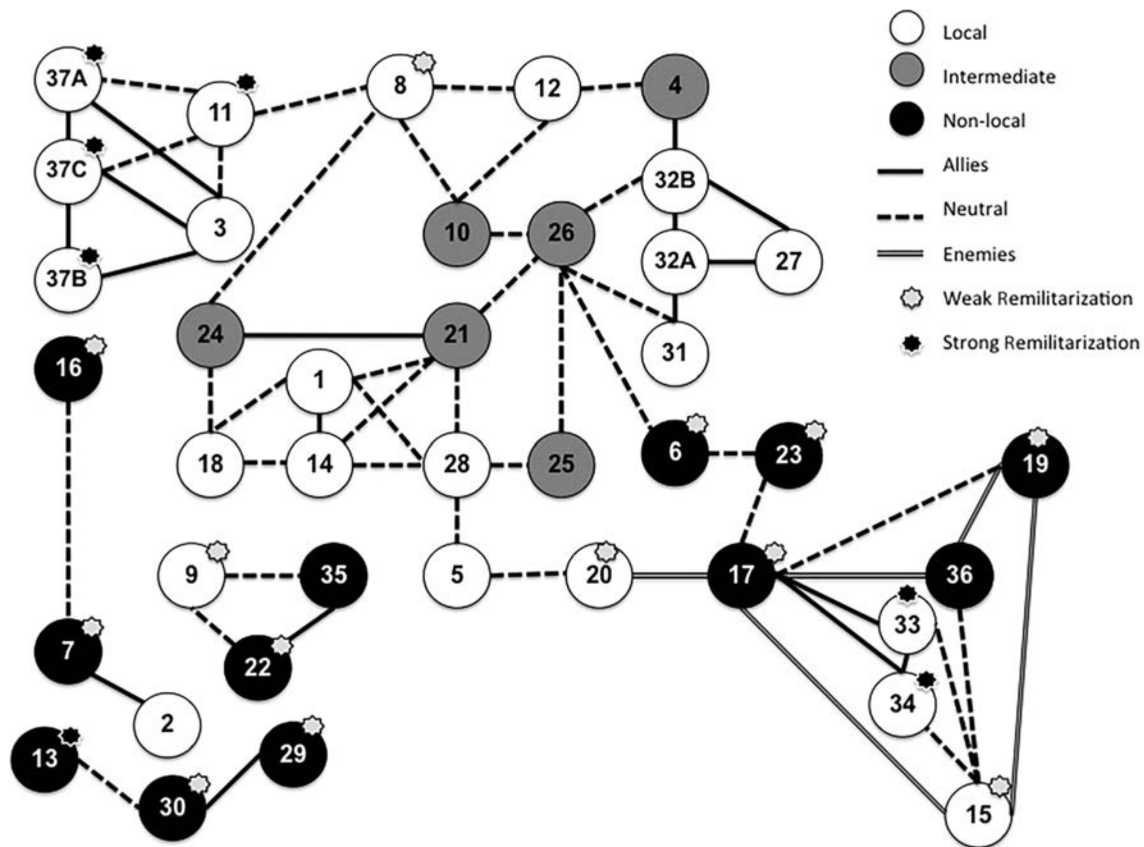


FIGURE 5.1. Paramilitary Organizations Subway Map.

explosion symbol shows points of conflict with its color indicating the strength of remilitarization. The circles in the subway map are labeled with numbers that correspond with the armed groups' names in Table 5.1. This table lists the paramilitary bloques and, for each, its region of operation, date of demobilization, proportion of local combatants, number of total combatants, and to facilitate the subsequent analyses, the number of its members that remained in the bloque's zones of military operation after demobilizing. Additionally, for each bloque, I include the average pairwise distances (in miles) between its combatants' towns of origin and between their postwar residences.

Figure 5.1 shows the variation in the dyads and sets across Colombia and the extreme complexity of the strategic interactions between the paramilitary groups. It also indicates how regional sets were not independent or isolated but often overlapped. This interdependence generated spillover effects and endogenous processes of conflict to which I return below.

At the time of demobilization, the Colombian government ostensibly enjoyed a national presence. The units of its army divided the territory of the country such that every place fell within the jurisdiction of a military *brigada*. However, in practice, state presence varied over Colombia's territory. Historically, the state has lacked complete presence. It was widely asserted that, in 2000, more than 200 of Colombia's roughly 1,100 municipalities had never had a police force and many more had experienced only a weak state presence.[6] Map 5.2 illustrates one indicator of variation in the presence of the state: the natural logarithm of the distance between each municipality's center and the department capitals, calculated using latitudinal and longitudinal data. Darker shaded regions indicate areas farther removed from the state's administrative core. Because the Colombian military can theoretically deploy anywhere, because there exist no systematic data on the nature of the relationships between the state and each of the paramilitary factions, and because the peace accords did not dramatically alter the state's power, I take the state as a constant actor across the configurations. (I complicate the role of the state in the qualitative case study chapters (Chapters 6 and 7).)

The guerrillas were also present in much of the country at the time of the paramilitaries' demobilization. In 2003, they operated in at least 331 of Colombia's municipalities and had a force size estimated at nearly 25,000 combatants. Although the relevance of the guerrillas to the different configurations also varied and, as they were in retreat from state forces, their power tended to shrink over the period that I analyze (see Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3), I treat

[6] President Uribe (2002–10) sought to strengthen the state administration in regions under guerrilla control through the National Consolidation Plan, which rated municipalities according to a "traffic light" scheme whereby rebel strongholds, rated "red," were targeted only by military operations; "yellow" was for municipalities largely cleared of guerrillas, which were targeted with short-term development activities; and "green" indicated that security had been established and social agencies could enter with social development programs.

TABLE 5.1. *Paramilitary Organizations*

	Ex-bloque	Number of Combatants	Group Type	Proportion Local	In Zone Postwar	Pairwise Distance (recruited)
1	Bloque Cacique Nutibara	911	Local	0.69	0.93	41
2	Autodefensas Campesinas de Ortega	167	Local	0.89	0.95	0.4
3	Bloque Bananero	458	Local	0.49	0.73	73
4	Bloque Sur del Magdalena	48	Intermediate	0.35	0.17	87
5	Bloque Cundinamarca	731	Local	0.17*	0.13	191
6	Bloque Catatumbo	1,483	Non-local	0.32	0.34	158
7	Bloque Calima	663	Non-local	0.32	0.48	173
8	Bloque Córdoba	953	Local	0.63	0.70	96
9	Bloque Suroeste Antioqueño	138	Local	0.56	0.54	88.502
10	Bloque La Mojana	110	Intermediate	0.37	0.44	84.5246
11	Bloque Héroes de Tolová	464	Local	0.72	0.72	58.2053
12	Bloque Héroes de Montes de María	598	Local	0.58	0.67	97.4484
13	Bloque Libertadores del Sur	708	Non-local	0.30	0.21	274
14	Bloque Héroes de Granada	2,051	Local	0.71	0.83	68
15	Autodefensas Campesinas de Meta y Vichada	918	Local	0.13*	0.08	218
16	Bloque Pacífico – Héroes del Chocó	413	Non-local	0.21	0.19	156
17	Bloque Centauros	1,480	Non-local	0.25	0.22	226
18	Bloque Noroccidente Antiqueño	232	Local	0.70	0.70	58
19	BCB – Frente Vichada	338	Non-local	0.11	0.01	236
20	Bloque Tolima	244	Local	0.69	0.67	97
21	BCB – Nordeste Antioqueño, Bajo Cauca y Magdalena Medio	1,995	Intermediate	0.38	0.42	144
22	BCB – Mártires de Guática	559	Non-local	0.33	0.44	158
23	Bloque Vencedores de Arauca	687	Non-local	0.14	0.06	218
24	Bloque Mineros	3,007	Intermediate	0.36	0.25	148

Pairwise Distance (Postwar)	Region of Operation	Date of Demobilization	Remilitarization	Remilitarization Strength	Configuration
14	Antioquia	11/25/03	No		L-L
1	Cauca	12/7/03	No		NL-L
63	Antioquia (Urabá)	11/25/04	No		L-L
78	Magdalena	12/4/04	No		L-L
143	Cundinamarca	12/9/04	No		L-L
165	Norte de Santander	12/10/04	Yes	Weak	NL-NL
157	Valle del Cauca, Cauca	12/18/04	Yes	Weak	NL-L
104	Cordoba	1/18/05	Yes	Weak	L-L
70	Antioquia	1/30/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
65	Bolívar, Sucre	2/2/05	No		L-L
75	Córdoba	6/15/05	Yes	Strong	L-L
96	Bolívar	7/14/05	No		L-L
250	Nariño	7/30/05	Yes	Strong	NL-NL
48	Antioquia	8/1/05	No		L-L
148	Meta, Vichada	8/6/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
158	Valle del Cauca, Cauca	8/23/05	Yes	Weak	NL-NL
197	Casanare, Cundinamarca	9/3/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
56	Antioquia	9/11/05	No		L-L
193	Vichada	9/24/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
80	Tolima	10/22/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
141	Antioquia, Bolívar	12/12/05	No		L-L
147	Caldas, Risaralda	12/15/05	Yes	Weak	NL-L
208	Arauca, Casanare	12/23/05	Yes	Weak	NL-NL
145	Antioquia	1/20/06	No		L-L

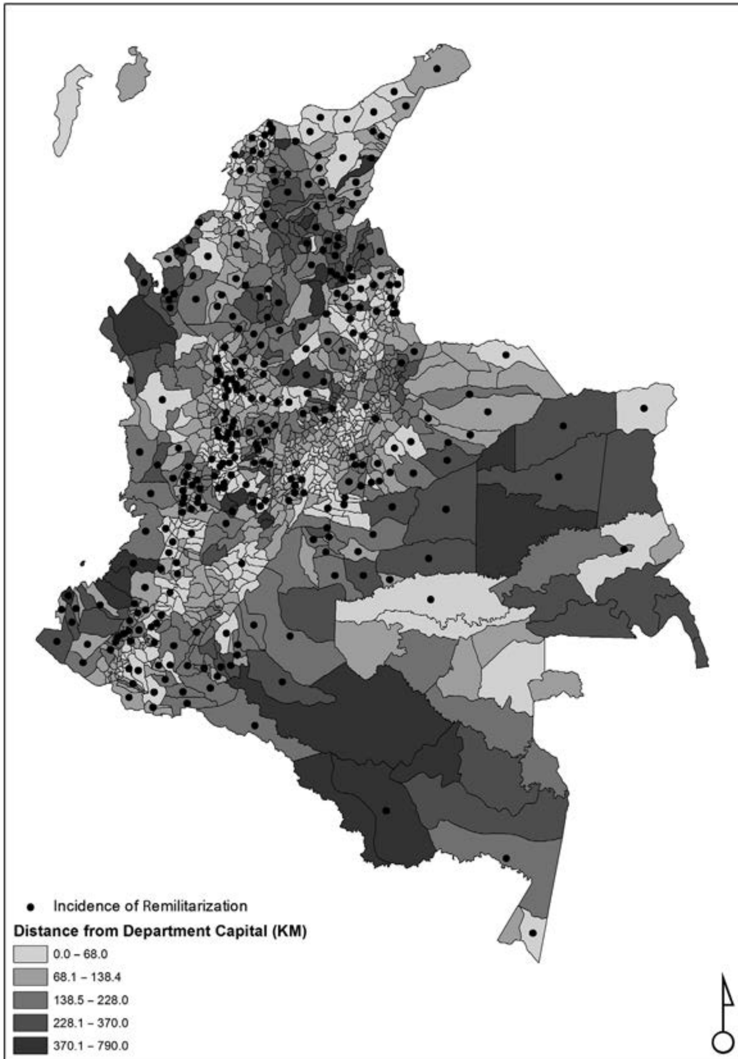
(*continued*)

TABLE 5.1 (*continued*)

	Ex-bloque	Number of Combatants	Group Type	Proportion Local	In Zone Postwar	Pairwise Distance (recruited)
25	Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio – Puerto Boyacá	1,358	Intermediate	0.36	0.40	154
26	BCB – Sur de Bolívar	2,533	Intermediate	0.45	0.42	158
27	Bloque Resistencia Tayrona	1,188	Local	0.64	0.65	153
28	Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio – Puerto Triunfo	995	Local	0.63	0.68	74
29	Bloque Andaquíes	584	Non-local	0.32	0.13	239
30	BCB – Sur del Putumayo	516	Non-local	0.33	0.15	252
31	BN – Frente Héctor Julio Peinado	250	Local	0.70	0.60	63
32A	Bloque Norte – La Mesa	2,545	Local	0.70	0.72	138
32B	Bloque Norte – El Copey	2,220	Local	0.67	0.62	119
33, 34	Héroes del Llano y Guaviare	1,831	Local	0.49	0.64	227
35	Cacique Pipintá		Non-local			
36	Autodefensas Campesinas del Casanare		Local			
37A	Bloque Élmer Cárdenas – Turbo	534	Local	0.77	0.73	105
37B	Bloque Élmer Cárdenas – Unguía	740	Local	0.79	0.83	88
37C	Bloque Élmer Cárdenas – Necoclí	316	Local	0.83	0.81	69

Note: * Qualitative sources and in-depth interviews of the commanders claim that these groups were highly local. Alternative data sources put their proportion local as significantly higher than shown in the "proportion local" column of this table.

Pairwise Distance (Postwar)	Region of Operation	Date of Demobilization	Remilitari-zation	Remilitari-zation Strength	Configuration
108	Boyacá, Santander	1/28/06	No		L-L
154	Bolívar	1/31/06	No		L-L
99	Magdalena, Guajira	2/3/06	No		L-L
66	Antioquia, Caldas, Santander, Tolima	2/7/06	No		L-L
217	Caquetá	2/15/06	Yes	Weak	NL-NL
250	Putumayo	3/1/06	Yes	Weak	NL-NL
77	Cesar, Norte de Santander	3/4/06	No		L-L
149	Bolívar, Cesar, La Guajira, Magdalena, Sucre	3/8/06	No		L-L
128	Bolívar, Cesar, La Guajira, Magdalena, Sucre	3/10/06	No		L-L
189	Meta, Guaviare	4/11/06	Yes	Strong	NL-L
	Caldas, Risaralda	N/A	N/A		
	Casanare	N/A	N/A		
93	Antioquia (Urabá)	04/30/06	Yes	Strong	L-L
81	Chocó (Urabá)	08/15/06	Yes	Strong	L-L
71	Antioquia (Urabá), Córdoba	04/12/06	Yes	Strong	L-L

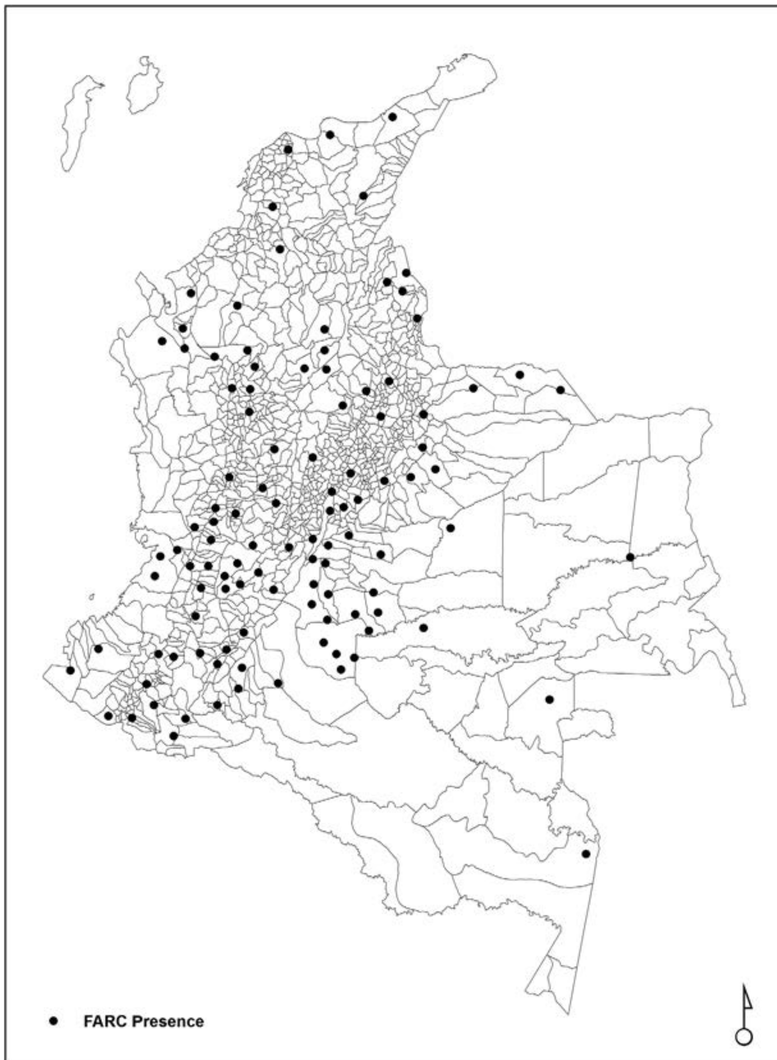


MAP 5.2. Variation in State Presence.

the guerrillas as constant to the configurations. (I again render this analysis more nuanced in the qualitative case studies.) Map 5.3 illustrates the presence of guerrilla *frentes* (fronts) and *columnas móviles* (mobile columns) in 2003.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER AND IMPLICATIONS FOR BARGAINING

I turn now to evaluating the impact of the different configurations of paramilitary structures on shifts in power. Chapter 4 demonstrates that local groups



MAP 5.3. Presence of Guerrillas.
Note: These data derive from Daly (2012); Sánchez (2007); and the Fundación Ideas para la Paz.

preserve their networks and capacity whereas non-local groups' networks erode and the groups weaken. These dynamics *within* the armed groups have implications for the dynamics *between* the groups. Specifically, this book's theory anticipates that regional configurations involving non-local groups should experience a power shift after demobilization because the non-local groups weaken, whereas configurations of only local groups should preserve

the distribution of power (hypothesis 2.7). I explore the size of the changes in capacity experienced in different sets of armed groups and then return to the implications for remilitarization.

To measure shifts in the distribution of power, I examine differences in group size during and after war. Fighting technology includes recruits, networks, leadership, access to firearms, terrain, and resources. I choose to focus on force size for several reasons: it constitutes one of the power variables most relevant to non-state actors; it corresponds to the book's theory about the importance of networks as providing military capacity; and it varies at the regional level across the different organizations in a configuration whereas the other inputs into a composite index of capabilities are held relatively constant.[7] An alternative but more complicated measure would examine relative changes in the survey-derived network index. However, I could approximate this measure before the peace agreements only poorly, as the surveys do not ask comparable questions for the periods during the war and postwar, and the sample size proves insufficient to draw inferences at the organizational level.

I calculate the change in the force size of each armed group: the number of combatants who operated in a region at the time of demobilization (C_{Wi}) minus the number remaining in the region postwar (C_{Pwi}) divided by the number who operated in the region at the time of demobilization: $Z_i = C_{Wi} - C_{PWi}/C_{Wi}$.[8] I then examine the change in relative capabilities between armed groups in a dyad: $Z_1 - Z_2$. If there existed more than two paramilitary organizations operating in a region (as was usually the case), I use the largest change in Z_i. Hypothesis 2.7 predicts that power shifts will prove largest in configurations of groups with divergent recruitment geographies (both local and non-local), followed by sets involving only non-local groups; those of only local groups should maintain the distribution of power.

As anticipated, the average shift in power among parties to local (L-L) sets was 7 percent; the shift within L-NL configurations was, on average, 41 percent, with the local group gaining the upper hand. The change in power within NL-NL sets exhibited a mean of 14 percent, demonstrating that the force size of the different actors in these non-local configurations tended to diminish in roughly equal measure (see Table 5.2).

A challenge arises in quantitatively evaluating the link between changes in the distribution of power and remilitarization because, in the theory, recruitment affects remilitarization not only through the mechanism of power shifts, but also through perceptions surrounding the power shifts (hypothesis 2.9). This mechanism of perceptions proves difficult to operationalize for statistical study. Although observational data can shine light on the magnitude of the

[7] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010); Christia (2012); Lyall and Wilson III (2009); Posen (1993).

[8] To remilitarize, commanders could, in theory, call on ex-combatants who have migrated to other localities beyond the group's zone of operation, but empirically I find that this proves rare. The qualitative case studies explore this finding in more depth.

TABLE 5.2. *Average Shift in Power by Regional Configuration*

		Average Shift in Power (%)
Regional configurations	Local and non-local groups (L-NL)	41
	Only non-local groups (NL-NL)	14
	Only local groups (L-L)	7

power shifts, correlating these shifts with remilitarization without taking into account the disagreements about perceptions of capabilities would bias the results downward. The expectations that larger changes in relative capacity would drive rearming should be observed in the universe of local organizations (comparing the sets involving both local and non-local groups [L-NL] with those including only local groups [L-L]). However, the sets of all non-local groups (NL-NL) will complicate the results.[9] The model predicts that the units in NL-NL configurations will also experience remilitarization, but through the alternative mechanisms of non-local groups' inferior informational capacities after demobilizing, and of power-vacuums and upheaval in the "orderly ladder of power" (Blainey 1988, 119). I therefore evaluate the relationships between the strategic configurations and remilitarization directly next, and trace the bargaining and informational mechanisms associated with hypotheses 2.8 and 2.9 in Chapters 6 and 7.

DEFINING REMILITARIZATION

How do we know remilitarization when we see it? In this project, remilitarization refers to a return to organized violence by the same armed group within five years of the peace accord, exploiting the assets of the prior group, that is, its coercive structure, recruits, command-and-control apparatus, organizational know-how, finances, and ties to the population. Remilitarized organizations exert manifest force; they *use* their weapons. In practice, this means that they usually patrol in camouflage uniforms, exhibit an overt military structure, activate their heavy weaponry, threaten the communities and, in the eyes of the civilian population, return "to the same as before."[10] By remilitarizing, these groups break the formal terms of the peace agreement and become illegal "enemies" of the state. They are recognizable armed organizations.

[9] In the observational data, large changes in power are associated with remilitarization as predicted by the theory, but relatively preserved power balances appear to be associated with both remilitarization (in the NL-NL configurations) and demilitarization (in the L-L configurations).

[10] Representative of Initiative of Colombian Women for Peace, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

Demilitarized groups, meanwhile, do not use manifest force. They often still have access to weapons; indeed, all groups usually do in the aftermath of peace accords.[11] These weapons may be in caches, under combatants' mattresses (literally or figuratively), or readily available through the still-active arms trafficking routes. The guns of demilitarized groups, however, are not being used; rather, they are silenced or muted. This does not mean that demilitarized groups lose their influence over territory, power over the civilian population, or leverage over the social, political, and economic orders in their zones; instead, they tend to maintain this control. Fear, memories of the use of coercion, and the threat of future coercion constitute part of this sustained control. However, the demilitarized groups do not actively employ violence. At least initially, these demilitarized structures often maintain the capacity and cohesion to remilitarize; they may be described as latently coercive. Over time, this capacity erodes and the groups fully decommission. However, armed organizations do not transition from militarized to completely demilitarized overnight; rather, it is a process. Accordingly, I code these as trajectories: some organizations transition back to organized violence; others transition away from violence and eventually toward sustainable negative peace, that is, the absence of violence.[12]

Since 2005, Colombia's security landscape has become populated with what the state calls BACRIM organizations (*Bandas Criminales Emergentes*). However, the government applies this term, translated as "emerging criminal gangs," to all contemporary illegal non-state armed actors, including remilitarized paramilitaries, but also historic narcotrafficking entities.[13] Drug cartels have coexisted with the "political" armed actors (guerrillas and paramilitaries) throughout the conflict. These cartels never entered peace negotiations and never demobilized; they experienced no break in their armed activity and thus their militarization does not need to be explained in this study. Many expanded in the aftermath of the paramilitaries' demobilization, specifically and (in confirmation of the book's theory) extending their reach into areas in which (non-local) paramilitary structures weakened. The most infamous for this practice are two groups derivative of the Norte del Valle Cartel, the Rastrojos and the Machos. I seek to differentiate the remilitarized paramilitaries from these other criminal actors.

I also differentiate the remilitarized paramilitaries from new armed groups which, at least initially, lack capacity and face collective action problems (Olson 1965). They tend to be small-scale and pose only a minor threat to the state. The policy implications for how to fight new armed units thus tend to prove distinct from those for combating remilitarized insurgent or counterinsurgent factions. This study's focus on organizations that return to violence, rather

[11] For this reason, I try to avoid the term "rearm," as "disarmed" groups rarely are truly disarmed.

[12] Galtung (1969); Keen (2000b).

[13] At times small-scale criminal entities and nondemilitarized factions are also included in the BACRIM category. I exclude these groups from the data on remilitarization.

than on new armed actors, also stems from the fieldwork-based conviction and data-confirmed hypothesis that organizational legacies are important and thus that the causes of remilitarizing are not the same as those of militarizing for the first time (Daly 2012). Former militant organizations act as repositories of collective action capabilities, which can be appropriated for future mobilization (Selznick 1952). This is not to say that these remilitarizing organizations do not conscript new recruits; they do, but the core of their structures builds on the organizational foundations of the prior armed brigades.

I should note that I make no stipulations about the political or criminal nature of the remilitarized groups. It proves difficult, if not impossible, to know individuals' and groups' motivations. Narratives cannot be trusted, as militarized actors have incentives to justify their behavior. Regardless of whether the remilitarized combatants seek resources as a means to an end or as ends in themselves, the observable behavior is the same: rent-seeking. All remilitarized groups are heavily involved with the production, distribution, financing, or protection of illegal activities such as drug-trafficking, arms smuggling, extortion, and money laundering. So too were the paramilitaries and so too are the guerrillas. From this observed behavior, we cannot distinguish between the hypothesized motivations (criminal or political). Moreover, both criminal and political armed actors seek to co-opt, corrupt, and engage politicians, and to become politicians themselves, again either as a means to an end (criminality needs amnesty, state revenues, and political cover) or as an end in itself (political takeover).[14] Finally, the use of such labels confuses the analysis. The presence or absence of illegal armed groups in the aftermath of the paramilitaries' decommissioning was viewed as a report card on the peace processes, one of President Uribe's "showpiece initiatives." Accordingly, Uribe supporters (including the Colombian military, police, and intelligence apparatus) called the armed groups "emerging criminal gangs" to indicate both that they constituted "new forces" that were unconnected to the demobilized paramilitaries (i.e., reintegration had succeeded) and that they were purely criminal (i.e., they justified operations funded by the U.S. war on drugs). Reintegration program and military personnel also sought to understate the extent of rearming in order to bolster their own performance ratings.[15] In contrast, the opposition called these same militarized groups "rearmed units," "successor groups," "a new generation of paramilitaries," or "neo-paramilitaries," highlighting their continued elements and links to the demobilization process.[16] Making my way

[14] Many governments are highly predatory. A criminal character does not preclude a group from seeking political power and control of the government. See the literature on "rentier states" (Beblawi and Luciani 1987; Karl 1997).

[15] The "false positives" scandal, a series of murders in which members of the military killed civilians and presented them to their superiors as guerrillas killed in battle to inflate the enemy body counts, suggests the lengths to which the armed forces would go for these ratings. See *El Tiempo (*2009b).

[16] Human Rights Watch (2010) and various reports from Fundación Nuevo Arco Iris and Indepaz illustrate these views.

through the weeds of these ideologically motivated labels and data proved extremely challenging. I remain agnostic about these groups' aims and focus on their organizational structures. Despite this position, however, I evaluate a motivation-based hypothesis below, given its prominence in the literature.

MEASURING REMILITARIZATION

To measure remilitarization at the organizational level, I rely on information from intelligence reports, confidential briefings, and datasets of the Mecanismo de Verificación Conjunto de Bandas Criminales Emergentes (MEVEC). This is a Colombian interinstitutional agency charged with assessing the location and evolution of the BACRIM. The agency consists of representatives from Colombia's army, navy, air force, police, intelligence agencies, and attorney general's office, and from the OAS (Organization of American States) Peace Mission. I attended their briefings and gained access to their reports. These reports indicate the names, sizes, and zones of operation of each BACRIM over time. I use interview data to confirm that these BACRIM were neither new armed groups nor actors that never had demobilized; I exploit extensive qualitative information and locational data to trace the remilitarized groups back to the prior paramilitary structures and to confirm that they made use of their paramilitary endowments to remobilize.[17] I focus only on major remilitarization that posed a significant threat to the state, excluding small or low-level gang violence and individual-level recidivism. In addition to the MEVEC data, I examine several alternative sources of information on remilitarized group presence including independent confidential accounts by the OAS Peace Mission; databases of the former Comisión Nacional de Reparación and Reconciliación, the Defensoría del Pueblo (ombudsman), several think tanks including Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP), Indepaz, and the former Fundación Seguridad y Democracia; and data for the period 2003–11 from the National Police on 13,861 arrests of ex-combatants; from the attorney general's office on 9,269 charges against former fighters; from the penitentiary institute (Instituto Nacional Penitenciario y Carcelario, INPEC) on 5,629 incarcerated ex-militants; and for 2003–15 from the Department of Forensics (Medicina Legal) on 3,861 former combatants' deaths.

I focus on remilitarization data from 2008, five years after the first paramilitary demobilization.[18] This time period captures the initial remilitarizations

[17] This task proved challenging as remilitarized groups tended to switch names often. The Organization of American States' Peace Mission called it a "game of names," intended to confuse (interview by author, Bogotá, 2008). For example, the remilitarized group derivative of the paramilitary Bloque Élmer Cárdenas assumed at various times the names Autodefensas Bolivarianas, Nuevas Autodefensas, Banda de Urabá, Los Chengues, Águilas Negras, Héroes de Castaño, Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, and los Urabeños.

[18] Given that the key independent variable is strategic configurations at the time of demobilization, there is not additional purchase to be gained by looking at the violent event counts over time rather than cross-sectionally.

and was the point when the conflict with the remilitarized groups crossed the threshold of 1,000 deaths, stealing the lives of at least 1,142 individuals by year's end.[19] By 2008, the remilitarized groups had established their presence in ninety-five municipalities, nearly all of which (88 percent) were areas that had previously been under paramilitary control. By this time, the remilitarized actors had engaged in 2,199 violent events, including 545 terrorist acts, 122 homicides, and 101 violent clashes, among other offensive and defensive actions in 418 municipalities. This means that, by this measure, nearly 40 percent of Colombia's territory had experienced a new wave of violence carried out by these remilitarized groups. By 2013, the BACRIM exercised a consolidated presence in 337, or nearly one-third, of Colombia's municipalities.[20]

EXPLAINING VARIATION IN THE INCIDENCE OF REMILITARIZATION

In this section I seek to explain variation in the incidence of this remilitarization, first at the level of the paramilitary organizations themselves, and then at the regional level.

Organizational Analysis

Of the full universe of thirty-seven paramilitary organizations that signed peace accords, I find that nineteen (51 percent) of these armed structures remilitarized, whereas eighteen (49 percent) demilitarized. I examine whether variation in the armed groups' strategic environments can account for this divergence in their postwar trajectories. To do so, I explore the incidence of remilitarization and demilitarization across the different configurations of local and non-local paramilitary armies. Here the outcome of interest is whether the organization returned to being an armed group or not.

My theory accurately predicts the organizations' postwar trajectories in thirty-one of the thirty-seven cases (see Table 5.3). In confirmation of hypothesis 2.2, local groups proved more likely to demilitarize if in a configuration of only local armed actors (seventeen of twenty-two). In strategic landscapes populated by both local and non-local actors or by only non-local groups, the organizations (with one exception) remilitarized (substantiating hypotheses 2.1 and 2.3). In only six cases does the theory inaccurately predict the outcome. In the qualitative analyses, I explore several of these paramilitary cases in depth: Bloque Córdoba, Bloque Héroes de Tolová, and the three brigades of Bloque Élmer Cárdenas in the region of Urabá. Chapter 7 shows how decapitation

[19] These figures derive from CEDE data. Many empirical studies of civil war define onset (or recurrence) according to a threshold of 1,000 combat-related deaths (Sambanis 2004).

[20] Data from Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris. Data from Fundación Ideas para la Paz put the number of municipalities with BACRIM presence at 234 in 2012.

TABLE 5.3. *Remilitarization and Demilitarization of Thirty-Seven Paramilitary Groups by Regional Configuration*

		Number of Remilitarized Organizations	*Number of Demilitarized Organizations*
Regional configurations	Only local groups (L-L)	5	17
	Local and non-local groups (L-NL)	8	1
	Only non-local groups (NL-NL)	6	0
	Total	19	18

of the leadership accounts for one of these deviant cases, which then spilled over into the rest of the strategic configuration. In the other incorrectly predicted case, absolute power seems to have outweighed relative power: although the local organization, Autodefensas Campesinas de Ortega, was strengthened relative to its contiguous non-local groups, these groups' rump postwar cadres still far surpassed Ortega in absolute power, reducing opportunities for the renegotiation of the bargains through force.

It is worth examining the nature of the relationships between the armed factions and whether there is path dependency, whereby prior cooperation generated demilitarization, whereas prior combat produced remilitarization. For example, even if there occurred a shift in power after decommissioning, actors who were collaborators during the conflict might not have fought after demobilizing, not because they were all local, but because of their previous strategic alliances. Similarly, we might expect that, even if there were no power shifts, prior enemies would nonetheless have remilitarized to confront each other. If we break down the data, we see that, of the twelve dyads of allies, four fought each other in remilitarized battles after the peace accords, whereas the remaining eight did not and, among former foes, three of five resumed hostilities. Finally, between armed groups that had neutral relations (meaning they had tacit agreements of noninterference), but did not actively cooperate (this was the norm), ten engaged in remilitarized struggles whereas twenty-four did not. In other words, although prior enemies proved at higher risk of fighting each other again, former allies and those in neutral relations were far from immune from this risk.

It also merits investigating whether the complex nature of the paramilitary groups' relations, specifically their alliances and federations (as presented in Chapter 3), undermines the assumption of independence. Testimonies and accounts of the paramilitary commanders, experts on the militant groups, and external observers describe the groups as independent at the time of demobilization even if their origins and evolution involved fusions and fissions. Analysts viewed the self-defense forces as not "one thing." Instead, they were "regional organizations that operated according to their own logic" (Patiño et al. 2005) with "points of convergence which were minimal and almost

incomprehensible" (Indepaz 2003a). In in-depth interviews, the paramilitary commanders confirmed that they "were each autonomous in their sector … each one over there in their place … each independent of the others."[21] I evaluate whether the results hold if we instead treat the allied groups as single observations. They do.[22]

Regional Analysis

Municipal-level violence data can support or disconfirm the patterns of organizational remilitarization. According to hypothesis 2.5, we should observe the incidence of remilitarized violence to be higher in regions in which non-local groups operated (configurations involving L-NL or NL-NL sets) than in those in which only local organizations fought (L-L sets).

To evaluate the hypothesis in space and explore whether the incidence of remilitarized violence varies across the configurations, I use a municipality-level dataset on remilitarized violence that includes 2,199 events involving remilitarized actors. These data track the presence of violence by rearmed actors in the five years following the first peace agreement, during which time these groups were responsible for at least 1,142 casualties. These data derive from the Conflict and Violence Data of the Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE) in the Facultad de Economía, Universidad de los Andes, which collects information from the Observatory of Human Rights of the Office of Colombia's Vice-Presidency and the National Department of Planning (Sánchez 2013). The dataset documents actions by armed actors including terrorist acts involving explosives or incendiary devices, other terrorist acts, armed combat between state and non-state armed forces, assaults on private property, attacks on civil organizations, political assassination attempts, road blockades, ambushes of civilians, forced displacement, incursions into or takeovers of towns, overland piracy, illegal checkpoints, armed forces wounded by armed non-state groups, murders of civilians or politicians, massacres, deaths of members of the state armed forces, and kidnappings of politicians, civilians, or members of the armed forces.

These violent event data include qualitative descriptions of each event, as the original data comprise a compilation of news from newspapers and reports from the National Police. On the basis of these descriptions, I recoded the data to identify the events involving a remilitarized group (and not a small gang, drug cartel, guerrilla, or other armed actor) and to determine which remilitarized

[21] Paramilitary commanders, interviews by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August–September 2008.

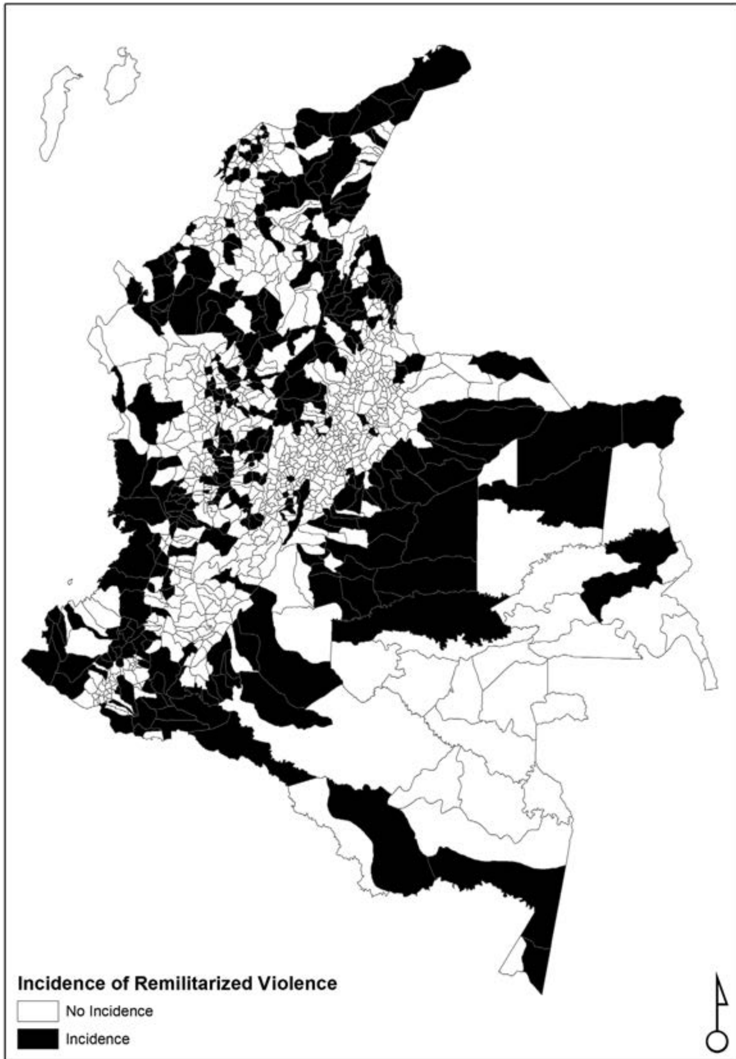
[22] In this analysis, 21 percent of local groups in L-L configurations remilitarized, whereas, in configurations of both local and non-local groups (L-NL), 88 percent of groups remilitarized. All of the groups in landscapes populated by only non-local groups returned to organized violence. Were information available on the geography of recruitment at the battalion unit of analysis, multilevel modeling or hierarchical linear modeling would prove feasible. Given data constraints, I work with the bloque level of analysis.

group was involved in each incident, again to trace the relationship between the demobilized and remilitarized structures. However, attribution of violence proves notoriously difficult and there may exist errors in this coding. I cannot verify that the remilitarized groups authorized every act or that some were not undertaken by individuals who, although affiliated with rearmed groups, carried out these acts on their own initiative. Nonetheless, the recoding effort ensures that the database accords with the definitions maintained by this book.

An additional consideration is that violence is not as good of an indicator of remilitarization as the organizational measure used earlier and may introduce the issue of problematic proxies (Kalyvas 2008b, 401–402). For example, factions may carry out a single act of violence in a location in which they have little presence or control, leading to the incorrect characterization of a place as experiencing remilitarized violence when the general trend there is towards a transition to peace. Although spatial considerations, spillover, and overlap affect all of the analyses, the observations at the level of the municipality are less independent because multiple municipalities may fall within the domain of the same regional configuration. Additionally, although every armed organization interacted strategically with at least one other armed group, in moving from the organization to the municipality unit of analysis, certain municipalities experienced the presence of only a single group during the war. In these cases, I code a municipality as a "0" if it included only a local group and a "1" if it experienced only a non-local group, to capture the extent of the power-vacuum created. Additionally some municipalities are so large that multiple groups were present; also, some groups dominated several municipalities, rendering municipalities potentially problematic units of analysis. Although the municipality-level data may not perfectly reflect the nature of the strategic relations, they permit a more micro examination of remilitarization below the level of the regional configurations and armed organizations. For example, if a local organization operated across a large region and only one of its battalions shared or abutted the territory of a non-local belligerent group while its remaining battalions confronted only local units, we should expect regional variation in postwar remilitarization *within* the territory of a single organization. While I have constructed a list of the paramilitary battalions, the data on recruitment geographies is available only at the brigade level, and information on remilitarization, in many cases, proves difficult to link to a specific battalion within a brigade. Accordingly, the municipality-level data are preferable to battalion-level information. Finally, the municipality-level data enable consideration of certain alternative explanations of remilitarization for which data is collected by municipal administrative entities.

Map 5.4 illustrates the distribution of violence by remilitarized organizations across Colombia.[23] Breaking down the risk of remilitarized violence in

[23] See online appendix for maps that overlay the incidence and intensity of remilitarization atop the recruitment geographies.



MAP 5.4. Incidence of Remilitarized Violence.

localities subject to different types of configurations, I find confirmation of the patterns observed at the organization level and support for the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization. Specifically, examining remilitarized violence only in the municipalities in which the paramilitaries operated during the war, the data presented in Table 5.4 suggest that 44 percent of localities that hosted a non-local militia (L-NL configuration or NL-NL configuration) experienced remilitarization, whereas remilitarization occurred in only 29 percent of municipalities affected by systems of only local units.

TABLE 5.4. *Municipalities Experiencing Remilitarized Violence by Regional Configuration*

		Remilitarized Violence	***No Remilitarized Violence***
Regional configurations	Only local groups (L-L)	145 (29%)	352 (71%)
	Local and non-local groups (L-NL) OR Only non-local groups (NL-NL)	117 (44%)	151 (56%)

NETWORKS, NOT GUNS, CAUSE VARIATION IN REMILITARIZATION INTENSITY

The book's theory offers implications not only for the incidence of remilitarization and demilitarization, but also for the intensity of remilitarization if it occurs. Specifically, the theory predicts that non-local organizations' remilitarization should be weaker than that of local organizations because of differences in the strength of the groups' postwar capacities (hypothesis 2.4). I claim that networks, not weapons, constitute the key ingredients to remilitarization capacity. Specifically, sustained bonds constrain individual former fighters in the following ways: (1) they link the ex-fighters' status and self-identity to the network; (2) they apply social pressure to cooperate with their former comrades to whom they are densely connected; (3) they afford the leadership the credible sanctions and normative authority necessary to re-recruit; and (4) they provide reassurance that, if a faction of the web remobilizes, others will follow and that it will be safe to follow.[24] In this way, local groups prove highly capable of remobilizing their networks.

Indeed in the Daly, Paler, and Samii (2014) study of individual ex-combatants' return to violence, the role of social networks – intact relationships between ex-fighters and sustained ties to their former commanders – proves the most robust determinant of recidivism across all of the measures. Those measures were: direct – whether the ex-combatants definitely engaged in violence again, and indirect – vulnerability to recruitment, and sympathy toward remilitarization; across all statistical strategies – multivariate regressions and a machine learning algorithm; when entered as an additional risk factor; and when evaluated as a hypothetical intervention that breaks up the friendships, lines of communication, solidarity, or chains of authority between former companions in arms. There exists a powerful relationship between intact networks and the ability to remilitarize.[25]

[24] Calhoun (1991); Petersen (2001).
[25] See also Samii, Paler and Daly (2015).

TABLE 5.5. *Intensity of Remilitarization by Recruitment Geography*

		Strong Remilitarization	*Weak Remilitarization*
Recruitment geography	Local group	5	3
	Non-local group	1	10

Accordingly, where the organizations' social networks were intact, we should witness more powerful remilitarization. This should be reflected both in the strength of the remilitarized organizations and in the intensity of the remilitarized violence. I look first at the strength of the remilitarized organizations that grew out of local armed groups versus those that grew out of non-local groups. Although non-local groups almost always exhibited weaker remilitarization in terms of the remilitarized structures' durability and the threat they posed to security, rule of law, and the state, there existed more variation across local groups. The theory correctly predicts the strength of remilitarized organizations in fifteen cases and incorrectly predicts four of these cases (see Table 5.5).

The in-depth qualitative information on the bloques' trajectories that proved incongruent with the theory reveals several nuances to the framework. In one case, that of the Libertadores del Sur, the theory predicts low intensity remilitarization, but instead a large-scale, powerful BACRIM emerged. Here, the weakening of the non-local faction encouraged the incursion into the zone of preexisting criminal entities, specifically the cartel of Norte de Valle. Rather than conflict, an alliance was born and the Rastrojos, the cartel's armed apparatus, co-opted and bolstered the Libertadores, inciting a large flare-up of violent remilitarization in the form of the Organización Nueva Generación. Although this type of co-optation occurred in other cases, this was the only resulting group that proved powerful. Meanwhile, certain organizations predicted to remilitarize in a strong fashion did so only weakly. In two cases – Autodefensas de Meta y Vichada and Tolima – this weakness largely resulted from relative military defeat prior to the peace accords. I examine defeat before demobilization as an alternative explanation below. In the case of Bloque Córdoba, which I discuss in Chapter 7, the weak nature of the remilitarization stemmed from the abdication of the commander cohort after the peace agreements. Usually, local leadership remains intact, but in this case, for idiosyncratic reasons, the command structure eroded.

I also investigate the intensity of remilitarized violence at the municipality level. Different configurations of armed groups should produce different levels of remilitarized violence as a result of variation in organizational capacity (hypothesis 2.6). Although stronger capacity might translate into the consolidation of territorial control and less violence over time (Kalyvas 2006), in the medium term, we should observe more acute conflict in places afflicted by strong remilitarized actors. To capture the intensity of remilitarized violence,

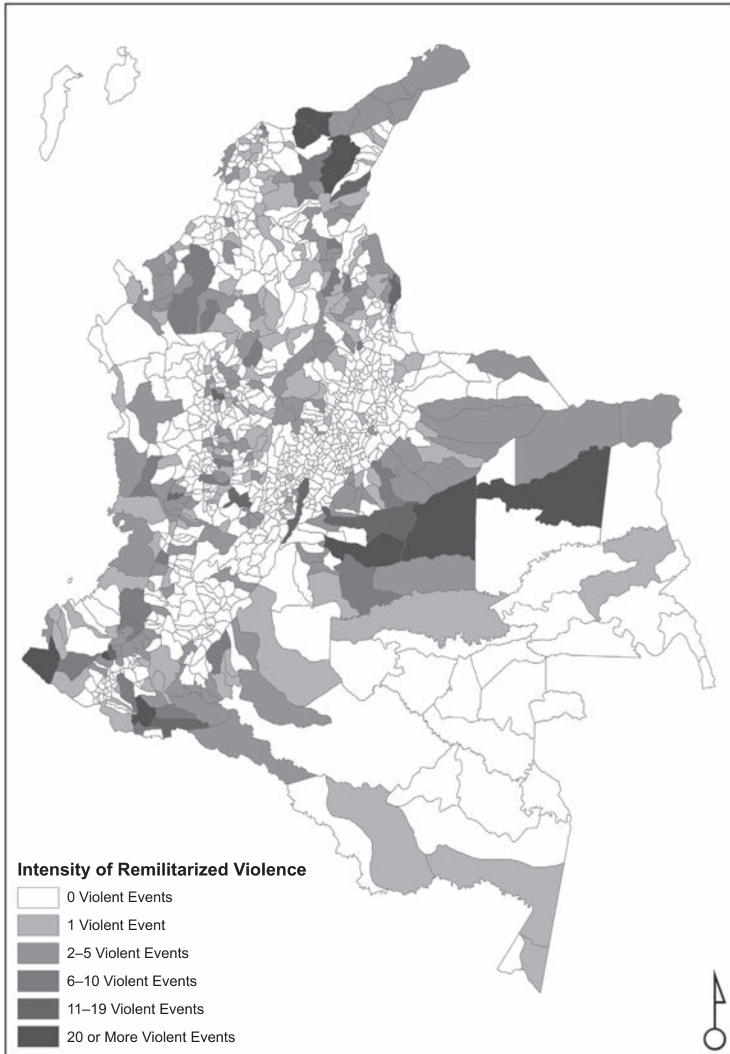
TABLE 5.6. *Intensity of Remilitarized Violence by Regional Configuration*

		Average Violence Intensity
Recruitment configurations	No paramilitary groups	0.3
	Only one local group (L)	0.8
	Only local groups (L-L)	1.3
	Only one non-local group (NL)	1.6
	Only non-local groups (NL-NL)	2
	Both local and non-local groups (L-NL)	5.1

I use a count variable of the number of violent events in the municipality in the five years since the first demobilization. I examine six different configurations to disaggregate where only one armed group operated. I would expect that, in terms of intensity of remilitarized violence, places in which no paramilitary factions operated would have the lowest-intensity remilitarized violence, followed by places with only a single local group. Slightly higher levels should be found in areas with several groups that were all local, due to having multiple actors present. Next in terms of greater violence intensity, I would expect to find places to which only a single non-local group deployed. We should observe intermediate levels of remilitarized violence in areas of multiple non-local (and no local) groups, and the highest intensity in places with both local and non-local groups. The mean number of violent incidents in localities with both non-local and local armed groups equaled 5.1 whereas places with only a single local group exhibited a mean of 0.8 violent events. Across the configurations, the levels of violence follow the predicted pattern (Table 5.6). When local groups remilitarize, they seem to do so in a powerful fashion unleashing high-intensity violence, as all of their organizational assets remain intact. Map 5.5 illustrates the intensity of violence by remilitarized groups across Colombia.

SPILLOVER OF REMILITARIZATION ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

As noted earlier, there exists an overlap between strategic configurations; observations within configurations are not independent; and, although the data offer a snapshot of remilitarization, the narrative involves a temporal element. This may mean that organizations that might otherwise have escaped violence will be brought into a new conflict. My theory can account for the first round of remilitarized violence prompted by changes in power as a result of the peace accords. However, further rounds of violence usually follow. Remilitarized groups face reduced costs to continuing to fight because they have already paid the sunk costs of remilitarization and possess strong incentives to strengthen as they confront not only their illegal armed rivals, but also the state. As groups at war, they engage in revisionist efforts and offensive expansionary campaigns and, in



MAP 5.5. Intensity of Remilitarized Violence.

so doing, spark violence elsewhere. Additionally, the state may strengthen relative to non-local actors in certain localities in the first round, which, in future periods, strengthens the state relative to local and non-local actors in other localities. War, once underway again, unleashes endogenous processes that influence where, when, and how violence ravages a country again. Indeed, we observe that, whereas the remilitarized groups exhibited an established presence in ninety-five municipalities in 2008, they had consolidated a presence in 337 municipalities by 2013. Chapter 7 traces these temporal and spatial

elements in more depth with the cases in Urabá and Córdoba. A power shift between the Bloque Córdoba and Bloque Héroes de Tolová resulted in remilitarization that spilled over into Urabá, prompting Bloque Élmer Cárdenas to also redeploy. While beyond the scope of the theory, these longer-term dynamics merit future research.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

I chose the comparative laboratory of Colombia because it exhibited extraordinary variation in the trajectories of the multiple factions that signed peace accords with the government and because it held constant many potentially confounding variables. Although the different armed groups received the same peace terms and all benefited from favorable structural circumstances in terms of physical and economic geography, within these broadly similar conditions there remains some subnational variation that could explain the outcomes of remilitarization and demilitarization described earlier.

Peace Terms and Peacekeeping

The peace terms did not vary sufficiently to account for the observed variation in postwar outcomes. No strong difference existed in what the paramilitary groups achieved in terms of political, military, or economic power-sharing, territorial autonomy, security-sector reform, or transitional justice. Although neither United Nations peacekeeping forces nor any other major peacekeeping operation deployed to Colombia, the OAS was charged with verifying and monitoring the peace process through its Peace Mission, MAPP. To do so, the OAS established regional offices with coverage of certain territories in Colombia. We might anticipate that the presence of these international monitors would reduce the risk of remilitarization through information, security, and commitment mechanisms.[26] However, peace monitors are more likely to go where violations of the peace terms occur; thus the causality may be reversed (Fortna 2008). I sought to address this endogeneity problem by examining MAPP presence in the first months of the peace process before remobilization emerged. However, this proved a limited and thus nearly meaningless presence as the MAPP operation was just being rolled out. Thereafter, unsurprisingly, we observe a positive relationship between MAPP presence and remilitarization, with causation most likely running in the reverse direction. Accordingly, this case cannot evaluate the alternative mechanism of security guarantees provided by international peacekeepers. Future research should seek to explore the intersection of the effect of recruitment geographies with that of peacekeepers across conflicts.

[26] Fortna (2004); Mattes and Savun (2010); Walter (1997).

War Outcome and Military Defeat

The qualitative evidence described earlier points to an alternative explanation related to the literature on war outcome: military weakness or defeat. That peace proves more stable after decisive military victories than after wars that end in a tie constitutes perhaps the most consistent finding of the literature on the durability of peace after both civil and interstate conflicts.[27] It is argued that indecisive military outcomes leave all sides capable of resuming the fight, and no side fully satisfied with the terms of the peace. Wars that end in a draw also leave greater uncertainty about who would win another round of fighting (Fearon 1995). If an armed group is militarily debilitated or defeated, we might anticipate that it will prove less likely to remilitarize. Although none of the paramilitary factions faced defeat, as such, several were weakened in the period leading up to the peace negotiations. As described earlier, groups such as Tolima and Meta y Vichada, although relatively local, were able to remilitarize only weakly because their military capacity had diminished prior to the negotiations. To explore the broader applicability of this relationship, I examine the proportion of each paramilitary organization that defected in the year prior to the peace accords. Mass exodus correlates with setbacks to the group. The data preclude me from estimating defection to another paramilitary group; I can only measure defection to the state's individual reintegration program. Defection to another paramilitary group was not very common, but did happen. For example, combatants from the Autodefensas Meta y Vichada, when involved in fierce confrontations with Bloque Vichada, switched sides to Bloque Vichada. However, we cannot know the exact numbers of each bloque that side-switched in this way. Meanwhile, approximately 3,456 paramilitaries individually demobilized from their armed groups (prior to their groups' collective demobilization) and enrolled in the government reintegration program; the numbers leaving ranged from 0 to 80 percent of the various bloques.[28] Although the military defeat factor seems relevant to certain of the cases explored, its impact does not appear generalizable. The average percentage of defectors prior to demobilization among the remilitarized groups was 10.77, compared with 9.72 for the demilitarized groups, not a statistically significant difference.

Tactical Terrain and Resources

Although it often seems that drugs, mountains, and jungle cover all of Colombia, there exists significant regional variation in resources and in tactical terrain that could account for variation in the paramilitary organizations' postwar trajectories. Related to the resources argument is a motivational one: perhaps

[27] Fortna (2004); Licklider (1995); Toft (2010).
[28] On the basis of data from the Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (ACR).

whether groups were more political or more criminal in nature affects their likelihood of remilitarization. I explore whether these factors can explain more of the share of variation than does my theory centered on the geography of recruitment.

The analysis that follows yields two main conclusions. First, social and human geography matters more than economic and physical geography in accounting for patterns of remilitarization; it is not rugged terrain, drugs, or poverty that lead to disciplined networks capable of violence, it is organizations. Second, contrary to a common assumption of academics, policymakers, and journalists, control of illicit resources does not require remilitarization, and therefore the presence of resources cannot predict the outcomes with which this book is concerned.

Tactical Terrain

During the war, all of the paramilitary groups benefited from a natural habitat favorable to militarization; otherwise they would not have been strong enough to gain a negotiated end to their fighting. There is, nonetheless, variation across the groups.

With respect to tactical terrain, the civil war literature predicts that armed movements are generally numerically weak relative to the government (Kalyvas 2008b). This implies that, to survive, militants must be able to hide from state forces and avoid denunciation (Collier et al. 2008). Dense forests, jungles, mountainous terrain, unmonitored borders, and regions unpenetrated by roads provide non-state actors with cover and camouflage against detection and aerial attack, and facilitate free movement of their combatants and arms.[29]

I explore several measures of tactical terrain at the municipality level and also average these measures across the localities in which each of the organizations operated. For mountainous topography, I employ an elevation variable from maps of the Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (IGAC) that report the average altitude of each municipality. I constructed a more detailed measure of topography, which is binary and captures whether the municipality's terrain is "strongly inclined" or "very steep." This ensures that I did not code high-elevation plateaus as mountainous, nor low-altitude rough terrain as flat. To further capture the availability of sanctuaries, I created a binary variable for municipalities adjoining an international border. In the absence of adequate road systems, countermilitancy operations cannot easily access, control, or win over rural areas. To capture road density, I relied on IGAC political-geographic maps. I consider the natural logarithm of the total kilometers of railroads, primarily and secondary roads (paved and unpaved), and navigable rivers per municipality.

Table 5.7 shows the average terrain in the zones of operation of the remilitarized versus the demilitarized organizations. The elevation and roughness

[29] Román Ortiz, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

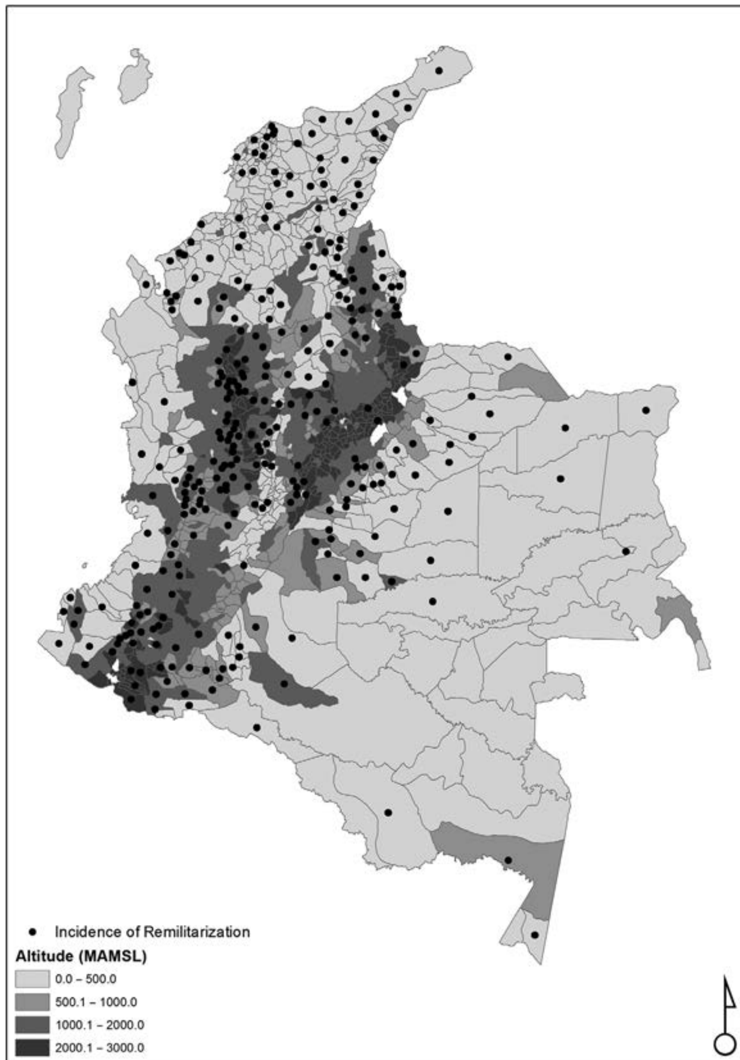
TABLE 5.7. *Tactical Terrain and Remilitarization: Organizational Level*

		Remilitarized Groups	*Demilitarized Groups*
Tactical terrain	Average elevation	802 m	870 m
	Average roughness of terrain	0.76	0.76
	Average road density	10.8	10.5
	International border	0.11	0.03

Note: These results are averaged across the zones of operation of the groups that remilitarized and those that demilitarized.

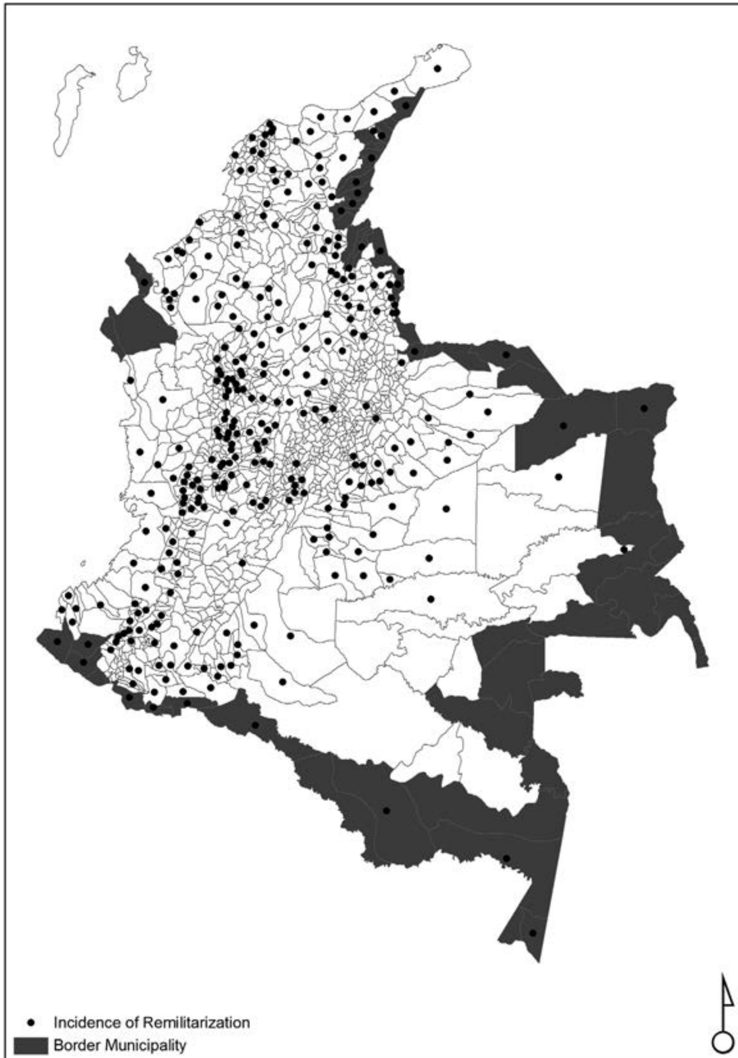
of the topography did not diverge in a significant way and, if anything, remilitarization proved less likely in mountainous areas (see Map 5.6 and Table A.5 in Appendix). Organizations benefitting from regions of low road density were as likely to remilitarize as those operating in places of higher road density. Although the incidence of violence by remilitarized groups was slightly higher in places close to international sanctuaries, there did not exist a noticeable concentration of violence along the borders, as demonstrated in Map 5.7. The multivariate results in the Appendix, Tables A.7 and A.8, display similar findings. These tactical variables do not change over time and cannot account for the decision to demobilize and thereafter to remilitarize. They also cannot account for the significant variation in the ability to remilitarize – the collective action capacity necessary to do so – and they cannot explain variation in motivations for returning to organized violence. The tactical terrain results make sense when we lay political, economic, and social factors on top of Colombia's most rugged topography. The core of Colombia is concentrated in the highlands: Bogotá is at an altitude of nearly 3,000 meters, Medellín at roughly 1,500 meters. Remilitarized actors do not aim only to hide; they also seek to exercise influence over strategic territories including urban areas, regions of economic wealth, population centers, and politically salient localities. Remaining in the jungles, along the borders, and in unpopulated territories would render them irrelevant and would likely starve them of other key assets. As Norman Bailey wrote about Colombia: "We have seen that the violence, as a social phenomenon, did not respect race or economic status, and that it took place in regions of *minifundia* and of *latifundia*, among the prosperous and the miserable, in desert and [in] plain" (1967, 3). The indicators of tactical terrain cannot account for the strong observed variation in remilitarization. Remilitarization occurred in areas especially favorable to armed mobilization according to the conventional correlates of civil war, but also in habitats less hospitable to the deployment of organized violence.

I should note that existing studies also use measures of population size and density and per-capita GDP as indicators of favorable tactical terrain because large, dispersed populations make "keep[ing] tabs on who is doing what



MAP 5.6. Rough Terrain and Remilitarization.
Note: MAMSL: meters above mean sea level.

at the local level" more difficult, while poverty is interpreted as an indicator either of state capacity or of the ease of recruitment (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 81). Population and poverty variables, however, prove highly correlated with the other indicators (terrain, road density, and international borders). Operationalizing poverty, in particular, at the subnational level produces potential problems of ecological inference. That is, if poverty is a proxy for the "state's overall financial, administrative, police, and military capabilities"



MAP 5.7. Border Sanctuaries and Remilitarization.

(Fearon and Laitin 2003, 76), it should be captured at the country level (given the centralized nature of armed forces and tax revenues) and, if proxying for the opportunity costs of recruitment, it should be measured at the level of the individual prospective recruit. My previous research on Colombia shows that population variables, although significant, have little substantive effect on the incidence of violence and that remilitarized organizations are less likely to emerge in areas of high poverty (Daly 2012). The recidivism study (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2014) similarly finds measures of income, employment status,

and subjective perceptions of welfare unrelated to the decision to reengage in violence or rejoin an armed faction. My qualitative field experience further convinces me of the importance of social networks over economic mechanisms of re-recruitment even when salaries are offered for reenlisting. Nonetheless, as a robustness check (shown in the Appendix), I evaluate a Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) poverty measure, "Unsatisfied Basic Needs (NBI)," to gauge the size of the population with a low threshold for joining a remilitarized movement according to the opportunity-cost theory of recruitment.[30] The data again suggest that poverty has a statistically insignificant effect (Map A.1).

Resources

Related to the favorable tactical conditions logic is the resources argument, which offers both "opportunity" and "motivational" variants. Civil war scholars posit that non-state armed groups require substantial financial revenues to purchase armaments and materiel and they are thus more likely to emerge if they can derive funding from high-value, low-weight goods or from extortion or "protection" of primary commodity extraction. Additionally, it is argued that resource-rich groups, in contrast to socially rich or ideologically motivated armed units, attract opportunistic, salaried joiners who lack incentives to remain at peace (Weinstein 2007). War constitutes a more efficient means to their desired end of economic profits.[31] In Colombia, the narrative posits that the paramilitary groups were fundamentally greedy, criminal, and revisionist, and that they therefore remilitarized to make a grab at drug-trafficking routes and opportunities for financial gain. However, not all groups remilitarized and not all paramilitary groups participated equally in the drug trade or, conversely, proved equally driven by a counterinsurgent ideology. On the basis of this alternative explanation, we should anticipate that the more resource-rich and more criminal paramilitary units would exhibit a higher likelihood of remilitarization than the resource-poor and more political factions.

Although I make no claims about the goals of the remilitarized groups, I do attempt to code whether their previous paramilitary incarnations were more criminal or more political in nature. In Colombia, the more criminal paramilitary factions possessed strong ties to or evolved out of drug cartels (Fundación Seguridad y Democracia 2006). For example, Vencedores de Arauca constituted a paramilitary franchise "purchased" by two notorious drug-trafficking brothers, "los Mellizos." The more political paramilitary organizations tended to be those founded for self-defense with a clearer counterguerrilla logic, such as Autodefensas Campesinas de Ortega. Such groups often also funded themselves through illicit means, but they retained a more *autodefensa* character.

[30] Collier and Hoeffler (1999); Oyefusi (2008).

[31] Collier and Hoeffler (2004); De Zeeuw (2008); Grossman (1999); Gutiérrez Sanín (2004); Söderberg Kovacs (2007).

TABLE 5.8. *Group Motivations and Remilitarization*

		Remilitarization	***Demilitarization***
Motivations	More criminal	10	7
	More political	9	11

The line between these two types is blurry. I rely on the coding by experts from the OAS Peace Mission, Colombian High Commission for Peace, and International Organization for Migration who were present at the peace negotiations and who possessed intimate knowledge of the organizations and their leadership. I asked these experts to code each paramilitary group as economically driven (*narco*) or politically driven (*self-defense/counterguerrilla*).

Although the groups coded as criminal proved more likely to remilitarize than the political ones, this motivational view cannot account for a great deal of the variation (see Table 5.8). The recidivism survey confirms this indeterminacy (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2014). "Consumers," or those who entered the conflict for material reasons, proved as likely to reengage in violent activities as did "investors" who joined for ideological reasons. Moreover, these data suggest that whether one belonged to a "greedy" or a "political" armed faction did not influence one's likelihood of recidivism.

I also measure the impact of resource richness directly. I constructed variables to capture whether each paramilitary organization had access to drug cultivation in its region of operation, measured in both a binary fashion and also as the total hectares of coca.[32] These drug data derived from the reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Colombian National Police's Integrated Illicit Crops Monitoring System (SIMCI).[33] I then generated an indicator for whether there existed precious gems in the area of influence of each armed group, relying on data on emerald, sapphire, and aquamarine locations identified in *The Oxford Economic Atlas of the World* and on gold and emerald mine sites from CEDE data (Jones 1972). Finally, although oil is a less lootable resource, it provides opportunities for extortion, so I created a binary measure for the presence of oil fields, pipelines, or refineries. U.S. Department of Energy maps provided this information.

Colossal profits from narcotrafficking and other sources of loot undoubtedly fueled the remilitarization phenomenon and increased the intensity of violence where it reoccurred as the armed actors struggled over territories seeking to control and monopolize revenue flows. However, as we can see from Map 5.8 and Table 5.9, some paramilitary organizations that benefited from the exploitation of drugs, gems, or oil demilitarized, and some remilitarized. In the Appendix, Tables A.7 and A.8 show the multivariate analyses. Access to these

[32] This indicator does not reflect access to drug laboratories or trafficking routes.
[33] United Nations International Drug Control Programme (2002).

TABLE 5.9. *Resources and Remilitarization: Organizational Level*

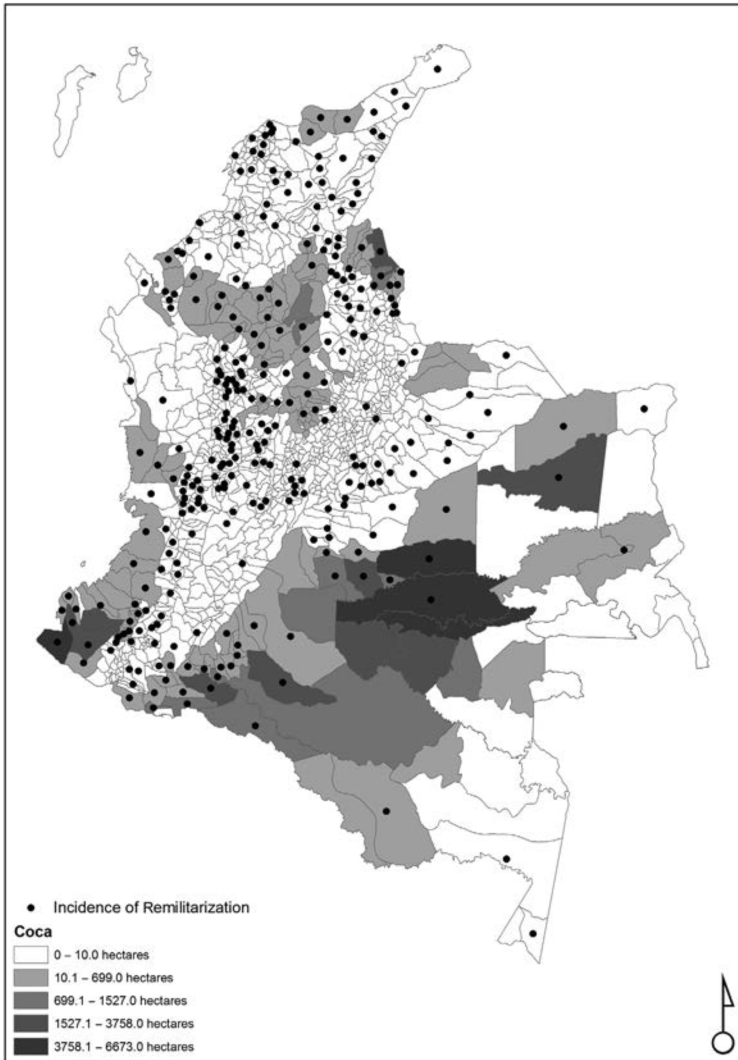
		Number of Remilitarized Organizations	*Number of Demilitarized Organizations*
Resources in area of operation	Resources (gems, drugs, oil)	17	17
	No Resources (gems, drugs, oil)	2	1
	Gems	7	9
	No gems	12	9
	Drugs	14	13
	No drugs	5	5
	Oil	10	11
	No oil	9	7

Note: See Table A.6 in Appendix for these results at the municipality level, comparing municipalities with and without remilitarized violence.

financial opportunities proved largely constant across time. Accordingly, they cannot explain the longitudinal variation in outcomes: first, the armed groups' implementation of the peace settlements and their demobilization, and then their remilitarization. Given that disarmament and decommissioning constitute a costly signal and behavior indicating commitment to a peace process, why would greedy, revisionist actors ever relinquish their arms and demobilize in the first place (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003)? Schweller (1996) argues that revisionist powers should only cooperate (in this case, sign peace accords and disarm) if they *lack* the capabilities to threaten the status quo. In contrast to this proposition, the actors in the Colombian case voluntarily disarmed despite possessing great strength. Moreover, profiting from resource endowments does not necessarily require the manifest use of violence; revenues are not available only to militarized actors. Keen (2000a) highlights this fact:

> The art of facilitating a transition from war to peace may lie, to a considerable extent, in ensuring that some of those benefiting from war are in a position to benefit to a greater extent from peace. In practice, these benefits may (at least initially) be secured under some kind of "armed peace" in which a number of players remain in a position to use the threat of force to underwrite control of economic activity.... Groups that have been able to use violence to secure control of production, trade and emergency aid in wartime may be able to carve out for themselves a degree of control over production, trade and development or reconstruction aid after a peace settlement.

Former armed groups often continue their licit and illicit dealings during "peace" with a variety of arrangements so they can continue to profit. The political economy argument offers us little leverage on the question of why we see latent arms in some cases and manifest ones in others. For example, as Driscoll (2012, 133–134) observes: "it is no great mystery why war did not resume" in Tajikistan. "The central mechanism that kept the Tajik civil



MAP 5.8. Drugs and Remilitarization.

war settled, as everyone knows, was bribery: uniforms, salaries, amnesty, and respected government positions lured warlords into the internationally recognized state." Similarly, in Myanmar, remilitarization did not prove necessary for the exploitation of resources. Following the ceasefire agreements, the demilitarized New Mon State Party set up the Rehmonya International Company, which was licensed to import and export, and the demilitarized Kachin Independence Organization set up the BUGA Company, which became involved in jade and logging. The United Wa State Party and the Pao National

Organization also obtained concessions in the Mong Shu ruby mines in Shan State and the Hpa-kant jade mines in Myanmar's Kachin State, and many other demobilized groups engaged in taxation of the local population and in border trade, logging, and mining operations, as well as more illicit activities including the production of drugs, human trafficking, and black-marketeering. They did so without remilitarizing.[34]

The data suggest that where remilitarization is *organizationally* feasible and desirable, it will occur. The findings reorient the analysis back to the population that picks up arms and fights and to the organizations that structure their action. It proves necessary to overlay the tactical terrain and resource endowments atop the human topography. Mobilization requires human and social capital, networks, and organization; mountainous peaks and rare gems do not provide these. Violence often leaves in its path organizations that retain robust capacities for collective action and durable social capital that future mobilization can exploit where and when shifting power generates opportunities.

Robustness Check

As a final robustness check of the relationship between the geography of recruitment and remilitarization, I use propensity-score matching to address the potential endogeneity of recruitment patterns. Propensity-score matching reduces the bias in observational data (in which "treatment" is not randomly assigned) by using observable "pretreatment" characteristics to estimate the likelihood that a unit is assigned to the "treated" or "untreated" groups (Becker and Ichino 2002). Each municipality observation receives a propensity score for receiving "treatment." In this case, I calculate the propensity score as the predicted value of a probit estimation of preconflict characteristics: guerrilla presence, economic indicators, exploitable resources, geographic variables, and demographics. I then match "treated" cases (those experiencing non-local groups) to "control" cases (those with only local groups) based on the closeness of their propensity score so as to create appropriate counterfactuals that are strictly comparable. I estimate the average treatment effect of recruitment type as the difference in mean values on the dependent variable – remilitarization – between the treatment and control group matches. I compare how the recruitment treatment affects the extent of remilitarization in municipalities with similar observable characteristics.[35] The results, displayed in Table 5.10, prove consistent with those found across the bivariate and multivariate analyses: non-local recruitment is positively and statistically significantly associated with remilitarization. The first row indicates that municipalities "treated" with configurations of non-local groups (L-NL or NL-NL) experienced an increase

[34] International Crisis Group (2011); Kramer (2009).

[35] The results in Table 5.10 are based on propensity scores derived from probit estimates, restricting to common support. Standard errors calculated using bootstrapping.

TABLE 5.10. *Recruitment and Remilitarized Violence, Propensity Score Matching*

ATT Estimate	Standard Error	Observations	Treated Observations
0.225	0.08	846	89

in the probability of remilitarized violence of 23 percent over untreated municipalities (L-L configurations) with similar observable characteristics.

CONCLUSION

Together, Chapters 4 and 5 provide varied quantitative evidence in support of the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization. Chapter 4 looks *inside* local and non-local groups to demonstrate that they varied in their networks, geo-clustering, command and control, and information asymmetries and that this translated into their power and cohesion being either preserved or eroded in the aftermath of the peace accords. Chapter 5 then looks at the dynamics *between* the groups as a result of the sustained or shifted distribution of power and the implications for remilitarization and demilitarization. Across the outcome measures, levels of analysis, and data sources, I find a strong relationship between the geographies of the armed groups' recruitment and their transitions back to or away from organized violence in the aftermath of the accords. The theory outperforms alternatives centered on resource endowments, tactical terrain, and military outcomes. Where the proposed causal process did not find support in the empirical record, the data served to offer important refinements to the theory and to indicate complexities in the realities of war-to-peace transitions. I explore these next in the detailed historical accounts of Chapters 6 and 7, which delve into the paths to demilitarization and remilitarization in three case study areas of Colombia.

6

The Path to Demilitarization: Configuration of Local Militias in Antioquia

The analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5 provides evidence on all of the paramilitary organizations and all of the regions in Colombia to quantitatively substantiate the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization. Statistical analysis, however, only confirms that these factors in the causal process prove consistently associated. A more detailed account of individual cases can uncover whether the causal process operates as narrated. This qualitative account can also better assess the theory's information mechanism and can illuminate its impact on perceptions of power, cognitive processes, and the dynamics of bargaining. The case studies can expand the analysis to illustrate nuances beyond the scope of the quantitative models. For example, these cases can explore the role of state-building and how the state strategizes toward different types of organizations. They can shed light on the nature of demilitarized groups about which we know little, and they can investigate the interactions between demobilizing and still-armed non-state actors.

Chapter 6 traces the postwar trajectory of the Bloque Cacique Nutibara (BCN), a case of demilitarization, and Chapter 7 examines Bloque Catatumbo, which remilitarized weakly, and Bloque Elmer Cárdenas, which remilitarized in a powerful fashion.[1] These cases, together with the organizations in their regional configurations, constitute a tightly controlled, subnational comparison across belligerent groups within the same war over time that holds

[1] To analyze the case studies, I engage in within-case congruence tests as well as process tracing to see how the predictions generated by the model and rival theories fare against the empirical record (Bennett 2008; George and McKeown 1985). I first employ congruence procedures: a within-case method of causal interpretation that compares the predicted values of the explanatory and outcome variables with their observed values in actual post–peace agreement environments. I track the extent to which changes in the outcomes of interest co-vary with changes in the factors provided by the model. Then, using the process tracing method, I trace the underlying mechanisms by which the causal variables translate into outcomes.

relatively constant the macro variables of colonial legacies, state coercive strength, regime type, and international involvement. The three organizations committed similarly heinous crimes against humanity and were each relatively strong at the time of disarming; none faced military defeat. In fact, Bloque Catatumbo constituted one of the most militarily effective paramilitary brigades in Colombia. Nevertheless, it weakened the most during the post–peace agreement period. All factions participated actively in the illicit economies. The structures decommissioned under the same peace terms. The only key ways in which they differed fundamentally was in the geography of their recruitment and that of their neighboring armed actors.

I analyze these cases with several specific goals in mind. First, I seek to further tease out the causal links between recruitment geographies and remilitarization. The recruitment theory of violence recurrence would be, at least partially, disconfirmed if (1) demilitarization or remilitarization proved unrelated to the mapping of the armed groups' recruitment patterns and those of their neighboring groups, (2) structures redeployed even where no shift in power resulted from a divergence in the factions' network structures or where no information problems hindered bargaining, (3) renegotiation of terms succeeded with equal likelihood in configurations involving non-local groups as in those involving only local units, (4) non-local groups maintained disciplined collective action and cohesion and did not weaken or, conversely, local groups tended to erode, or (5) the state disproportionately engaged in state-building in areas of local units while respecting the sovereignty of non-local structures. Any one of these patterns would suggest that recruitment geographies may not be the greatest determinant of remilitarization and demilitarization, would raise questions about the internal validity of the theory's causal process, and would indicate that other mechanisms might be driving the postwar trajectories of these armed organizations. This is not to say that the book's theory can account for all of the empirical variation and that no other factors matter. Instead, as a second goal, I aim to ensure that other factors critical to our understanding of conflict resolution and peace are not playing the key causal role (although they may explain several of the observed facts). In tracing these processes, I pay attention to the role of alternative variables such as economic resources, leadership, and socialization that may be driving variation in the book's central outcome – remilitarization and demilitarization – or affecting the intervening factors. In the case narratives that follow, I show how much of the dynamics of organized violence are dominated by the nature of the postwar network structures of the armed groups. These networks, intimately tied to where armed groups recruited, caused variation in the postwar collective capacities of the groups and influenced their ability to renegotiate their pacts effectively.

This chapter focuses on the path to demilitarization. The book's theory tells us to expect demilitarization to occur when a local unit belonged to a regional configuration that included only local groups along with the state.

The following sections trace the formation and evolution of such a unit, the BCN in Medellín, Colombia's second-largest city located in the northwestern department of Antioquia. First, I carefully track how the leaders of a local group – Cacique – chose to recruit and deploy and the impact of their choices on the group's network configuration, the proximity of its combatants, its command and control apparatus, the flow of intelligence across levels of its structure's hierarchy, and its ability to estimate its postwar capacity with little error. I then similarly detail the recruitment geographies of Cacique's neighboring local armed groups and explore Cacique's strategic interactions with these groups and with the state. I next illustrate the demilitarization of Cacique Nutibara and offer insights into the form taken by its successor organization, a sociopolitical association. The analysis focuses on the postwar trajectory of the armed organization from 2003 to 2008. In the chapter's concluding section, I highlight several facets of the case's longer-term dynamics, which lie beyond the theory's explanatory scope. The chapter brings the process of demilitarization to life by drawing on diverse primary data collected over the course of two months spent in Medellín's shantytowns and the surrounding countryside, and an additional month observing its neighborhood elections and conducting interviews of remilitarized paramilitaries in its Bellavista prison.

FOUR WARS IN ANTIOQUIA

Any *paisa*[2] can narrate how Medellín's Valley of Aburrá has suffered four wars over the past thirty years. Beginning in the 1980s, the rural guerrilla organizations (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC], Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army [ELN], Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army [EPL]) sought to create urban militias in Medellín.[3] These efforts bore fruit in groups such as the Bolivarian Militias and the Popular Armed Command, whose "armed proselytizing" and authoritarian presence brought a wave of violence to the city.[4] This violence helped engender local gangs.[5] As one ex-rebel explained, "The militias killed the thieves and then became the thieves. They killed the rapists and then became the rapists. I hated this so I left the militias and formed a gang to resist their presence."[6] Another ex-combatant recounted how, when he was ten, he witnessed the rape of his neighbor, Ana María. Juan was powerless to stop it. After the rapists stormed his home and

[2] *Paisa* is the slang term for the local population of Medellín and the surrounding areas, reflecting Colombia's strong local identities.

[3] Jaramillo Arbeláez, Ana María (1994); Medina Franco (2006).

[4] The urban militias were highly fragmented; ten groups were operating by 1993. President César Gaviria (1990–94) demobilized 800 of their members, in the aftermath of which the FARC and ELN consolidated their control over these urban militias.

[5] Gustavo Villegas, Director of Medellín's Reintegration Program and Secretary of Government, interview by author, Medellín, 4 March 2008.

[6] Ex-commander of Comuna 6, interview by author, Medellín, 26 February 2008.

threatened him with torture and execution if he opened his mouth, Juan formed a gang with his childhood companions. He had observed that the most popular and most respected kids in the city were those with motorcycles, arms, and money, those who belonged to gangs. He and his gang rid his beloved neighborhood of the rapists' group and displaced the militias, thieves, drug addicts, and petty criminals to other neighborhoods.[7] This story repeated itself across the city. Thus, by the late 1980s, Medellín had both guerrillas and gangs.

During this period, Pablo Escobar also rendered Medellín synonymous with the cocaine trade (Salazar 2001). The Medellín drug cartel, which at its height (1980s) enjoyed profits of $60 million per day, launched a campaign of violence to pressure the Colombian government to outlaw extradition to the United States for drug offenses. A "total" war raged between the Colombian state and Escobar's private army of salaried hitmen (*sicarios*), with Medellín's poor neighborhoods caught in the crossfire. Thus, the drug mafia's terrorists, private security, and paid assassins joined the mix of gang and guerrilla specialists in violence. By 1991, Medellín experienced the highest per-capita murder rate in the world, with a monthly average of 529 homicides (García 2005). This "second war" came to an end in 1993, when Escobar was captured and killed by a rogue faction of Medellín's mafia, "People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar" (PEPES), collaborating with U.S. Special Operations, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Colombian forces.

After Escobar's death, his gangs remained active but without the cartel's disciplining structure. According to a midranking paramilitary commander who formerly worked for Escobar, "There were many *pelaos*, 'sons' of the boss [Escobar], who were left abandoned. This is when the third war began between the remaining criminal groups to gain control of the city,"[8] its drug sale points, and the extortion and assassination markets. Diego Fernando Murillo Bejarano, alias "Don Berna," a former member and founder of PEPES, inherited Escobar's principal narcotrafficking structure, known as the Oficina de Envigado.[9] After Don Berna won this third war, he became the most powerful chief of Medellín's underworld.

By the mid-1990s, Don Berna faced mounting security problems and was forced to flee Medellín. He sought refuge with his former PEPES comrades and close friends, the Castaño brothers, who had formed a paramilitary structure

[7] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Medellín, July 2006.

[8] Ex-Cacique commander of Comuna 4, interview by author, Medellín, 25 February 2008.

[9] Envigado is a municipality adjacent to Medellín in the south of the Valle de Aburrá and is part of its Metropolitan area. The *Oficina* (the office) was an association of distinct criminal structures to coordinate assassinations, robberies, kidnappings, extortions, and drug-trafficking. See Alonso and Valencia (2007, 54). The former paramilitary commander "Doble Cero" described the oficina as the "office of complaints and claims, or the Attorney General of the narco-traffickers, which by following certain existing norms among the mafias, repair[ed] 'inconveniences' generated by the narco business in exchange for a 30 percent cut on the profits at stake" (Frente Urbano Rafael Uribe Bloque Metro 2007, 4).

in Colombia's northwest frontier called Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá (ACCU). "Don Berna" then returned to Medellín and adopted a new alias, "Adolfo Paz" (Adolfo "Peace"). Transforming his criminal apparatus in Medellín into a paramilitary organization, he commenced a fourth war to consolidate control of the region. To do so, he built upon the well-developed industry of violence staffed with veterans who had starred in the three earlier wars and co-opted their hitmen, offices, and powerful gangs.[10] In the metropolitan area, Don Berna's structure became the BCN: in the rural areas, specifically eastern Antioquia, it became the Bloque Héroes de Granada.

LOCAL GEOGRAPHY OF RECRUITMENT

The Cacique Nutibara organization comprised armed elements that were local and linked to the comunas (communes) and barrios (neighborhoods) in which they operated. Although it proves difficult to conceive of localness in a city as large as Medellín – two and a half million people – this armed group stationed its combatants in their barrios of origin, rendering it local at a very micro level. The Cacique commanders all came from Medellín and were deployed in their home neighborhoods. To fill the ranks of their organization, they built on the region's industry of violence.[11] Through a process of annihilation, negotiation, absorption, and domination,[12] they co-opted and recruited the "primary" elements of the conflict – the neighborhood gangs, known as *parches* and *combos*. The parches generally served as an adolescent's first encounter with violence, their "kindergartens in criminality"; they consisted of a small group of friends who hung out together and became involved with minor crime and violent activities in their neighborhoods.

Cacique Nutibara also came to reign over all of Medellín's combos, the next tier in the hierarchy of violence. Combos were criminal organizations composed of five to twenty members; they were very territorial and local in nature, and sold their services to more institutionalized armed groups. Combos stationed their members on the street corners of their communities and patrolled several-block radiuses. They represented the link between the neighborhood populations and the macro armed groups: the cartels, guerrillas and paramilitaries. In 2000, Medellín had 221 combos, comprising 6,991 members.[13] Thirty-seven percent of the Cacique fighters claimed to have belonged to a gang prior to joining the paramilitaries.[14] To recruit these micro gangs, Cacique

[10] Commander Diego Murrillo, versión libre, Medellín, 16–17 July 2007.

[11] Commander Diego Murrillo, versión libre, Medellín, 16–17 July 2007.

[12] Instituto de Estudios Políticos de la Universidad de Antioquia 2007.

[13] Alonso Jaramillo, ex-militia member and Director of the Security Branch of the Reintegration Program, interview by author, Medellín, 27 February 2008.

[14] These data were provided by Medellín's reintegration program, Programa Paz y Reconciliación. This figure is, however, likely an underestimation because many noncombatants demobilized along with the paramilitaries in order to gain access to the economic, educational, and

adopted methods described by one of its commanders: "My work was to … conduct a study neighborhood by neighborhood; to do a census of how many boys were in each combo. We completed this work in the neighborhoods, contracting [with] all of Medellín's combos to be part of our ranks."[15] In addition to the primary violent actors, Cacique Nutibara also commissioned the "secondary" elements of organized crime – the hitmen-for-hire, offices, and powerful gangs (*bandas*).[16] These bandas – Terraza, Triana, and Frank – were the most organized and powerful of the criminal entities. Less territorial, but still local and strongly hierarchical, each banda operated sophisticated arms, equipment, and personnel; each had a certain type of criminal specialty such as bank robbery, kidnapping, extortion, or narcotrafficking. Cacique Nutibara also recruited the "tertiary" elements of the war, the "traditional armed actors": insurgents and counterinsurgents, specifically the members of the paramilitary Bloque Metro, which BCN had defeated.[17]

Network Structure

The BCN thus was almost entirely made up of fighters who deployed locally in their barrios. Over three-quarters of the Cacique combatants were born in the city of Medellín and the surrounding area of the Oriente Antioqueño in which Cacique operated. The average pairwise distance between the Cacique fighters' towns of origin equaled forty-one miles. Almost all of my Cacique interviewees reported operating in their specific neighborhoods of origin. Moreover, a majority of the Cacique combatants possessed strong ties to one another prior to joining the paramilitaries. During my conversations with ex-combatants in Medellín, many reported that, prior to joining, they had friends (from elementary school and their neighborhoods) or family members (siblings, cousins, and partners) who were already in the Cacique structure. It was not just sharing locality that gave the combatants social ties, but also the fact that Cacique recruited these individuals as part of existing collective structures – parches, combos, bandas, guerrilla militias, and paramilitary battalions. In other words, Cacique enlisted members through networks that predated their entry. These networks, embedded within local neighborhoods, were generally dense: members were linked by their "organizational" affiliations, and also by kinship, friendship, and other types of quotidian bonds. My interviewees who had

psychological benefits of the reintegration program, and such individuals were unlikely to have belonged formerly to a gang.

[15] *Revista Semana* (2005).

[16] Jorge Gaviria, Director of Medellín's reintegration program, interview by author, Medellín, 19 January 2008.

[17] Ex-Héroes de Granada combatants, interview by author, Comuna 4, Medellín, 18 February 2008. Cacique Nutibara had launched an offensive against the other paramilitary organization present in Medellín, Bloque Metro, and had decimated it, thereafter "absorbing" Metro's structure and members (Civico 2009; Espinal, Ramírez, and Sierra 2007).

formerly belonged to a criminal group (parche, combo, or banda) attested to having a "very strong sense of belonging" to these groups. When the paramilitaries summoned the gang leaders and said, in effect, "join us or face the consequences," they opted to join collectively. (Those who did not join were killed.)

Most of these ex-combatants reported that they also came to identify strongly with the BCN, which suggests that their loyalty to their gangs transferred to Cacique. As one former fighter described it to me: "In the criminal world, I was a rogue, a *pillo* (scoundrel), then when I entered the Bloque Cacique Nutibara, I was a *paraco* (paramilitary). It was a very big responsibility. Before, I made money myself. In Cacique, I was paid to do things." Ex-combatants I spoke with felt that they were part of a larger mission, a movement that afforded them a status upgrade. "I felt much more respect from the community when I joined the paramilitaries; it collaborated with me much more."[18] Cacique Nutibara members who had not belonged to a criminal gang also testified to joining collectively along with their groups of neighborhood friends. In the context of scarce economic opportunities and widespread abuses by the guerrillas' militias, when their friends said, "let's go join the autodefensas, it will be cool," they went. This suggests that the leaders plugged into relatively homogenous networks within heterogeneous local communities. Sergio Mauricio specified his ties with other combatants: "They were the boys with whom we had always done everything together, with whom we had studied together."[19] As a result of these long-standing relationships and friendships, the Cacique comrades' ties tended to run deep. The co-optation of these preexisting micro armed groups who had intimate knowledge of their community members' reputations also gave to the Cacique organization the block-by-block reconnaissance necessary to continue to staff itself with the most interested members. These members' loyalty proved more likely to persist beyond a ceasefire.

Cacique Nutibara linked the small, localized, neighborhood-level armed units into a relatively disciplined hierarchical organization. Former combatants described the changes they experienced as they graduated from their combos and joined the paramilitaries. "In the paras, it was more tense, you had to ask permission for absolutely everything. You had to report everything. Criminals don't have to ask permission for anything; you are your own boss." Another explained that, "In Cacique, it was much more rigorous, I had more responsibility." His friend recounted, "It was more repressed because I didn't have the liberty that I had when I was in the parche." A former Cacique militant captured the essence of Cacique membership: "I became less rational in that I stopped measuring the consequences of my actions because I had to obey orders, period."[20]

[18] Recidivist ex-combatants, interviews by author, Bellavista Prison, Medellín, April–May 2008.
[19] Quoted in Programa Paz y Reconciliación (2007, 29).
[20] Ex-Cacique combatants, interviews by author, Medellín, February–April 2008.

Postwar Networks, Cohesion, and Information

Over the course of Cacique's armed reign over Medellín, it eliminated its rival paramilitaries, guerrillas, and criminals, and established hegemonic control over the city. Then, in 2003, Cacique signed a peace agreement with the Colombian government and on 25 November at dawn, its soldiers left their homes to disarm.[21] They headed for the Palace of Expositions in downtown Medellín where the formal disarmament ceremony took place. The Cacique members were then transferred to a "concentration area" in a nearby town, La Ceja, to be "re-educated" in civilian affairs. Three weeks later, they boarded thirty-two buses, which returned them to their homes.[22] They "arrived back to the neighborhoods in which they had fought, street by street, with the militias, guerrillas, and Bloque Metro paramilitaries.… Now, they arrived as civilians, hoping to redo their lives" (Yarce 2003b). Displacement away from their homes and away from where they had operated proved rare. This was partially because Medellín, as a large city, offered economic opportunities, and because Cacique, as a resource-rich organization, could afford to offer its members selective incentives to entice and render feasible their continued residence in the zone. However, the phenomenon of local combatants remaining where they operated was widespread across Colombia, as Chapter 4 details. One ex-combatant stated: "Even if I had the opportunity to live in El Poblado (the wealthiest neighborhood of Medellín), I would never leave my *barrio*."[23]

Thus, 93 percent of the Cacique paramilitary members remained in Medellín and the surrounding area after demobilization, amid the communities they had never left, the communities they had abused, patrolled, extorted, and governed. The average pairwise distance between one Cacique member's postwar place of residence and another's equaled twelve miles.[24] Importantly, nearly all of the midlevel and top-ranking Cacique leaders remained located in their prior spheres of influence. The fact that the Cacique combatants possessed preexisting ties and remained geographically proximate after demobilization in the neighborhoods where they had operated sustained collective action and enabled the organization's structure to endure and to maintain its power. It also facilitated the circulation of accurate information about its ex-members' loyalty to the organization, their willingness to act collectively in the organization's interest,

[21] See Alto Comisionado para la Paz (2006).

[22] High Commissioner for Peace Luis Carlos Restrepo stated prior to Cacique's disarmament that "all members of the [Bloque Cacique Nutibara] will go to their homes." Quoted in Yarce (2003a).

[23] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[24] Contrast this with the non-local paramilitary Frente Vichada, which had been active in the department of Vichada in the eastern plains: just 1 percent of its members continued living in the brigade's area of operation, and the pairwise distance between its former fighters averaged 208 miles.

and their likelihood of showing up if called again to fight: its remilitarization capacity.

Cacique Nutibara survived organizationally in the form of the Corporación Democracia (Democracy Corporation), which it founded on 10 December 2003 as a result of the peace agreement. All of the 868 members of the BCN and the 2,033 combatants of the Bloque Héroes de Granada automatically joined the Corporación. According to most members, the decision to join the Corporación was voluntary, but inevitable.[25] Corporación President Fabio Acevedo outlined how the "bloque did not lose its structure; organizationally nothing changed. It maintained the same pyramid and hierarchy as it transformed from illegality to legality." The top commanders became the directors of the Corporación. The second and third-tier leaders became official members of the Corporación's board. They carried out the Corporación's operations and activities through the midranking commanders, who became the "coordinators." As in the former military structure, the leaders assigned each of these "coordinators" a territorial zone (usually several neighborhoods) and a group of thirty-seven demobilized combatants.[26] They received direction and funding from the headquarters of the Corporación Democracia.[27] "The paramilitary rank and file became the Corporación's assembly, ... [its] member base."[28] According to the Corporación's former legal representative: "In the Corporación, everything works by orders. The boys never attend a meeting or participate in a project of their own volition. They do so only if the coordinators give them the order. The demobilized are very loyal to their *jefes* [chiefs]."[29] The Corporación operated as a mechanism of control, monitoring, and intelligence by which the commanders kept tabs on their rank and file and kept them in line and loyal.[30] As one of the coordinators described his job: "My principal commitment is to ensure that my men do not violate the parameters of the peace agreement."[31] Another commented, "I believe that my leadership has increased [since demobilizing].... If it hadn't then I wouldn't have the moral authority to direct the 100 to 120 'boys' [ex-combatants] that are here in the neighborhood."[32] The Corporación structure legitimized the status of the commanders and midranking officers and perpetuated their often authoritarian

[25] Fabio Acevedo, Ex-Cacique commander and president of the Corporación Democracia, interview by author, Medellín, 22 February 2008. See also the peace accord: Alto Comisionado para la Paz (2003).

[26] Alcaldía de Medellín (2007).

[27] Gustavo Villegas, Director of Medellín's Reintegration Program and Secretary of Government, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[28] Fabio Acevedo, Ex-Cacique commander and president of the Corporación Democracia, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[29] Legal representative of the Corporación Democracia, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[30] Legal representative of the Corporación Democracia, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[31] Ex-Cacique commander, Comuna 4, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[32] Quoted in Programa Paz y Reconciliación (2007, 29).

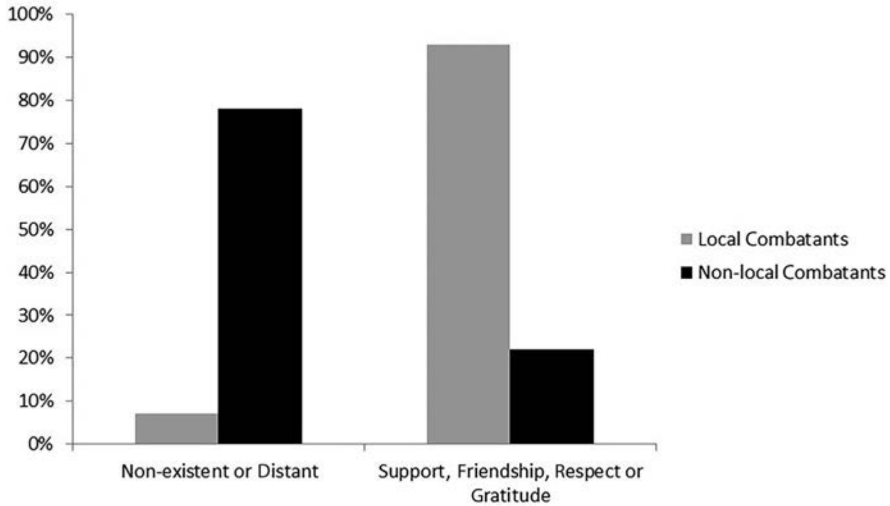


FIGURE 6.1. Ex-combatants' Relationships with Their Ex-commanders, Medellín.

governing style. As a result, the rank and file faced significant hurdles to exiting the hierarchical structure. Principal-agent problems were minimized.

The rank and file and the commanders continued to interact face-to-face on a frequent basis and to maintain their rapport. An interesting comparison can be made between the local Cacique combatants who reintegrated where they had operated militarily and the "returnee" and "displaced" ex-combatants from other brigades who had operated elsewhere in the country but migrated to Medellín to reintegrate. In response to the question, "How would you describe your current relationship with the leaders of your former armed group?" the paramilitaries that had participated in local Medellín units demonstrated much closer relations with their former superiors, characterizing these relationships with such words as "respect," "friendship," "support," and "gratitude." In contrast, most of the combatants who had belonged to non-local armed forces described their relationships with their ex-commanders as "nonexistent" or "distant" (78 percent). Only 7 percent of local ex-Cacique combatants responded this way (see Figure 6.1). The returnee and displaced ex-combatants also expressed that what they most enjoyed about their demobilization was "not being a member of a brigade with the hierarchy and restrictions that such membership implie[d]."[33] Non-locally deployed groups did not possess the

[33] These data derive from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) survey of nearly the entire population of former fighters in Medellín. The sample included 1,111 of the 1,384 non-locally deployed ex-combatants residing in Medellín and 742 of the 807 Cacique ex-combatants. The sample also included 1,411 fighters from Héroes de Granada, which tended to deploy locally. Most (85 percent) of these ex-Héroes de Granada members exhibited close relations with their leaders; only 15 percent described these relations as distant.

dense networks and physical concentration necessary to maintain their hierarchical bonds with and command and control over their members.

While the leadership of non-local armies was disintegrating as their combatants dispersed, the Cacique elite continued to enjoy a strong presence in the lives of their demobilized fighters and strong normative authority. According to Cacique ideologue Fabio Acevedo, after the peace agreement, "the whole Cacique organization rotated around [commander] Don Berna – he was the central axis." Piedad Moreno, an Organización de Estados Americanos (OAS) Peace Mission monitor, described the demobilization ceremony: "On the date of the planned disarmament, Don Berna found himself in the neighboring state of Córdoba, but the muchachos refused to demobilize until he had arrived.[34] This forced the government to transport him in a helicopter to where the demobilization ceremony was occurring." Moreno continued:

> It was the most impressive scene: over two thousand men and women … all over the hills dressed in white, waving white flags, holding huge signs reading, "thank you for the peace." When Don Berna arrived, symbolically from the sky, everyone cheered. His combatants were awe-struck, euphoric, deeply moved at his presence. Many shed tears. It was so special for the combatants to see him. He was their king, their "gangster," a martyr. They were emotional at the sight of him.[35]

Don Berna continued to exercise normative power both over the midranking commanders and among the base. The Corporación Democracia president said, "Don Berna continues to be our leader, very much so. He is so powerful in the organization, not just militarily."[36] While in the Colombian prisons, Don Berna received daily visits and reports from his men. He continued to run his Antioquia organizations from his cell to such an extent that the Colombian government extradited him to the United States.

The Corporación Democracia kept its members through credible threats of coercion, norms of reciprocity, and side-payments; this proved possible because of their physical clustering. The neighborhood-level officers exploited their deep local knowledge, derived from the previous combo structures, to target defectors and their elaborate informant network to reward good performance. Combatants' coordinators knew where their "boys" lived and worked and thus had the means to discipline them and keep them "monitored and on track."[37] Additionally, all of the former fighters' friends belonged to the Corporación, so exit from the group would have risked these relationships. The Corporación further influenced its members' behavior through the side-payment of social acceptance. The paramilitaries were tolerated by the local population in the majority of Medellín's neighborhoods. This meant that

[34] Don Berna had been accused during the ceasefire of the murder of a member of Colombia's congress and had turned himself in.
[35] Interview by author, Medellín, 21 February 2008.
[36] Interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.
[37] OAS Peace Mission, unpublished document (2006).

the ex-Cacique members were not ashamed to be identified as "demobilized persons" or to be associated with a network of ex-combatants; rather, they perceived such membership as affording them higher status and influence. The side-payments at the commanders' disposal also included economic and legal benefits: the Corporación helped the ex-combatants find employment, funded their projects, and provided them with legal counsel. In return, it gained their loyalty (at least in the medium run) and accurate information on this loyalty. Former Cacique fighters launched businesses, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and campaigns together, which further strengthened their ties, the collective structure, and the intelligence webs. Ex-Cacique soldiers in the neighborhood of El Pesebre, for example, formed a small farming cooperative at which all the ex-combatants from the neighborhood worked. "Walter," the former commander of the Santa Cruz barrio, created a business association of all of his former soldiers, which washed buses. Cooperatives of this sort proliferated all over Medellín except in certain neighborhoods in Comuna 13, an anomaly discussed in Chapter 7.[38]

Cacique's command thus knew with high levels of certainty that their ex-combatants could be contacted and mobilized, "willing to retake up arms" and willing to risk their lives if called upon again.[39] As one leader conveyed to me with confidence, "If someone wants to enter the city – guerrilla or other – we will be there to combat them."[40] Another midranking commander confessed, "If new armed groups try to come to Medellín, we won't let them come in."[41] Said a group of ex-combatants in the neighborhood La Sierra: "Returning to arms is not an alternative, but neither is it a myth." They described how there existed a great deal of fear that other groups would try to enter and dispute their territory. If this were to happen, "we will return to arms," they declared.[42]

As I demonstrate in greater depth below, Cacique's leadership also enjoyed effective surveillance over its organization's territory and detailed intelligence about what was happening within that territory and especially along its perimeter. This reconnaissance depended upon information moving smoothly up the chain of command, but also on noncombatant informants providing accurate intelligence. They did so because Cacique was embedded in the local communities, which afforded it continued leverage over civilian affairs and nonrejection by its civilian neighbors.

In sum, repeated interactions through physical concentration and multifaceted bonds linked local combatants to the Cacique Nutibara organization and its successor Corporación Democracia and enabled the local group to sustain

[38] These observations are based on participant observation by the author, Comuna 1 and 13, Medellín, February 2008.

[39] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[40] Ex-commander, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[41] Ex-commander, interview by author, Comuna 6, Medellín, February 2008.

[42] Ex-combatants, interview by author, Comuna 8, Medellín, March 2008.

disciplined collective action and mitigate information asymmetries surrounding individual members' commitment to the group. Cacique's chain of control survived and the organization stayed intact after demobilization, preserving the power it enjoyed during the conflict.

Cacique's sphere of influence in the metropolitan area of Medellín renders it a potential outlier. It is therefore instructive to examine the other local cases explored in the next section and in Chapter 7. These local organizations, except for Bloque Córdoba, exhibited levels similar to Cacique of prewar ties, geographic proximity, postwar cohesion, and sustained power after demobilizing despite operating in varied strategic environments: Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio and Noroccidente Antioqueño in rural Antioquia, Bloque Élmer Cárdenas in the jungles of Chocó, Bloque Bananero in the banana export producing region of Urabá, and Héroes del Llano y Guaviare in the cattle ranching expanses of the eastern plains; some in strong collusion with the Colombian security forces and others relatively separate from them.

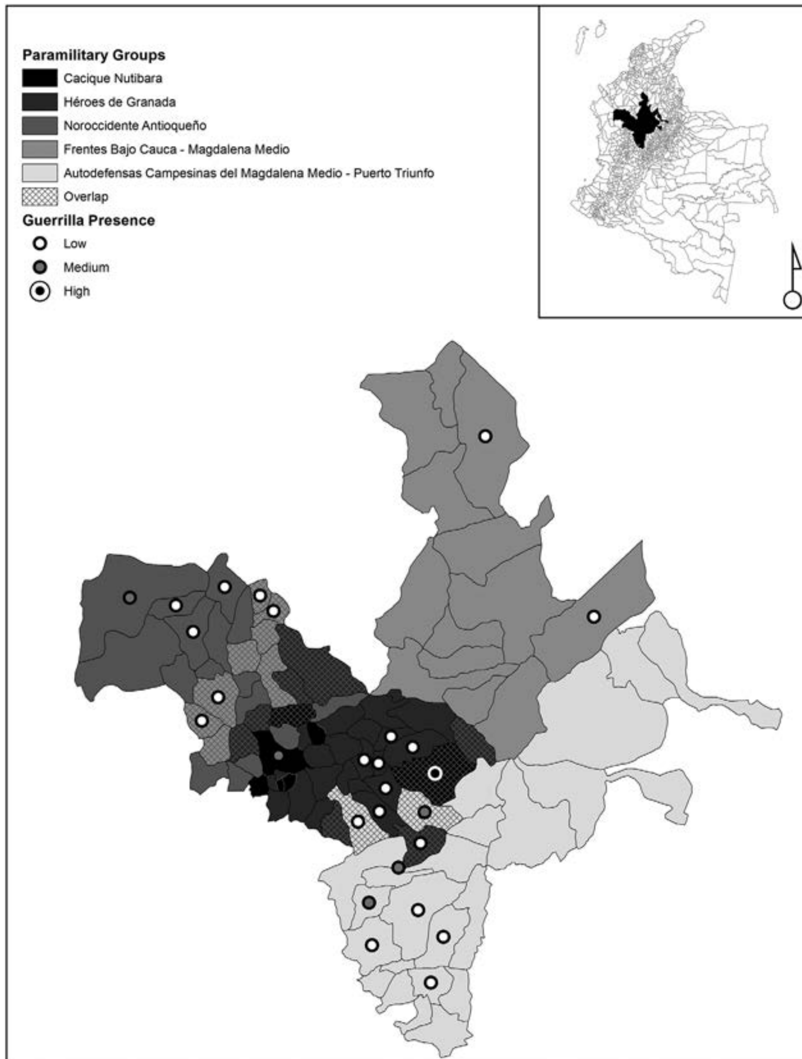
CONFIGURATION OF ALL-LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Cacique's territory abutted the turf of two of these other locally recruited organizations – Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio–Puerto Triunfo and Bloque Noroccidente Antioqueño – and tangentially touched the zone of operation of an intermediately local group called Frente Bajo Cauca (see Map 6.1).[43] Héroes de Granada operated in the Oriente Antioqueño as Cacique's rural affiliate; in their interactions with other armed actors, both state and non-state, they operated in unison.[44] Cacique had, by 2003, largely pushed the FARC and ELN guerrillas out of its region, reducing the guerrillas' relevance to its strategic configuration. The trajectories of the contiguous paramilitary groups in Antioquia largely reflected that of Cacique. The ex-combatants of Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio, Noroccidente Antioqueño, and Frente Bajo Cauca enjoyed pre-recruitment relationships, emigrated only minimally from their combat zones, and remained clustered and strongly linked to their former paramilitary employers. They created associations that preserved their collective structures and reported "very close" relationships of "respect, trust, guidance and frequent contact" with their leaders, facilitating disciplinary chains of command, and reducing information problems.[45] Thus, the distribution of power shifted only minimally between the paramilitary

[43] Map 6.1 shows the level of guerrilla activity in 2003, with activity classified as low if the guerrillas carried out between one to four events per year, medium if they carried out five to ten events, and high if they carried out more than ten events. Events included attacks on the military, on the population, and on infrastructure, kidnappings, robberies, illegal roadblocks, and other terrorist actions. Data derived from the Fundación Ideas para la Paz.

[44] Piedad Moreno, Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Medellín, 21 February 2008.

[45] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Antioquia, February–May 2008.



MAP 6.1. Medellín Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation.

factions in this region of Antioquia and the leaders of all of the local structures possessed an accurate sense of their groups' postwar remobilization capacity, enabling the territorial bargains between these former armies to hold. I briefly discuss the cases of the Autodefensas Campesinas of Magdalena Medio and Frente Bajo Cauca. I then show how Cacique Nutibara's power also remained constant vis-à-vis the state during the period under examination, cementing its accord with the state. As a result, Cacique Nutibara demilitarized as a sociopolitical organization, one with "muted guns."

Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio–Puerto Triunfo

In the 1970s, the FARC made a "historical mistake" that led to its defeat in the area of Middle Magdalena. "Unable to take money from the richest, they targeted the middle class peasants. This ruined the economy. It displaced landowners." The population therefore transferred its support from the guerrillas to the Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio, which emerged as an "authentic" movement of self-defense against the FARC's extortion and kidnapping (*Revista Semana* 2007b). According to its commander Ramón Isaza, "General Frank Díaz told us [the local leaders]: 'Defend yourself because the army is unable to offer a soldier to each Colombian to defend him'." Thus, said Isaza, "Our sole motivation in arming ourselves was to defeat the guerrillas."[46] The group formed at the first assembly of the ranchers' organization, the Asociación Campesina de Ganaderos del Magdalena Medio. The association's members had tired of the guerrillas' abuses, extortion rackets, cattle theft, and kidnappings. The resultant self-defense group imposed taxes on the *ganaderos* (ranchers), and on the narcotraffickers who had bought large expanses of land in the area in exchange for protecting their farms and for exterminating the guerrillas of Magdalena Medio. These autodefensas also benefited from important collaboration from the Colombian armed forces.

The organization remained, until its final years, highly local. Commander Isaza, known as "El Viejo," grew up in Puerto Triunfo, the group's stronghold. So tied was Isaza to his land that, when the extremely powerful drug lord Pablo Escobar sought to assume control over Puerto Triunfo in the 1980s, Isaza replied that it was his *tierra* (land) and that he would not go; he challenged Escobar to remove him by force.[47] The brigade enjoyed a tight-knit web. It was practically a "family business." The top leaders included Ramón Isaza, his son Omar (alias "Teniente"), his son-in-law Eduardo Zuluaga (alias "Macguiver"), his nephews Miguel and Hernán, and his adopted son Walter Ochoa (alias "El Gurre"). Six of his eight children became paramilitary officers. Isaza recruited all other leaders directly through long-standing relationships. The commanders led battalions in their places of origin and, although the fronts varied in their exact social composition, all were local, with preexisting ties derived from landowner associations in some cases and from captured and converted guerrillas in others. Macguiver's frente, for example, was made up of 70 percent ex-ELN guerrillas with strong prior bonds to one another.

After thirty years of struggle, the Autodefensas del Magdalena Medio demobilized 995 combatants on 7 February 2006. The organization remained cohesive with its organizational power intact: "We will not disappear; instead, we will be part of the political, social, and economic panorama of Colombia … not clandestinely, but now publically," announced Isaza.[48] The Autodefensas

[46] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

[47] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

[48] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

maintained total control over all facets of life in their territories.[49] They preserved a legal organizational structure, the Asociación de Ganaderos del Magdalena Medio, which in practice operated as their "political arm."[50] In relative terms, they were not resource rich and flooded with illicit earnings, but still networked and geographically proximate, the leaders' command-and-control mechanisms remained operational.[51] During annual celebrations of the Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio, which persisted after the peace accords, Isaza continued to indoctrinate his foot soldiers and sought to deepen their dedication to the "cause." By expressing respect for the service of his men, he strengthened their sense that they were performing important work by continuing to "belong" to the organization. He would publically acknowledge their value, loyalty, discipline, and sense of camaraderie in a motivational oration. He would also listen to his subordinates to learn everything happening at the micro level of the organization, especially with respect to the management of lower-level personnel. During these celebrations, the foot soldiers could "chat one-on-one with [Isaza] and with the intermediate commanders."[52] This personal connection enabled the leaders to keep tabs on and foster solidarity among their followers.

During the years of conflict, informal bargains had emerged between Cacique Nutibara and its neighboring armed actors. For example, Isaza claimed that the locality of San Luis represented his group's frontier, but after "hitting" that zone two or three times and confronting Cacique there, he ceded it to Cacique Nutibara. San Carlos, similarly, was agreed to belong to Cacique, so Isaza never "entered there."[53] Cacique and Autodefensas de Magdalena Medio's capabilities, having been demonstrated in combat, were public knowledge during the war. This shared knowledge about the balance of power facilitated these informal territorial arrangements.[54] As both organizations remained cohesive, the

[49] William Quintero, Analyst, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Bogotá, April 2008.

[50] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

[51] The average pairwise distance between the Magdalena Medio combatants postwar was sixty-six miles.

[52] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

[53] Ramón Isaza, versión libre, Bogotá, 6–8 June 2007.

[54] Evidence of these territorial bargains during the war exists in other regional configurations as well. For example, Bloque Tolima's commander described how, following decimation of part of his organization and a resultant shift in power, a neighboring faction, Bloque Centauros, "wished to seize Tolima's territory. However, I spoke with Centauros' commander and I agreed to give him a piece of the zone and with this, I managed to satisfy his goal of taking away territory that my bloque had" (Diego José Martínez Goyeneche, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008). Bloque Cundinamarca's commander similarly told how, "there was always communication. For example, with Ramón Isaza, with Botalón de Puerto Boyacá, with Héroes de Guavilá, there was always communication.… I was autonomous in the region of Rionegro, Ramón autonomous over there, Botalón autonomous over there." (Luis Eduardo Cifuentes, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008).

distribution of power did not shift between these former armed actors during the transition to peace.

Frente Bajo Cauca

Relative power similarly remained unaltered in Cacique's relation with the Bloque Noroccidente, a local brigade which maintained more than 70 percent of its combatants in its zone of operation after demobilizing. Frente Bajo Cauca, meanwhile, was intermediately local in nature with nearly 40 percent of its fighters native to the zone. After signing the peace accord, 845 of its ex-combatants remained in the region of its military influence. This constituted a shift in power vis-à-vis Cacique. However, although only intermediately local, the core of the Bajo Cauca structure stayed intact with preserved networks and, importantly, reduced information asymmetries.[55] Accordingly, although the shift prompted renegotiation of the bargains between Cacique and Bajo Cauca, this bargaining proved successful, and the resulting transfers between the groups restored the balance of power.

After demobilization, Bajo Cauca created associations such as Corporación Escuela Bajo Cauca para la Paz (later Buscando Caminos Buenos), Senderos, Tierra de Promisión, Ebalpaz, and Semillas de Paz. It established agro-businesses, such as Centro de Formación Agropecuaria, La Orquídea, and Fundación Colombia Producción Verde, that employed its rank and file, provided them with health care and education, laundered the group's criminally acquired land and monies, and protected its extensive leverage over local politics. These and other ventures enabled the leaders "to maintain ties with the combatants, reward and help those whom they considered important and preserve physical presence and influence in certain territories" (Guáqueta and Arias 2008, 20). Through these associations, "the ex-combatants continued relating to their leaders in a manner that was remarkable for its preservation of hierarchy and subordination. These same models of relating existed between the demobilized and the community."[56] Specifically, a study of Bajo Cauca found that:

> With demobilization, there were no significant changes in the [paramilitary] structures dedicated to social control, political work, community work and control of crime.… For example, in the urban zone of Caucasia, the control and surveillance continued through approximately 5,000 motorcycle-taxis that constantly informed about any new event.… In Bajo Cauca, the [state] institutions do not function unless it is under the direction of the ex-commanders of the self-defense forces.[57]

[55] The effect of geographic clustering on cohesion may depend on which type of combatant stays in the zone: those in support versus combatant roles, those of low versus high rank.

[56] Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización (2007, 60).

[57] Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización (2007, 59).

The Bajo Cauca commanders, moreover, boasted of having dossiers on all of their former fighters for "insurance" purposes (Guáqueta and Arias 2008, 22). The Bajo Cauca brigade thus transitioned with a reduced but cohesive structure and with high-quality information about its subordinates, its organization's remilitarization capacity, and its territory.

Regional power balances in Antioquia thus proved relatively unaltered by demobilization or, where they shifted, became re-equilibrated by effective renegotiation of the arrangements governing the territorial boundaries and division of goods between the various organizational structures. These brigades and their leaders were not necessarily allied; indeed, conflicts and skirmishes had occurred between them, and their relations during war were never better than neutral (except for those between Cacique and Héroes de Granada). Yet, we observe that they did not violate the territorial arrangements in the peace accords' aftermath; there occurred no incursions by other armed actors into Cacique's Oriente Antioqueño or Medellín zones. The one exception was Medellín's Comuna 13, the only place to which Cacique Nutibara had deployed a non-local force. There, a shift in power took place and territorial contestation followed. I discuss this micro case in more detail in Chapter 7. In general, however, Cacique Nutibara's bargains with its neighboring illegal non-state actors held. As we see next, its accords with the state also held, at least in the medium term.

Collaborative State-Building

The government of Medellín wished to reassert its authority and extend its power, institutions, security apparatus, and service provision to the localities that had long been under illegal armed group control; in other words, it wished to engage in state-building. Colombia's High Commissioner for Peace confirmed that the peace process with the BCN would be "the first step and the beginning of a long journey to regain the state's monopoly over the means of coercion."[58]

However, as a result of its local recruitment, Cacique's power and militarization capacity persisted, altered little by demobilization. Accordingly, the government's probability of successful state-building through confrontation – winning a war against Cacique – was unimproved. The state therefore had to keep its agreement with Cacique: a state strategy of "compromised peace" – a ceasefire rather than a full dismantling of the organization and its criminal and governing functions – was therefore "better than war."[59] During the period 2003–08, under Medellín Mayor Sergio Fajardo, the government opted to minimize any "articulated military contention" of Cacique Nutibara's

[58] Quoted in *El Colombiano* (2003).

[59] Gersen Arias, Analyst, Fundación Ideas para la Paz, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008.

prerogatives.[60] In 2008, however, the state changed its policy, a dynamic to which I return below.

Had the state broken its bargain with Cacique Nutibara in these first years after the peace accords, it would have almost certainly sparked remilitarization. The state instead allowed the Corporación Democracia to continue to operate as a quasi-state in large expanses of Medellín and eastern Antioquia. It accepted this non-state actor's territorial sovereignty and collaborated with it in its own state-building objectives, calling it "a critical ally."[61] For example, the state engaged in joint policing with former combatants to facilitate the entry of police forces into localities to which they had had no access in the past. Demobilized fighters received radios from the state so that the ex-combatant leaders could remain in permanent contact with their "boys" and receive detailed local intelligence on public order (which further reduced Cacique's own information problems). Some of this intelligence the ex-commanders then passed on to the police with whom they enjoyed direct access by telephone.

Testimonies from the Medellín comunas of San Javier, Popular, and Villa Hermosa about this collaborative relationship abound. In my interviews in 2007–08, paramilitary coordinators confirmed that the police acted through them because the population turned to the coordinators when a problem arose. When new police commanders were assigned to a neighborhood, the first thing they did was go to the ex-combatant coordinator of the barrio, introduce themselves and seek the coordinator's collaboration.[62] For example, when several violent deaths occurred in Villa Hermosa on Easter in 2007, the police went directly to the ex-commanders to clarify the situation and sort through the rumors. The police officers claimed that this produced effective operations without civilian deaths. One ex-combatant boasted: "The police forces are too weak.… They can't do anything without us [the demobilized]. The police depend on us."[63] Reintegration Program security coordinator Alonso Jaramillo, when asked whether the population really called the authorities, replied: "If it is a small threat, yes. If it is a big threat, no … they call on the ex-combatant structure to help."[64]

An alternative logic to explain the state's strategy would propose that Medellín, as a large metropolis, would have proven ungovernable without allowing the paramilitaries to keep their control. However, extending state presence and institutions, if anything, should have been easier in major administrative centers of government such as Medellín than in, for example, the peripheries

[60] See Stepan (1988).

[61] Gustavo Villegas, Director of Medellín's Reintegration Program and Secretary of Government, interview by author, Medellín, 4 March 2008.

[62] Ex-commander of Comuna 8, elected to the local government (Juntas Administradora Locales [Local Administration Boards, JAL]), interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[63] Ex-commander of Comuna 6, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[64] Alonso Jaramillo, ex-militia member and Director of the Security Branch of the Reintegration Program, interview by author, Medellín, 27 February 2008.

of the state or the depths of the jungle. We do not observe state-building in the aftermath of the paramilitaries' decommissioning correlating with levels of urbanization or development; instead, the state's strategies appear to have been constrained by the regional configurations of armed actors and the shifts (or not) in post-demobilization relative power that resulted from these configurations.

SILENCED GUNS: THE PATH TO DEMILITARIZATION

Because the power balance vis-à-vis the state and vis-à-vis its contiguous non-state actors was sustained, the Cacique structure transformed from a manifestly coercive entity into a latent and eventually a demilitarized one. After signing the accords, it existed with "silenced guns." Cacique Nutibara had demobilized, but it remained in an unstable state of passive coercive capacity from which it could easily remobilize. It possessed the organizational infrastructure, access to quickly reactivated recruits, and caches of weapons to facilitate rapid redeployment of its troops for combat. The caches included rifles, ammunition, uniforms, and even canned foods.[65] However, Cacique's weapons remained muted. According to the International Crisis Group, its ex-combatants patrolled the streets, but now they did so without uniforms or guns. They maintained their social, political, and economic influence, but without camouflage.[66] The demobilized "radically changed their means of operating and their manner of being. Now they do not use direct violence, do not displace. They use latent power," reported a Medellín ombudsman.[67] Eduardo Pizarro (2004b) described how the paramilitaries' control became "more subtle; there are no hooded patrols armed with assault weaponry. It is an invisible control, with threats and camouflaged guns … and an iron fist."

Because Cacique Nutibara's bargains with the state and with other non-state actors held, violence levels dropped significantly. The number of killings reported in the region fell by 47 percent. Homicide rates in Medellín declined from 184 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2002 to just 29.4 in 2006 and 23.9 in 2007 (Fundación Ideas para la Paz 2009). Residents of the comunas of Popular and Santa Cruz described how these statistics were felt on the ground: "peace" in the barrios meant that inhabitants could venture out into the streets again, open bakeries and markets, engage in community service, and attend social gatherings. It meant that development, investment, and participatory politics returned to these areas after suppression by over twenty years of violence. An older woman in Popular described how, as the conflict diminished, her dance

[65] Parmenio Usme, versión libre, 3 September 2008. See also Castrillón (2005).

[66] International Crisis Group (2007, 21).

[67] Robert Moreno, Analyst, Sistema de Alertas Tempranas (SAT, Early alert system), Defensoría del Pueblo (Office of the Ombudsman), interview by author, Medellín, February 2008. The SAT monitors warn of potential situations emerging from the armed conflict that could place the civilian population at risk.

club and her group of female friends became her principal focus; she could return to the concerns of daily civilian life.[68] In Manrique, a young man related with relief how he was finally able to complete high school; before, he could not leave his house.[69] "Our neighborhood has changed completely because now the people are free, you can have a party in your house *tranquilo*," commented a civil society leader in the neighborhood of Villa Hermosa.[70] A resident of Robledo added, "I see it this way … before it was impossible for children to go outside to play.… These parks were filled with drug-dealers and at any hour there could be an exchange of gunfire.… Further up the hill, narrow passages wind between the houses. Each nook guards a story of death and evokes memories of victims. Here fell so-and-so and further down, so-and-so."[71] This changed. As a result of the reduction in violence, residents of Medellín's shantytowns and neighboring communities could return to normal life. Moreover, they attributed this return to normalcy to the paramilitaries' negotiation process. Several affirmed that the "tranquility and peace that Medellín has today is thanks to the autodefensas."[72] A word association exercise carried out in Medellín on a random sample of 1,000 civilians asked the question, "What do you think of when you hear the word 'reintegration'?" The most frequent responses were "peace," "opportunity," and "tranquility."[73] Eighty-eight percent of Medellín's community members evaluated the presence of ex-combatants in their neighborhood as "positive." Eighty-seven percent responded that, since the demobilization process, their neighborhood experienced more peace; 84 percent said their neighborhood enjoyed greater security.[74] Cacique Nutibara became known as the "great pacifier of the city." Graffiti in one of the northeast neighborhoods announced: "Adolfo Paz is peace in Medellín."[75]

Although Cacique Nutibara no longer exercised an overt military presence, it did operate informant networks; members used mobile telephones and radios to communicate with their leaders about what was happening at the micro level. For example, former combatants reported that, if the political left were to attempt to establish a presence in the communities, "we would have to speak to the commanders … to see what should be done about it."[76] The ex-combatants performed their vigilante jobs, but did so without the *use* of weapons. "We speak with any strangers who enter the neighborhood, we ask

[68] Civilian woman, interview by author, meeting of Proyecto Encuentro, Comuna 3, Medellín, March 2008.

[69] Civilian man, interview by author, meeting of Proyecto Encuentro, Comuna 3, Medellín, March 2008.

[70] Civilian man, interview by author, Comuna 1, Medellín, March 2008.

[71] Quoted in Castrillón (2005).

[72] Civil society leader, interview by author, Comuna 8, Medellín, March 2008.

[73] Programa Paz y Reconciliación (2006).

[74] These figures are based on International Organization for Migration surveys conducted annually 2004–07 on a random sample of civilian respondents across the comunas of Medellín. In 2004, respondents totaled 451, in 2005 (n = 501), 2006 (n = 812), and 2007 (n = 1123). See Appendix for more details on these civilian surveys.

[75] *Revista Semana* (2005). "Adolfo Paz" ("Peace") was an alias for "Don Berna," Cacique's chief.

[76] Quoted in *Revista Semana* (2004c).

them where they are from, what they are doing. Now, we start with dialogue, not like before when we went straight for our guns," explained a former Cacique fighter.[77] "Before we would have just sent them to the funeral parlor."[78] "Even though the ex-combatants for now do not commit crimes in the sense established by the Penal code, they have not lost their capacity for coercion," confirmed a local civil society organization.[79]

The term "silent guns" should not be taken to mean that the former combatants abstained from illicit endeavors. There surfaced reports of ex-Cacique fighters using threats, extorting, extracting protection taxes from residents,[80] abusing drugs, making money from running lotteries, prostitution rings, and credit scams, and operating private security businesses.[81] Many of these enterprises proved highly lucrative. Demobilized combatants were also accused of controlling the population's access to electricity and water, regulating cocaine and marijuana markets, illegally appropriating land,[82] pressuring politicians, appropriating local neighborhood budgets, and taxing transportation providers for the rights of passage.[83] One former paramilitary member I interviewed had managed to convert ill-gotten gains into a fleet of 500 taxis, hundreds of head of cattle, and a collection of rare birds of prey.[84] Many ex-Cacique members were arrested for their criminal dealings. Meanwhile, the Oficina de Envigado, Escobar's criminal institutional legacy, continued its illegal operations.

Similar to Cacique veterans, members of the Bajo Cauca brigade also sustained their involvement in common crime, illicit crop cultivation, trafficking of gasoline, and performance of surveillance activities, often exploiting their new jobs as *salvavías* (road patrols) or private security companies as facades. Ex-combatants were observed continuing to do their "rounds." However, "the biggest change was the nonexistence of armed actors in the municipalities even though many of the practices deployed by the paramilitaries remained." The muting of Bajo Cauca's weapons paved the way for demilitarization.[85]

Ex-combatants from the Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio and from the Noroccidente Antioqueño brigades were also convicted and imprisoned for involvement in illegal activities.[86] But, as with Cacique and Bajo Cauca,

[77] Quoted in Restrepo (2005).

[78] Quoted in *Revista Semana* (2004c).

[79] Franco (2005).

[80] Human Rights Watch (2005).

[81] Civilians, interviews by author, Comuna 13, Medellín, April 2008.

[82] For example, the president of La Honda's Junta de Acción Comunal (Community Action Committee, JAC), a former combatant, illegally appropriated and sold off land to displaced persons (Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, May 2008).

[83] OAS Peace Mission, Internal Public Order Reports, 2006–07.

[84] Ex-midranking commander, interview by author, Comuna 6, Medellín, February 2008.

[85] Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización (2007, 60).

[86] These ex-combatants' continued participation in criminality is unsurprising; across all of Colombia's paramilitary and guerrilla groups, 24 percent of ex-combatants have engaged in illegal activity again after demobilizing (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2014).

"the demobilization of the paramilitary structures that operated in the region of Magdalena Medio was total.... [There is] no evidence in the region indicating a process of rearming," according to the municipal administration of Puerto Triunfo. However, again, these intact structures remained with their guns only silenced: "The *possibility* of rearming is very high, and especially so if you take into consideration that ... the totality of the arms were not surrendered."[87] It is important to reemphasize this distinction between remilitarization and criminality. As discussed in Chapter 5, remilitarized organizations, demilitarized organizations, and individual ex-combatants may all engage in illegal activities. Involvement in criminality and illicit resource extraction cannot account for the disappearance or reappearance of large-scale armed organizations.

Although I argue that the Cacique structure did not remilitarize – it did not use its organizational know-how, access to recruits, and strong social networks to return to war and challenge the Colombian state – crime and violence nonetheless persisted in Medellín, albeit on a reduced scale. Illegality remained too embedded culturally and economically to evaporate quickly. Despite signs of change, the "social appropriateness" of violence endured and reproduced many of the primary elements of the conflict, such as parches and combos. There existed many unemployed young men who had never had anything to do with the paramilitaries or the guerrillas, but who formed or joined neighborhood criminal groups. The Mayor's Program for High Risk Youth, which sought to demobilize gang youth, reflects this reality.[88] Moreover, while the paramilitaries demobilized, the narco industry did not. Because this industry requires private security, the drug-mafia elements endured. Pablo Escobar's Medellín was at the heart of the drug trade during the 1980s and 1990s and remained important to it after the paramilitaries' peace process. In 2008, in Medellín, there were a reported 762 sell-points for drugs, and cocaine-dealers earned a monthly profit of $5 million. "While Medellín is not where the crops are grown and most of the drugs do not physically pass through Medellín, it is the center for the business, administration and contacts for narco-trafficking,"[89] and one of the places of highest domestic drug sales and consumption.[90]

The resource-endowment explanation is particularly challenged to account for the empirical realities of Cacique's trajectory. Cacique clearly operated in a region rich in resources; the commanders' testimonies under the Justice and Peace Law speak to the extent of its involvement in narcotrafficking. For

[87] Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización (2007, 47–48). Emphasis added.

[88] Members of the Group of High Risk Youth, interviews by author, Comuna 13, Medellín, 24 March 2008.

[89] Medellín government official, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008. One ex-Cacique commander described his barrio: "There are thirty-eight drug points for marihuana and twenty-five for crack and other kinds of drugs. The location of these points is plainly known by the community." Interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[90] Ex-commander involved with illicit activity, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

example, "El Tuso" (an alias) tells of operations in 1999 during which Cacique Nutibara sent 1,200 kilos of cocaine to Córdoba to be shipped out of the country in small boats and how, in 2000, Cacique shipped 1,200 kilos of cocaine by plane from a hidden runway in the jungle of Antioquia.[91] Extending the dominant variant of the resources argument put forth by Weinstein (2007) to the postwar period, I find that it predicts the opposite of what occurred with Cacique Nutibara; rather than fragmenting, remilitarizing, and lacking sociopolitical influence, Cacique stayed intact, demilitarized, and transformed into an NGO with widespread social and political control.

However, there exists an alternative version of the resources argument that may have played a role in the Medellín case. Cacique's extensive illicit gain, in need of rapid laundering, could have provided the selective incentives to the ex-combatants that sustained their participation in the Cacique structure. Indeed, this might even have created Cacique's postwar social glue, rather than its cohesion deriving from recruitment-based social networks. Or cohesion might have resulted from the interactions of the group's networks and resources (Staniland 2012b). Cacique's resource richness may have caused its former fighters to remain concentrated in its zone of operation and enabled the bloque to resolve the principal-agent problem. Had the ex-combatants been forced to displace from Medellín to make a living, perhaps they would have dispersed geographically, undermining their loyalty to their combatant networks, commanders, and former armed employer.

Although the illicit funding no doubt played a role in sustaining the coherence of the Cacique organization, several pieces of evidence undermine the generalizability of this line of reasoning. First, as demonstrated in Chapter 4, a vast majority of Colombia's locally deployed fighters remained in their groups' areas of military operation irrespective of the levels of resources and employment opportunities available in those areas. Second, although a correlation between funding and cohesion is observed in this case, Cacique was not the only paramilitary faction flooded with illicit funding; groups across Colombia had similar levels and types of resource endowments but diverged significantly in their trajectories, as demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5. Many paramilitary factions that were extremely wealthy dissolved (e.g., Vichada and Sur de Putumayo); many that were relatively poor remained intact, such as Ortega and Julio Peinado. Chapter 4 explicitly tests the role of resources in accounting for retained membership and does not find generalizable support for this explanation. Additionally, as documented below, Cacique's cohesion eroded over the long term even though its access to resources remained constant. Although not the central determinant of Cacique's organizational cohesion, its abundant and illicit funding nonetheless played a role in shaping its post-demobilization trajectory, and especially in helping to finance its continued governance over Medellín.

[91] Juan Carlos Sierra Ramírez, alias "El Tuso," versión libre, Medellín, 25–26 October 2007.

FIGURE 6.2. Model Neighborhood, La Sierra, Medellín.
Source: Sarah Zukerman Daly, © 2016.

EMBEDDEDNESS AND CORPORACIÓN DEMOCRACIA

While in Medellín, I visited the Cacique ex-combatants' command center of sociopolitical operations in a neighborhood called La Sierra. The former fighters showed me a model they had designed indicating how they wanted their neighborhood to look (see Figure 6.2). It included an ecological park, a center for youth and community life, and a local government building. They could construct these models because they maintained influence over *all* of these facets of civilian affairs. I argue that, in addition to its resources, it was Cacique's embeddedness in the local communities that allowed it to do so. The community members continued to tolerate Cacique's enduring control over civilian affairs and to view it as the authority: able and willing to take care of the barrios.[92]

[92] Coordinator of Comuna 4, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008; male and female civilians, interviews by author, Comuna 1, Medellín, March 2008.

The Corporación Democracia enjoyed a monopoly of "social work" in many of the poor neighborhoods of Medellín. It regulated economic activities, dictated social norms, administered local justice, and won several local government positions on the JAC and the JAL. According to Corporación Democracia President Fabio Acevedo, Cacique became "a legitimate, legal, social organization to … generate social, human, political, and economic development of the demobilized and their surroundings."[93] He described how the Cacique leadership charged the seventy-eight former midranking commanders with directing the Corporación's franchise social organizations in the neighborhoods under their command.[94] One of these coordinators specified: "My position as the social leader of the neighborhood came directly from the military structure of Cacique, in which I was the leader of the zone."[95] According to journalist Gloria Castrillón, the paramilitaries "fabricated the image of a Robin Hood to extend their political project."[96] A La Sierra neighborhood mural depicts Cacique's commander Don Berna with his arms around the civil society organizations in Medellín in a paternalistic way (see Figure 6.3).

An International Organization for Migration (IOM) survey of all demobilized fighters in Medellín found that 84 percent of non-local combatants considered that the best way to support the community was by being an anonymous person and a legal individual; in contrast, local ex-Cacique combatants instead believed that the best way was by promoting community activities in their localities and assuming an active, visible, and influential role in the social and political life of the neighborhoods in which they resided (see Figure 6.4).

The BCN continued to exercise its social leverage in several ways. First, the ex-combatants resolved problems between members of the community. One midranking commander reported: "Whenever there is a death in the community or a robbery, the community members call us to deal with it or to help resolve the problem."[97] Another coordinator claimed: "I receive 10–15 visits from people every day because someone is not paying his debt, someone's husband hit her, someone's wife is cheating on him, someone is taking over his land."[98] Civil society leaders corroborated this: "Many people continue to go to the former combatants instead of to the police. The police does not even exist in these neighborhoods and the citizens view it

[93] Fabio Acevedo, interview by author, Medellín, March 2008.

[94] Interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[95] Alejandro Giraldo, Coordinator of neighborhood of Moravia and President of its JAC, interview by author, Medellín, 19 February 2008.

[96] Castrillón (2005).

[97] Coordinator of neighborhood of Aranjuez, Comuna 4, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008.

[98] Jhon William Lopez, coordinator of Comuna 8, elected to the JAL, then imprisoned on criminal charges, interview with author, Medellín, February 2008.

FIGURE 6.3. Mural of Commander "Don Berna" and Representatives of Medellín Civil Society.
Source: Sarah Zukerman Daly, © 2016.

with mistrust."[99] The former Cacique combatants responded to the community's complaints and imposed a form of justice.[100] "When there is a problem in the barrio, the [ex-paras] arrive and help; sometimes they threaten the implicated or even beat him or put him in the sewage holes for hours as punishment."[101] For example, a man who refused to repay a debt to his neighbor of 300,000 pesos was permanently "disappeared" to set an example. In another case, several drugged boys who had kidnapped a mentally disabled child were exiled from the neighborhood and threatened with death.[102]

Second, the former combatants eliminated or punished people whom they deemed socially "undesirable." They established themselves as "moral guardians" of the barrios. For example, the local ombudsperson reported that the

[99] Community leaders and presidents of the JAC in Sector Aures 2, Comuna 7, interviews by author, March 2008.
[100] Peace monitors, OAS Peace Mission, interviews by author, Medellín, May 2008.
[101] Civilian man, interview by author, Comuna 1, Medellín, 2008.
[102] Restrepo (2005).

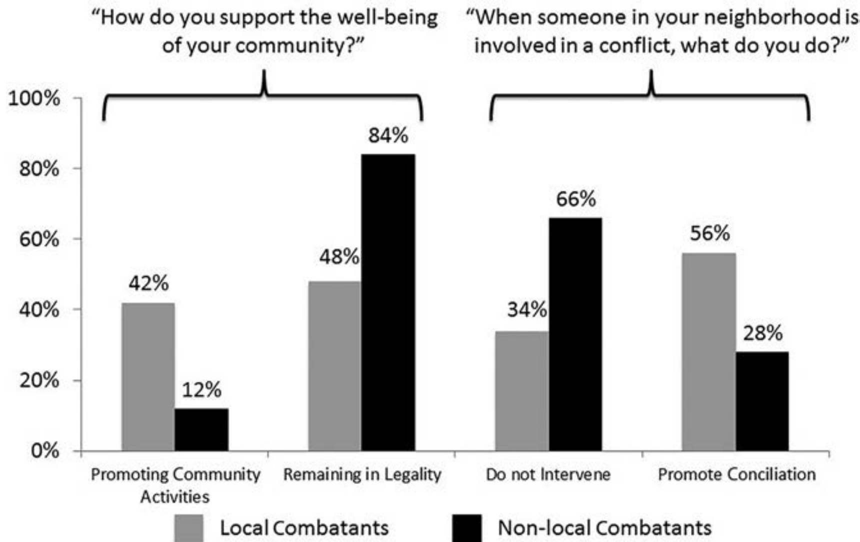


FIGURE 6.4. Involvement in the Community, Medellín.

demobilized combatants punished women said to be unfaithful and, at times, they prohibited girls from wearing low-riding jeans or short skirts. In a tragic event, they killed "a homosexual couple whom the community affirmed had been living together for over three years." They disciplined students who were "behaving badly." Local police agents testified that parents used the ex-combatants to punish their children physically and psychologically. For instance, the police found a twelve-year-old child in the gutter. It appeared that his parents had asked the ex-Cacique combatants to put him there as punishment for using drugs and stealing. According to civil society leaders, prostitutes also often received harsh treatment.[103]

Third, the former combatants hosted community fiestas. They threw huge, well-funded parties in the poorest neighborhoods of Medellín in celebration of Christmas, New Year's, Easter, Mother's Day, Halloween, and other holidays. For these fiestas, they bought presents for all the children of the neighborhood. During my visits to the shantytowns, the members of the community showed me pictures of these parties and recounted the details: the music, food, games, decorations, and costumes. For neighborhoods plagued by violence for decades, the importance of these celebrations should not be underestimated.

Fourth, the ex-combatants, through the Corporación Democracia's foundations, organized and funded social clubs for the elderly and children and sponsored sports teams. They also contributed to the marginal neighborhoods by mobilizing people to clean up trash, plant trees in the parks, create tourist destinations, and

[103] Anonymous respondents, interviews by author, Medellín, February–March 2008.

construct chapels. They formed health brigades, which linked up with the official state services to provide coverage in the marginal neighborhoods. Additionally, the ex-Cacique structure funded microbusinesses, from agricultural projects to enterprises that produced sweets, soft drinks, fast food, and shoes. Through these businesses, they became a large local employer.

Finally, with respect to formal politics, twenty-four ex-Cacique combatants ran for the Local Administrative Boards in the 2007 election. Three were elected. Meanwhile, many other former paramilitaries gained positions in their neighborhood governing bodies, the JACs.[104] In these political pursuits, the ex-combatants received the backing of the Corporación Democracia and ran on the paramilitary-allied Movimiento Colombia Viva party ticket. It no longer proved "sufficient [for the paramilitaries] to have political power through co-opted people, now they want[ed] to assume it directly."[105] According to a Cacique ex-commander, Giovanni Marín: "We continue seeking our ideals in legality. Now we are on our way to creating a political movement."[106]

The local nature of the Cacique structure embedded it in the noncombatant communities and afforded it authority over and tolerance by the communities. The combatants exhibited ties to the civilian population through familial, friendship, neighborhood, and other prewar networks. In an IOM survey of civilians in Medellín, those that resided in communities with large proportions of local Cacique ex-combatants proved eight times more likely to interact with the former fighters than communities where there were lower proportions of local demobilized fighters and higher proportions of displaced or returnee combatants from other bloques. These networks generated relative community collaboration with Cacique members.

Evidence suggests that these social ties between Cacique participants and civilians also reduced victims' levels of anger and facilitated reconciliation.[107] The emotional logic is that anger was reduced because the perpetrators were deemed part of the community and the violence seemed justified by the motive of protecting that community.[108] Two civilians described this relationship between recruitment and emotions:

> Unlike in other places where the self-defense forces arrived from other areas to kill people, the boys who formed the self-defense forces here were from the communities (children of my neighbors, children of my friends). For this reason, here … they are well received when they return from war. For this reason, there hasn't been massive rejection of these boys.… Many of the boys were children of the violence. Each one

[104] The JACs control the neighborhood budgets in Medellín.

[105] Medellín (2005).

[106] Niera (2003).

[107] Juanita Leon, Colombian journalist, interview by author, Cambridge, MA, April 2007. Such social ties do not, however, necessarily reduce levels of pain, sadness, or loss.

[108] Chapter 2 elaborates on the relationship between embeddedness and anger. See also Lyall, Blair, and Imai (2013). Kimberly Theidon proposed to me that anger is elevated when people are victimized by armed actors from their own towns (Kimberly Theidon, interview by author, Cambridge, MA, March 2007). I do not find evidence of this dynamic in Colombia.

had his story and, in some way, the community saw them as justified. For this reason, the issue of forgiveness is not so difficult, as they are boys from our same communities. We watched them grow up. There is a continuous interrelationship between victims and perpetrators.[109]

Also consistent with this logic, in the survey data, I found embedded ex-combatants significantly more likely to believe in transitional justice, to recognize the harm done to victims, and to accept the need for symbolic and material reparations.[110]

Given that the local ex-Cacique fighters were unlikely to move elsewhere, the community members recognized that they would continue to reside together in their neighborhoods for at least the medium term, which extended the shadow of the future and thus encouraged cooperation. María, a resident of Popular, explained: "They are our neighbors, our family; if we don't give them a second chance, they will return to violence. We cannot turn our backs on them."[111] The civilian populations therefore resigned themselves to accept the former fighters in their mix.

Finally, the communities comprised "retrospective voters" (Kiewiet and Rivers 1984). Despite its use of assassinations, extortion, kidnappings, and massacres, Cacique Nutibara "improved" the lives of many of the shantytown dwellers. Cacique "ran on a platform" of doing so and made good on this promise, putting an end to bloody turf gang warfare. Thus, the community members rewarded this "past performance in office" and afforded Cacique their tolerance.

Figure 6.5 contrasts the local Cacique combatants with the non-local, displaced and returnee combatants from other paramilitary factions that resided in Medellín after demobilizing. Cacique combatants proved much more likely to be embedded in their communities and to believe that their communities viewed them with trust and gratitude and as positive leaders and protectors.

As a result of this embeddedness, the population did not resist ex-Cacique's continuing control over the area. Accordingly, Cacique could exercise extensive influence over Medellín and its surroundings without the use of manifest arms. This enabled it to fully demilitarize. Over time, the Cacique infrastructure also eroded and the state began to actively state-build in Cacique's territory.

LONGER-TERM DYNAMICS: DECAY IN ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The theoretical model of this book predicts the dynamics of remilitarization and the trajectories of armed organizations for the five years following a peace

[109] Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización (2007, 38).

[110] See Daly (2015), for a discussion of perpetrators' transitional justice and Daly (2011) for quantitative tests of this relationship.

[111] Castrillón (2005).

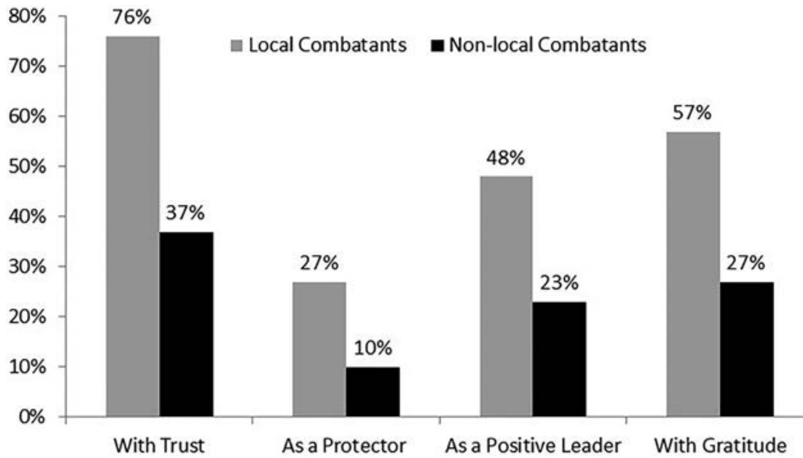


FIGURE 6.5. Embeddedness in Medellín: How Does the Community View Former Fighters?

accord. These organizational trajectories, it argues, derive from the geography of the recruitment patterns. Thereafter, processes take over that are beyond the model to explain. I discuss the endogenous process of remilitarization in the subsequent chapter. In this chapter, as an epilogue to the Cacique case, it is worth touching on a dynamic of organizational erosion that occurred over time within the Cacique structure that other demilitarizing apparatuses may also experience. The Cacique organization transitioned into a "legal" NGO, but it did not recreate the same sense of purpose and requirements of regular contribution that it maintained when it was a military structure. It did not continually remobilize and remotivate its members. Had it become a successful political party or had it remilitarized, it might have retained or grown its power in the longer term. Instead, over time, it underwent a slow process of decline. The former combatants now had something to lose by returning to fighting. They were five or more years older than when they demobilized. "They had tested the benefits of civilian life, education, job training, legal earnings, and constructing familial and social links as noncombatants."[112] These links began to pose a counterforce to remobilization (McAdam 2003). Sergio Mauricio, a former Cacique combatant, explained: "Now I worry about my homework, now I worry about working for the community.... Now I dedicate time to my children.... For me it is a luxury to sleep all night ... [to] go to bed at seven at night and wake up at seven in the morning having slept calmly, without having stayed up all night [patrolling].... Now I think more about my family,

[112] Palou (2009, 4).

my future."[113] According to ex-militia Alonso Jaramillo, "It is now easier to recruit new people to fight rather than demobilized ones.... The demobilized now have a different culture among them that isn't useful to armed groups. They have attended too many psychological workshops!"[114] Evidence of this organizational decay becomes clear when one compares the responses to two government actions. After an arrest warrant was issued for Don Berna in 2005 for the murder of a congressman, ex-Cacique combatants paralyzed Medellín by shutting down all buses and public transportation in the entire metropolitan area in protest. In response to the 2008 extradition of Don Berna to the United States on drug-trafficking charges, there occurred no disturbance or dissent of any kind by the former combatants. After several years, the glue that had kept the Cacique structure cohesive had begun to disintegrate. At this point, remilitarization became costly and unlikely.

Beginning in 2008, the state began to renegotiate its informal bargain with Cacique. It did so only after the Cacique structure had weakened and thus, contesting its power would no longer have prompted a return to fighting. Cacique had passed from "silent guns" to no guns. The state continued to collaborate with Cacique but coupled this strategy with policies aimed at more directly dismantling Cacique's power and control.[115] The state began to extend its sovereignty beyond the center of Medellín and into the city's marginal neighborhoods and the thirty municipalities to the east of Medellín. There, it constructed new libraries, public transportation (*metrocables*), parks, schools, and urban and rural development projects. In other words, it began to state-build.

Cacique's erosion also opened opportunities for armed actors and drug gangs from other regions of the country to gain a foothold in Medellín. Cacique proved unable to deter them or to remilitarize to stop them. At this point, it was the Medellín police, not Cacique Nutibara, who assumed the lead in fighting these criminal groups. "Demobilized paramilitaries passed to second in importance in the coercive world.... Currently, all the names of those disputing the illegal power in the city ... are of individuals who did not come from the ranks of the paramilitaries." Don Berna's Cacique Nutibara had lost its supremacy in the city and so it became the strengthened government that fought the new forces of violence and illegality. Although Cacique's capacity to return to war had diminished, for some years it retained the Corporación Democracia structure and extensive social and political activities and influence. The Corporación eventually ceased to exist by 2012, nine years after its creation.

[113] Quoted in Programa Paz y Reconciliación (2007, 23).

[114] Alonso Jaramillo, ex-militia member and Director of the Security Branch of the Reintegration Program, interview by author, Medellín, 27 February 2008.

[115] Colombian think tank analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008.

CONCLUSION

A close examination of the peace process in Antioquia shows that the local nature of the brigades' recruitment had important implications for their network structures, organizational endurance, and ability to keep tabs on their staff after signing peace accords. Their ability to transition without surrendering their coherence and remilitarization capacity meant that "peace" did not alter the power balance that buttressed the bargains. In the five years following the accords, the state kept its side of the tacit bargain and let the paramilitaries continue to rule; each faction followed through on its informal promises and remained contained in its respective territories. These conditions propelled the paramilitary organizations down the path to demilitarization.

In several ways, however, this case invites a reevaluation of the assumptions and mechanics underlying our understanding of demilitarization. First, the case reveals that demilitarization is not necessarily a perfect outcome. It resembles "negative peace," an absence of large-scale organized violence, but it does not mean an end to structural violence – terror, extortion, and rampant criminality – or to high levels of individual-level recidivism. It is also unstable in the short term, as the muted guns could easily be loaded and fired again.

Second, the book traces the armed organizations' trajectories for five years after the first peace accord was signed, during the initial period when the recruitment geographies exerted the greatest causal power. Thereafter, forces of the post-conflict period gain in significance. The Cacique case suggests that the organizational capacity of local groups will slowly erode if they remain demilitarized. Examining the generalizability of this finding and explaining variation in the longer-term cohesion of ex-armed organizations should be an object of future inquiry. Third, unsurprisingly, the case material indicates that the real world proves more complex than a few variables can describe. Relatively little is demanded of quantitative models in terms of explanatory power. Many prominent models account for only a small share of the empirical variation. More is expected of a theory's ability to account for qualitative variation. However, there exist many idiosyncrasies in any case, and individual agency and personalities play important roles. No theory can explain 100 percent of these social realities. Although the book's framework can account for more of the empirical reality than can existing theories, there remain facets of the cases relegated to the model's error term.

Fourth, the chapter raises many additional questions. For example, what role does embeddedness play in demilitarization? If the communities prove strong and able to organize resistance to the continued rule of former armed groups, would a lack of embeddedness undermine these organizations' ability to demilitarize? What structural form will demilitarized organizations assume? Philip Selznick (1952, 3) writes, "Organizational weapons" are "a source of power [which when] tapped … may be … diverted to other, more far-reaching aims." Do demilitarized organizations disappear, or can these stores of capacity

for collective action be appropriated for other forms of cooperation such as legal politics? When will the demilitarized groups reinvent themselves as political parties, co-opt existing parties, or form nongovernmental associations? The chapter suggests that current studies of transitions to party politics may be subject to selection biases. Analysts cannot merely examine the cases of illegal armed groups and ask why they transition from bullets to ballots in some cases and not in others; rather, they must explain a series of outcomes that end with electoral success: why actors who violate human rights are allowed to run for office under the transitional justice regime; why they retain an organizational structure that enables them to run a political campaign; why they are able to demilitarize and thereby be eligible for party politics (where armed actors would be barred), and why they can gain the endorsement (not merely tolerance) of a sufficient segment of the population so as to pass the threshold for election. The list goes on. The geography of recruitment can shine light on some of these questions, but a future research project should seek to explain armed groups' reinvention as political parties with these selection issues in mind.

Finally, the chapter raises the question whether "collaborative" state-building in the medium term always yields positive outcomes for state consolidation. When is the state the beneficiary of such an arrangement, and when is the illegal non-state actor instead the winner, co-opting, manipulating, and corrupting the state for its own purposes?

7

Remilitarization, Strong and Weak: Local and Non-local Militias in Catatumbo and Urabá/Córdoba

The book's theory posits that remilitarization will occur when power shifts as a result of varied patterns of recruitment and information problems prevent the successful renegotiation of the peace bargains among the non-state armed actors and the state.[1] It further predicts that, because of their strong postwar capacity, local factions will remilitarize in a more powerful fashion than do non-local groups. This chapter explores remilitarization by both local and non-local groups. It begins with the weak remilitarization of non-local groups in the department of Norte de Santander on Colombia's northeastern border with Venezuela. It travels to Urabá and Córdoba, regions in northwestern Colombia afflicted with strong remilitarization by local groups after the peace accords. The chapter then briefly tours Colombia's southern frontier, Pacific Coast, and eastern plains to explore similar trajectories in diverse territories. Through in-depth process tracing of these cases, I demonstrate that the dynamics of postwar organized violence in Colombia were strongly affected by the geography of recruitment and the strategic interactions between the former belligerents.

Weak Remilitarization: Bloque Catatumbo in Norte de Santander

Until the late 1990s, Norte de Santander constituted a bastion of the guerrilla armies, principally that of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army [ELN]), with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC]) and Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army [EPL]) having a lesser presence. The ELN army was deeply entrenched in the petroleum workers' unions of Tibú and the campesino villages of Catatumbo. After its mass mobilization efforts failed in the 1980s, the ELN switched tactics and began to bomb the oil

[1] State-building may also shift the distribution of power, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 8.

pipelines, kidnap prominent figures, and commit terrorist attacks on infrastructure to demand that the government bring more social services to the local population. The FARC and ELN also became heavily involved in the cultivation of coca. By the late 1990s, the guerrillas had taken control of most of the rural and jungle region in the north and west of the department of Norte de Santander and also had gained a strong urban militia presence in its cities. The rebels permeated all aspects of life in the department; the presence of the Colombian military and police remained limited. For example, when the army in La Gabarra patrolled from its base to a park five blocks away, the entire brigade would have to go because, "if only five soldiers went, they would certainly be killed."[2]

In 1998, a group of paramilitaries from the Atlantic coast set out to conquer Norte de Santander, motivated both by a desire to rid the area of the insurgents, and to access its expansive and lucrative coca crops and border smuggling opportunities (Fundación Progresar 2004). After a brutal campaign against the rebels,[3] the paramilitaries, which now called themselves Bloque Catatumbo, managed to gain control of the flat region along Colombia's crucial border with Venezuela, the urban centers including the capital city of Cúcuta, the roads and bridges, and much of the economically strategic petroleum and drug-producing areas.[4] Only a small, remote region of jungle and mountains in Norte de Santander remained under guerrilla control (*Revista Semana* 2004b).

Mapping Non-local Recruitment and Networks

The Bloque Catatumbo paramilitaries recruited in a geographically dispersed fashion, deploying soldiers non-locally, away from their towns of origin. The leaders began with a seemingly randomly chosen set of paramilitaries, which it deployed from the coastal regions of the departments of Córdoba and Antioquia to the Venezuelan border, roughly 1,000 kilometers away. The brigade drew more recruits as it traveled eastward toward Catatumbo. One ex-combatant, Jorge Mario Garzón, who originally joined the Bloque Córdoba in his home region in San Jorge and operated in a unit composed of roughly 450 men, explained the recruitment process:

> After eight months, the commander of Bloque Córdoba came to the base and said, 'We're going to Norte de Santander. We are taking 150 men. The whole structure is going to be transplanted so it will be ready to deploy immediately there.' The commander said, 'Who wants to go?' but most of us didn't want to go because [Norte de Santander] was far and because it was a dangerous zone, others because they had arrest warrants and so they didn't want to travel between states by road because they were worried they would be stopped. So it became obligatory for 150 of us to go. The commander just chose us randomly. The commander paid for our passage and told us where

[2] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.

[3] The incursion into the zone left 5,200 dead (*Revista Semana* 2007a).

[4] See Fundación Progresar (2004).

we had to report in Norte de Santander. We traveled as civilians all separately. If we didn't show up, the commander said, "We have all your information, we know where your family lives." I took the bus first to Cúcuta and then to La Gabarra where I located the farm where we were supposed to meet. There I found a part of my structure from Córdoba. We were told that our goal was to arrive to El Tarra which was completely under guerrilla control.[5]

Other Bloque Catatumbo recruits formerly belonged to the Frente Bananero of Urabá, Colombia's prime banana-growing area along its northwestern frontier. They transferred to the Bloque Catatumbo in 1999 to "help build the paramilitary base there."[6] Catatumbo leaders recruited others from the Autodefensas of Puerto Berrío in Magdalena Medio[7] and from the *Convivir* (cooperatives of private security) in the south of the department of Cesar. Many Catatumbo members were recruited individually from the urban coastal regions of Cartagena, Barranquilla, and Santa Marta.[8] These individuals joined without any ties to members of the Catatumbo force. There was no preexisting self-defense unit in Norte de Santander for the paramilitaries to co-opt.[9]

Thus the vast majority of the Bloque Catatumbo combatants constituted what paramilitary "visionary" Carlos Castaño called "autodefensas nativas" from Córdoba, Urabá, Bolívar, Sucre, Cesar, and other parts of the coast.[10] The different ethnicities and accents of these regions made it easy to identify these soldiers' non-local origins. Those from Norte de Santander, near the border, spoke with a Venezuelan accent; those from Córdoba were generally tall *Afrodescendientes* (Afro-Descendents), *costeños* (from the coast); those from Antioquia and the Eje Cafetero were *paisa*. In 1999, the population of Norte de Santander would say, "The *paracos* [paramilitaries] arrived." They said this because they saw soldiers who were unfamiliar: "big men…. They were tall, costeños; they played dominos; they didn't wear shirts."[11] One of the Catatumbo commander's bodyguards, whom I interviewed in Cúcuta's prison, recalled, "All of the members of my group in Catatumbo were black *costeños*. There were only six whites."[12] This theme of fighters coming from "outside of Norte de Santander" recurred in multiple interviews with the ex-combatants.[13] An ex-paramilitary now living in Cúcuta estimated that, of his Catatumbo company of approximately forty-eight fighters, thirty-two were from Córdoba and eight were from Norte de Santander, but the top commander was paisa,

[5] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[6] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Urabá, June 2008.
[7] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[8] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 8, Cúcuta, June 2008.
[9] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, 2008. Only Ocaña historically had a presence of self-defense forces from the Sur de Cesar.
[10] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, June 2008.
[11] Will Fredo, Fundación Progresar director, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[12] Top Catatumbo commander "Camilo's" bodyguard, interview by author, Cúcuta Prison, May 2008.
[13] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Norte de Santander, June 2008.

from Medellin. A former Catatumbo fighter reasoned, "All of the muchachos from my brigade were from other parts. There was no commander local to the zone because of social networks.... The commanders from Córdoba and Urabá brought their best friends whom they trusted and so their best friends got the top ranks in the organization in Norte de Santander."[14] Another gave me the following example: "You are North American and so if you had to choose people to help you with an operation or something, you would choose your best friends from North America. If you were doing a very risky attack, you would want to be surrounded by 'your people' because you trust them and because you also want them to have privileges, you want the best for them."[15] Catatumbo leaders turned away Norte de Santander locals when they tried to join the paramilitaries ranks; according to one testimony, "They were not accepting people from Norte de Santander."[16] An ex-guerrilla, now a think tank analyst, confirmed: "They did not recruit here. Only 2 percent of the armed group was from Norte Santander."[17] An International Organization for Migration (IOM) report described the ex-combatants in Cúcuta as isolated and alone because "of their cultural diversity, given that many of them are from other regions of the country."[18]

Although the survey data suggest higher estimates of local combatants, no account puts the fraction of local Catatumbo soldiers at more than one-fifth. However, Bloque Catatumbo did recruit some locals, principally from the municipalities of Puerto Santander and Ocaña.[19] The Catatumbo leaders recruited locals partially because they needed local intelligence. "The Cordobeses and Urabeños arrived without any knowledge of the zone of Norte de Santander."[20] Even in the most strongly guerrilla-dominated communities, the paramilitaries sought out subgroups willing to defect.[21] Given that only the potential recruits knew their true level of commitment to the guerrillas, the paramilitaries had to be clever in their strategies to uncover the locals' preferences. When the paramilitaries arrived in the municipality of El Tarra, for example, they sought to target a section of the population who might be willing to collaborate with them: the merchants who had "supported the guerrillas out of obligation and were tired of paying extortion fees." Some of these provided information to the paramilitaries about who supported the guerrillas "out of their hearts," out of conviction.[22] Pure deception was also used, for example as described

[14] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Puerto Santander, June 2008.
[15] Ex-midranking commander, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.
[16] Interview by author, Comuna 6, Cúcuta, June 2008.
[17] Will Fredo, Fundación Progresar director, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[18] International Organization for Migration (2005, 3).
[19] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[20] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.
[21] Defensoría del Pueblo analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.
[22] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Tibú, June 2008.

by a former Catatumbo member who drove taxis between Cúcuta and Puerto Santander prior to joining the *paras*:

> One day, I got caught in a 'guerrilla' roadblock in Aguaclara. The combatants had the armbands of the FARC. These men organized a meeting with all the people they had stopped to ask how the situation was on the road and to seek intelligence about the status of Puerto Santander. The paramilitaries had done a quick incursion of Puerto the week prior in which they had killed one guerrilla. In the meeting, a woman spoke up and said, 'The paras are coming, you have to stop them, they are already trying to enter the town', demonstrating her support for the guerrillas. Others were quiet or gave incorrect intelligence. When the meeting was over, the soldiers took off their FARC armbands and underneath were the armbands of the paramilitaries. They took the woman outside and shot her. This was their way of figuring out who were the guerrillas' sympathizers. I was very collaborative in the meeting and so the paramilitaries asked if I wanted to join them.[23]

In addition to intelligence, the paramilitaries also required support and supply networks. Although they transplanted their combatants from outside of Norte de Santander, they relied on the local population for inputs such as food, transportation, and medicine. Thus, many of those contracted locally in Norte de Santander did not form part of the military structure, but instead served as drivers, cooks, landlords, nurses, financiers, informants, mechanics, coca pickers, and logisticians.[24] One ex-combatant recalled, "When they first arrived, the paramilitaries rented apartments in the military's barracks. I took them around because they didn't know Cúcuta. I washed their cars and ran errands for them." Slowly, he was brought into their ranks.[25] The paramilitaries also needed people to cut the coca leaves. Some of these *raspachines* (coca pickers) ended up joining the military structure as foot soldiers. "I was a raspachín of coca for three years in La Gabarra. It was the only job available there. I got tired of it and so I ended up being able to enter the paras who were there in 1999," recounted an ex-combatant.[26]

Whereas locality-based networks provided multifaceted bonds, there existed one-dimensional networks, which the paramilitaries exploited in Norte de Santander. One of these was the veteran web. The top commander of the Bloque Catatumbo, alias "Camilo," was a retired high-ranking military officer. Military service was compulsory in Colombia. If one dodged it, the state imposed a fine, which only the elite could afford. Convoys would come through periodically to gather up military-age boys. After the required eighteen months of service, the "veterans" returned home to their communities. Many

[23] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Puerto Santander, April 2008.

[24] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008. Other interviewees included ex-combatants who served as mechanics and cooks. Further confirmation was provided by Will Fredo, Fundación Progresar director, interview by author, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[25] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[26] Ex-paramilitary leader, interview by author, Aguaclara, June 2008.

had enjoyed their time in the military and were convinced by the counterinsurgency doctrine. They remained high on the adventure of war, were skilled in combat and not much else, and they missed the routinized life of the military as well as the army's regular provision of food, clothing, and shelter. Accordingly, veterans, having completed their tours of duty, sometimes sought to rejoin the Colombian armed forces. Some who found their reenlistment cases rejected deemed the paramilitaries their next best option. One ex-combatant narrated, "I was unemployed and tried to join the army three times, but they would not receive me.... My friends convinced me, 'let's go to the *paracos*'."[27] Meanwhile, the paramilitaries, at times, needed to increase their manpower rapidly to patrol the vast border area of Norte de Santander. They ideally sought individuals with "expertise in arms and combat."[28] Given the high cost, time, and risk of transporting combatants from other regions, they recruited some local soldiers, using "the social webs of the veterans to recruit and to recruit trustworthy people."[29] This recruitment of veterans helped produce one of the most militarily effective paramilitary armies in Colombia. "I was accepted into the paramilitaries only because of the recommendation of my [former army] lieutenant," one Catatumbo fighter explained to me.[30] Another combatant, José Luis, had served as a counterguerrilla in the army for four years in Norte de Santander:

> I liked it. I got used to it. After serving, I didn't find a permanent job, only seasonal, unreliable work. During this period, I always went to visit my friend from the army in prison. My friend said, "I have a friend from my army battalion who is working with the paramilitaries in Puerto Santander." ... So I went to Puerto Santander to visit his friend and eight days later, he called me and offered me work with the paras. Most of the members of the battalion were from other parts of the country, but I was able to join because I was reliable.[31]

A former Catatumbo militant, Tomás, summarized, "Local people joined the [non-local] paramilitaries only through friendship links because in order for a local to enter, he had to have a friend that would answer for him, be completely accountable for him. He had to be someone trustworthy who had friends in the organization. You couldn't enter if you didn't know people in the group."[32]

However, these cases of injecting the Catatumbo paramilitary ranks with local recruits proved the exception, and were concentrated mostly in the municipalities of Puerto Santander and Ocaña. Thus, the vast majority (at least 80 percent) of the Catatumbo members, and nearly all of its top and midlevel leaders, originated from heterogeneous places outside of the group's zone of

[27] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[28] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 8, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[29] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Puerto Santander, May 2008.
[30] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 8, Cúcuta, June 2008.
[31] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 6, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[32] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, June 2008.

military operation. Tracing the recruitment patterns of the different levels of the hierarchy (commanders, midlevel officers, and rank and file) proves important to understanding the trajectories of the groups, as the next section shows.

Non-local Combatants Disperse after Demobilization

On 10 December 2004, the Bloque Catatumbo demobilized 1,434 soldiers and decommissioned 1,114 weapons in Campo Dos. Thirty-four percent of the Catatumbo soldiers remained in Norte de Santander after demobilizing. The rest dispersed home across northern Colombia. Most importantly, many of the top commanders left the region, leaving a relative vacuum in the command structure.[33] Of the sixty-three ex-combatants identified as having held some rank in the organization, only fifteen remained in Norte de Santander, twelve of whom hailed from there. I interviewed several members of the Bloque Catatumbo in Córdoba, Atlántico, and Urabá who uniformly told me, in effect, "After the demobilization, all of my compañeros and I … returned home."[34] Those who stayed in Norte de Santander confirmed this: "Almost all of my battalion compañeros were from Córdoba or the coast or were paisas. They all left Norte de Santander to go home after disarming."[35] The non-local combatants who did not return to their towns of origin tended to displace to the department's capital city of Cúcuta, where relatively few had operated militarily, or to journey to Bogotá and other urban centers, which promised unrecognizability and potential work.[36] There, many evaporated into civilian life. Only the minority of Catatumbo recruits who had deployed locally, together with several midlevel leaders, remained in the zone of operation. There they formed rump cadres in the post-demobilization period. Table 7.1 illustrates these recruitment and migration patterns, highlighting the heterogeneity of the Catatumbo combatants' regions of origin and the dispersion of their postwar places of residence.

Organization Dissolves in Places to Which Non-local Ex-Combatants Displace

In Cúcuta, the former combatants proved able to disappear in relative anonymity into the urban social fabric of migrants, displaced victims, and impoverished vagrants. They maintained few, if any, links with their Bloque Catatumbo employer. One former Catatumbo member said, "Here in Cúcuta, I could start

[33] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[34] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.
[35] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[36] Colonel Páez, Policía Nacional, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008; Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (Colombian Agency for Reintegration, ACR) regional director, interview by author, May 2008; ex-combatants, interviews by author, Norte de Santander, May 2008.

TABLE 7.1. *Bloque Catatumbo's Recruitment and Postwar Relocation Patterns*

Departments	Percentage of Catatumbo Combatants from Department (%)	Percentage of Catatumbo Combatants who lived in Department Postwar (%)
Bogotá	0	2
Atlántico	1	3
Magdalena	2	2
Santander	2	2
Cesar	4	6
Bolívar	6	2
Sucre	8	8
Antioquia	11	11
Norte de Santander	29	34
Córdoba	31	27

anew. I didn't know anyone in Cúcuta so it seemed a city I could vanish in."[37] Another member similarly told me, "I could never go back to [the region of] Catatumbo. I would be killed immediately as I would be identified as a paramilitary. In Cúcuta, no one knows I am a demobilized."[38] The ex-combatants I interviewed in Cúcuta explained that, after the peace accord, there existed no social networks among the demobilized Catatumbo fighters and no associations created by them. One paramilitary narrated, "We all concentrated in Campo Dos for the disarmament ceremony and then all of my compañeros went their own ways. Nothing remained. I don't know what happened to them."[39] Another offered, "There are many demobilized paramilitaries in [Cúcuta,] the capital city of Norte de Santander, but it is not safe to be seen with other demobilized. I only have friends from my barrio. I have no demobilized friends. I only go out till 9 pm if I go out at all." Nearly all of the interviewees recounted similar things: "I have no contact with the other demobilized.... I have nothing to do with them. I only see them when I go to pick up my reintegration stipend or when I go to a [reintegration] workshop."[40] Another ex-fighter confided, "I live in the city where I can disappear because you never know how many enemies you have. I never leave the house and have moved six times since I demobilized."[41] The IOM confirmed that ex-combatants in Norte de Santander changed residences "constantly."[42] "There is no corporation of demobilized,

[37] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[38] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 8, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[39] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 3, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[40] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008. Similar statements were echoed by ex-Bloque Catatumbo members, interviews by author, Comuna 6, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[41] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 6, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[42] International Organization for Migration (2005, 3).

there are no leaders of the demobilized … there are no social networks between the demobilized," were statements frequently expressed in my interviews.[43] A former foot soldier added, "There is extreme lack of trust between us former comrades … no one asks questions and no one would answer. I don't even know where the other ex-combatants live." Another summed it up, "nothing remains of my Bloque Catatumbo. It has no social influence, no military influence, nothing."[44] "There is no longer a hierarchy, the structure of the paramilitaries of Norte de Santander has dissolved. There are no rural structures, no commanders or leaders … there are just illegal businesses and hitmen," a think tank analyst and human rights activist confirmed.[45] My participant observation in reintegration workshops, in the prisons, and in the barrios of Cúcuta and Tibú corroborated my respondents' testimonies about the degradation of their paramilitary structures after demobilization.

Two Rump Cadres Remain

Two Catatumbo battalions diverged from this dominant postwar trajectory of the organization: the Frente Frontera in Puerto Santander, and Frente Ocaña in Ocaña.[46] These two units drew more local recruits than those that operated in other areas of the Venezuelan border region. In most other areas (including La Gabarra, Tibú, El Tarra, Pamplona, San Calixto, Convención, Teorama, and Ragonvalia), demobilization left little or nothing of the Catatumbo structure. "Void" and "vacuum" were words that observers used to describe these places after Catatumbo's demobilization. However, in Puerto Santander and Ocaña, demobilization left latent, if reduced, cadres of the Catatumbo brigade. These rump units comprised ex-combatants who either had originated from the municipalities and returned home, or who were not local to Norte de Santander, but remained there post-conflict.[47] In Puerto Santander, "Jorge," the midranking paramilitary officer, "continued to operate at a level of command similar to that which he had possessed in the previous organization," according to the Organization of American States (OAS) Peace Mission. The OAS also found that "his subordinates included the same combatants as in the former structure."[48] In my observations of the ex-fighters in these two localities,

[43] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[44] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 8, Cúcuta, June 2008.

[45] Fundación Progresar analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[46] The Catatumbo brigade comprised seven battalions. The other five were highly non-local: the Frentes La Gabarra, Móvil Catatumbo, Rural Catatumbo, Choque Cazadores, and Las Mercedes.

[47] For example, one confrontation in 2006 between remilitarized groups, in which several ex-Catatumbo members were murdered, demonstrates the heterogeneous character of these rump units: one came from Tierralta in Córdoba, one from Puerto Berrío in Magdalena Medio, one from Antioquia, one from Cali, one from Montería, one from Barranquilla, and two from Norte de Santander. See CODHES (2006).

[48] Organization of American States (2006b).

I found still-cohesive networks linking the ex-paramilitaries and midlevel leaders in charge.

Regional Configuration of Groups

At the time of demobilization, Catatumbo controlled the state of Norte de Santander; to the east, the Mellizos brothers had Arauca; further west, the Frente Julio Peinado patrolled the south of Cesar, while the Bloque Sur de Bolívar commanded Magdalena Medio Santandereano and the south of Bolívar. Bloque Catatumbo's zone of operation, geographically delimited by jagged mountains, thick jungle, and large expanses of Venezuelan territory, only tangentially touched these other bloques' zones; as a result, strategic interactions had numbered relatively few (see Map 7.1). Nonetheless, Catatumbo had forged a set of agreements with these contiguous armed actors. These agreements held despite ambitions to the contrary and there occurred little, if any, violence between the paramilitary units. (Catatumbo exhibited a stronger alliance with Julio Peinado; it had a neutral relationship with the Sur de Bolívar and Arauca organizations.)

Interestingly, Catatumbo even maintained "an implicit division of territory" with the FARC, ELN, and EPL rebels in Norte de Santander. "La Gabarra was the limit of where the paramilitaries were able to extend their power. The Catatumbo River marked the limit between the guerrillas and paras. It was a tacit agreement. The paras had secured the areas important to them: the flat regions, roads, urban areas, and petroleum, gold, and copper resources."[49] According to *Revista Semana* (2004b), the right sides of both the Catatumbo and El Tarra Rivers were "of the autodefensas," and the left sides belonged to the Frente 33 of the FARC, with a "nonaggression pact between [them]."

Catatumbo also enjoyed a tacit accord with the state, whereby the state turned a blind eye to its activities and tolerated its sovereignty in the regions that Catatumbo controlled. Although "parapolítica" corruption did not run as deep as in other parts of Colombia, Bloque Catatumbo did infiltrate Norte de Santander's political, judicial, and security institutions.[50]

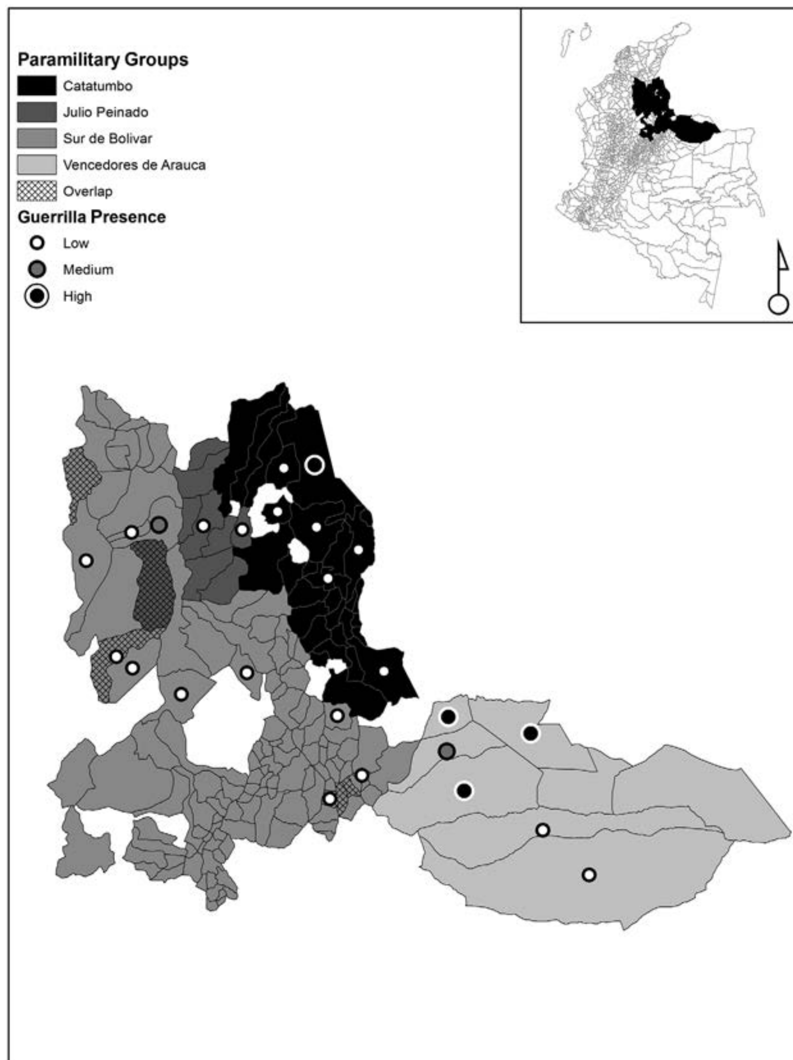
Organizational Erosion

Demobilization shocked and downgraded the Bloque Catatumbo's capacity. It even more dramatically weakened the neighboring Bloque Arauca.[51] Bloque Arauca had invaded the northern part of the *llanos* (Colombia's eastern plains)

[49] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.

[50] Senator Manuel Guillermo Mora, for example, was known as a key ally in the paramilitaries' expansion into the region (*Revista Cambio* 2007).

[51] Over the course of the 1990s, attempts to form a local self-defense force in Arauca had failed. In 1993 and 1994, Los Capuchos had tried and, in 1996 and 1997, locals created the Convivir El Corral. After a series of denunciations, these groups were dismantled and their members imprisoned. Only in 1998 did a paramilitary force, invading from outside the region, gain a foothold there.



MAP 7.1. Catatumbo Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation.

from outside the region, drawing only 10 percent of its force from its zone of military operation. The average pairwise distance between its members' towns of origin equaled 218 miles. Demobilization left only 6 percent of the Bloque's combatants in Arauca, whereas the remaining 94 percent dispersed back to their homes across Colombia or displaced to new localities. In weakening Bloque Catatumbo and Bloque Arauca, demobilization undermined their tacit agreements with the state and with other non-state actors. The entire power balance on the border became destabilized.

A great deal of uncertainty also existed within the Catatumbo units surrounding the estimates of their post-demobilization power. "Before the demobilization, it all was very clear. It was very easy to understand what was happening. Everyone knew who was in charge, but post-demobilization, it became very unclear. Everything was in confusion."[52] The dispersion of Catatumbo fighters made it nearly impossible for its leaders to calculate the group's remilitarization capacity accurately. One commander testified to this effect: "48 buses arrived to bring the demobilized back to the coast.... I don't know what they are doing now."[53] Without associations or productive projects of former combatants, Catatumbo leaders found it more difficult to monitor their foot soldiers and to assess the ease of their potential re-recruitment.[54] In the absence of the top commanders, it also became unclear with whom other actors should negotiate. A power struggle began to emerge between the midlevel leaders in the zone, specifically among the ex-commanders known as "Jorge," "Sinaí," and "Camilo" (Yarce 2008). According to the National Police in Norte de Santander, "everything was in disorder. The groups have lost their orientation and are in chaos. They are like marbles bumping around."[55]

Bloque Catatumbo's non-local nature also reduced the information its ex-members could acquire from the civilian neighborhoods after demobilizing. This is not to say that Catatumbo had lacked access to surveillance *during* the conflict; before surrendering, "the self-defense forces had networks of intelligence composed of taxis, shopkeepers, porters and traders ... [and] criminal networks" (*Revista Semana* 2004b). However, after disarming, the paramilitaries were not embedded in the local population. Without social connections to the former combatants,[56] as the reintegration psychologists explained, the communities felt anger toward the ex-paramilitaries.[57] The IOM civilian survey found that 57 percent of noncombatants in Norte de Santander reported that they had difficulty accepting the ex-paramilitaries, in contrast to in Antioquia, where this number equaled 32 percent. The fact that the Catatumbo ex-combatants had moved around constantly also reduced the shadow of the future and the levels of tolerance between the civilian population and the demobilized Catatumbo militants.[58] The population had served as the "social base of the paramilitaries only due to fear and pressure."[59] This type of control, bolstered only by the "stickiness" of institutions of authority, proved quick to

[52] Fundación Progresar director, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.

[53] Interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, August 2008.

[54] It was not lack of resources that was the obstacle: Catatumbo had the financial resources to form associations and to pay its ex-combatants, as it was deeply rooted in the drug trade, extortion, and gasoline smuggling.

[55] National Police officer, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[56] Fundación Progresar analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[57] Reintegration psychologists, interviews by author, Cúcuta and Tibú, May 2008.

[58] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, 2008.

[59] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, 2008.

erode. According to the psychologists, the noncombatant communities did not collaborate with or support the ex-combatants; they "very often" did not allow the ex-combatants to participate in organizations or associations and "very often" did not permit them to engage in economic activities such as establishing businesses or buying land or cattle.[60] "The populations did not view the ex-paramilitaries as counsel for advice, leadership, or dispute resolution though individuals did, at times, use them to resolve their personal vendettas."[61] Not embedded, the ex-Catatumbo fighters did not participate in community work or political activities and did not maintain influence over civilian affairs in their neighborhoods.[62] These former fighters "feared the public exposure of community activities … and being recognized" or "showing their identities."[63] Whereas 78 percent of civilian respondents to the IOM survey in Medellín and other parts of Antioquia interacted with ex-combatants once or more per week, only 36 percent of those in Norte de Santander had such frequent relations.[64] Rather than the civilian population in Norte Santander providing ex-Catatumbo combatants with intelligence, some have argued that the information flow went the other way: that Norte Santander's civilian population became the police's best source of information on any illegal activity. Having infrequent and more strained interactions with the noncombatant population, Catatumbo fighters received poorer information from their communities, straining their ability to interpret accurately what was happening within and around their former sphere of influence.

Bargaining Fails and Organized Violence Resumes

The significant shift in the distribution of power generated by the erosion of the extremely powerful and resource-rich Catatumbo paramilitaries; the high levels of uncertainty surrounding the exact nature of this disintegration and that of the neighboring armed groups; the poor on-the-ground intelligence; and the multiplicity of actors (and veto players) active in the region rendered renegotiation of the tacit pacts challenging. The Catatumbo rump cadre believed that it could re-recruit its fighters and deploy a military structure with approximately 500 to 1,000 men to retake La Gabarra and Tibú, and simultaneously station a large force in Cúcuta.[65] Accordingly, it proved unwilling to surrender control of Norte de Santander. Other neighboring armed actors and the state, meanwhile,

[60] Comprehensive Survey of Ex-combatants' Psychologists.

[61] Fundación Progresar analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, 30 May 2008.

[62] Comprehensive Survey of Ex-Combatants' Psychologists; Fundación Progresar analysts, interviews by author, Cúcuta, 29 and 30 May 2008.

[63] Fundación Progresar analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, 30 May 2008. Defensoría del Pueblo, Early Alert System representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[64] See Appendix for more details on the IOM civilian survey conducted between 2005 and 2007.

[65] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Tibú, May 2008.

perceived a power vacuum that they wished to exploit. Arrangements to convince Catatumbo to cede segments of the territory, allow access to trafficking routes, or sell drug laboratories to neighboring factions failed.[66] These actors thus descended like vultures to make their grab. Vencedores de Arauca, under Los Mellizos, remilitarized weakly as a group known as the Nevados. The police captured a number of top remilitarized leaders of the Arauca paramilitaries in Norte de Santander, a sign of their incursion into the zone.[67] In Ocaña, the spark seems to have come from former middle managers of the Bloque Sur de Bolívar under the command of a former leader known as "Vides." These various actors sought to gain a foothold in the border region.[68]

In response, the Catatumbo rump squads remilitarized defensively, in units known as the Black Eagles (Águilas Negras), Blue Eagles, Red Eagles, and Golden Eagles.[69] While conducting interviews in the prison of Cúcuta, I observed one of the inmates opening his notebook. The inner cover was "tattooed" with a large drawing of Black Eagles, the symbol of the remilitarized group. It was cultlike. He told me that he had been arrested because hostilities had broken out between the demobilized from Bloque Catatumbo and "those trying to enter the zone."[70] Evidence of this incursion included twenty-two selective killings of Catatumbo ex-combatants between 10 December 2004 and the end of September 2005.[71]

The border area constituted a zone strategically important to Colombia's economy and national security. It merited state reconstruction, and thus the state also wished to renegotiate its informal agreement of noninterference with the Catatumbo paramilitaries. The remnants of the Catatumbo structure proved insufficient to deter it and the state and these rump units' incongruent estimates of the units' strength rendered efforts to bargain a failure. As a result, Norte de Santander witnessed a military and state buildup in the years following the paramilitaries' demobilization. In 2005, the military activated the Thirtieth Brigade in Cúcuta and, in 2006, it assigned the Fifteenth Mobile Brigade to Catatumbo and constructed a military airport in the rural area of La Gabarra (International Organization for Migration 2007). Units of the

[66] Policía Nacional representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[67] Policía Nacional representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[68] *La Opinión* (2005a).

[69] It seems that the "invading forces" called themselves by the same names to confuse authorities and to convince them that the Bloque Catatumbo was the only one redeploying, thus meriting a state offensive against it. According to the OAS Peace Mission, the remilitarized groups also crossed the border into Venezuela to dump their victims, contributing to a rise in the number of "unidentified" bodies in Venezuela. This was part of the "tactic of invisibility" that "generated confusion around the identity of the remilitarized structures" (Peace monitor, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008).

[70] Interview by author, Cúcuta Prison, May 2008.

[71] Organization of American States (2005).

Navy moved in to patrol the rivers and bridges. The roads between Cúcuta and Tibú, a former paramilitary bastion, became guarded by heavily armed state military patrols (*La Opinión* 2005b). The military also created an effective elite search team charged with capturing remilitarized members of the Águilas Negras. The National Police, meanwhile, established new stations in at least eleven townships including Petrólea, Campo Dos, and La Gabarra, areas that formerly were "strongly controlled by the Bloque Catatumbo."[72] Thus the state, rather than continuing to collaborate with the former Catatumbo structure and acquiescing to its sovereignty over its prior zones of operation, as in the cases of Medellín (described in Chapter 6) and Urabá (documented subsequently), instead sought to take advantage of the power shift to circumvent the paramilitaries' authority and establish consolidated state presence.[73]

The guerrillas also aimed to fill the vacuum left by the demobilization of the paramilitaries in La Gabarra, Tibú, and El Tarra. In 2005, the FARC killed several inhabitants of the paramilitary's side of the river. "Such an infraction of the rules wouldn't have occurred before when the territory was divided."[74] An expert on the conflict explained, "The areas left by the former paramilitaries are becoming constant targets" for the EPL, ELN, and FARC "with the goal of procuring those territories."[75] The guerrillas ambushed towns and damaged electricity grids, bridges, and oil infrastructure as they ramped up their raids on the paramilitaries' territories. They faced both the remilitarized paramilitaries and the state in response (*La Opinión* 2005b). The local cartels (los Boyacos, Pepes, Pulpos, Mechas, and Pamplonas), which the paramilitary commanders had subjugated during their war, now also resurfaced to claim a piece of Bloque Catatumbo's pie.

Weak Remilitarization

Where the Bloque Catatumbo proved almost entirely non-local, such as in La Gabarra, El Tarra, and Tibú, the remilitarization was almost nonexistent. In contrast, in areas in which Catatumbo had recruited some natives or where its non-local combatants remained in the zone, Catatumbo preserved rump structures. For example, the remilitarized Águilas manifested "a more organized structure" in Puerto Santander and Ocaña, which remained "paramilitary strongholds."[76] There, the OAS Peace Mission found that "the structural organization, Águilas Negras, is identical to the structure of Bloque Catatumbo." The remilitarized groups revitalized the same *modus operandi*. They engaged in targeted killings and assassinations, death threats, raids, massacres, and

[72] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Tibú, April 2008.
[73] Colombian army general, interview by author, Tibú, May 2008.
[74] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[75] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006.
[76] Policía Nacional representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

disappearances of the communities' inhabitants. They set up checkpoints on the roads. They protected the coca laboratories and crops. They sought to control civilians through curfews, forced displacement, and obstruction of their free movement. The OAS Peace Mission tracked the evolution of the remilitarized groups:

> [The remilitarized organization] first sought individual and collective intimidation in order to submit the population to its will and exercise social and territorial control. It began with social cleansing, distributing pamphlets to announce its presence and justifying its actions, arguing that it was fighting for justice and the security of the communities. It therefore stated it would be eliminating indigents, drug addicts, homosexuals, and criminals. It would then exterminate these people through massacres and selective assassinations. This made it seem like an organization that would do as it said, enabling it to generate terror among the population. After intimidating the population, it was easy for the Águilas to submit civilians to curfews, mass meetings, taxation, rules regarding their social behavior, forced labor, food blockades, and crop substitution. The intimidation and subjugation of the population opened up the possibility of the group controlling the public administration, appointing officials and bribing policymakers (Organization of American States 2006b).

The remilitarized group disseminated leaflets and graffiti announcing: "We are the paramilitaries" and "We are the Águilas Negras." It had an apparatus to extort and tax transportation operators, gas stations, and other businesses. It forced the commercial sectors to close early (International Organization for Migration 2007). It funded itself "in identical ways to the paramilitaries:" principally through narcotrafficking, smuggling gasoline, arms, and drugs, and engaging in widespread extortion. It also profited from prostitution and domestic drug sales, robbery, and illegal protection and security services.[77] The Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación put the Águilas' size at around 300 to 400 active members (Romero 2007a).[78] The breakdown in the bargains and remilitarization by various factions meant that demobilization initially brought little reduction in rates of violence. According to the National Police data, homicide rates remained nearly constant at 61 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2004, 53 in 2005, and 54 in 2006.[79]

However, having only a fraction of its former manpower and materiel and a more limited geographical reach, the weak remilitarization in Puerto Santander and Ocaña burned out quickly.[80] The three ex-combatant leaders of the Águilas Negras, all former Catatumbo midlevel commanders, were killed within months.[81] Forty-six other ex-combatants were assassinated by March

[77] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

[78] The IOM put the numbers closer to 600 (International Organization for Migration 2007).

[79] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2007d).

[80] A dataset of newspaper articles from *La Opinión* 2004–2006 confirmed this.

[81] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.

2006. Without strong networks or command and control mechanisms to keep the members in line, internal frictions and in-fighting broke out within the rearmed units. The midranking commanders who remained in the zone of operation proved "loose, detached, flyaways," not controlled by the structure. From information gathered on the ground, the OAS Peace Mission observed the remilitarization "not to be a single organization, but instead various groups that did not belong to the same military structure or hierarchy of power and [that] worked independently."[82] A conflict analyst noted, "The Bloque Catatumbo did not incorporate any natives. For this reason, it wasn't able to 'rearm' because it did not have a consolidated structure anymore. [The rearming] is more a mishmash of disparate, disunited actors."[83] "If the Catatumbo paramilitaries had been local, we would be seeing a huge rearmed bloc," reasoned an ombudsperson.[84] Instead, the Catatumbo-remilitarized Águilas "do not have a hierarchy.… They are not linked to a military apparatus in rural areas."[85] Arauca's remilitarization by the the group known as the Nevados proved similarly weak. It lacked a sufficient collective structure and military apparatus. One of the twin brother (Mellizo) commanders was killed, the other captured, and the group eventually dissolved.

Longer-term Dynamics: An Epilogue to the Case of Bloque Catatumbo

The weak remilitarization of the paramilitaries in Norte de Santander, over time, left a power vacuum; as a result, low-level violence continued in the border area for some time, perpetrated by a miscellany of armed and criminal actors including the guerrillas, remilitarized groups from outside of the region, and Colombia's most powerful narcotraffickers, such as the drug lord known as "Jabón." Each year, the number of Catatumbo ex-combatants involved in the remilitarized armed groups decreased, and over time, the "rump units" dissolved, replaced by diverse factions who disputed the critical border zone in the absence of a strongman.[86] Importantly, although the state was unable to consolidate order and security in Norte de Santander, it strengthened significantly through the demobilization and weakening of the Bloque Catatumbo. If in 2002 the paramilitaries "were the 'state' in the department of Norte de Santander and had managed to govern and dominate almost every public

[82] Organization of American States (2006c).
[83] Fundación Progresar director, interview by author, Cúcuta, 9 June 2008.
[84] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008. This was confirmed in another interview (ex-combatant, interview by author, Comuna 6, Cúcuta, June 2008).
[85] Fundación Progresar analyst, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008.
[86] National Police representative, interview by author, Tibú, May 2008. In 2008, the number of *ex-combatant* members dropped to 7 percent of the total number of captured members of the remilitarized groups in Cúcuta (Colonel Páez, National Police, interview by author, Cúcuta, May 2008).

institution in the department," by 2008, the Colombian state had reclaimed its sovereignty from the illegal non-state actors in this region of the country.[87]

WEAK REMILITARIZATION IN OTHER REGIONS OF COLOMBIA

Other regions of Colombia, similarly plagued by non-local paramilitaries during the conflict, faced similar dynamics of weak remilitarization by the demobilized groups as other armed actors descended on the regions to exploit the relative vacuums in power.

Western and Southern Colombia: Bloque Pacífico and Bloque Libertadores del Sur

On Colombia's western coast, the non-local Bloque Pacífico, led by Luis Eduardo Echavarría Durango, was made up of 79 percent non-local recruits. Only 19 percent of its combatants remained in the group's zones of operation after demobilizing; the remainder relocated across the country. With weak prewar networks and a geographically dispersed member base postwar, Bloque Pacífico nearly disappeared, leaving a vacuum in power in the western department of Chocó and an "absence of an organization to regulate the illegal use of force." Accordingly, "a territorial dispute [broke] out between drug traffickers, guerrillas and emerging gangs associated with drug trafficking to compete over control of trafficking routes, drug crops, and the production of narcotics." In this region, centered in Istmina and the San Juan River, the Bloque Pacífico's rump cadre exhibited weak remilitarization. The group redeployed to defend its territory against encroachment by actors attracted by its diminished force. One of the powerful factions of the cartel of Norte del Valle, "Los Machos," led by Don Diego, eventually co-opted Pacífico's rump cadre (Romero 2007a). This new armed apparatus became the Autodefensas Campesinas Unidas del Norte or Héroes del Pacífico.

Similarly, in southern Colombia, in the departments of Nariño and Cauca, the non-local paramilitary Bloque Libertadores del Sur also weakened significantly. Its fighters originated from various departments of northern Colombia, especially Antioquia, and had deployed to the war theater by plane and helicopter. A minority of its fighters remained in its area of military influence after demobilizing, resulting in a reduced squad and a power vacuum. Libertadores del Sur attempted renegotiations with neighboring non-local factions. For example, its commander was apparently willing to sell off part of the organization and its territory to narcotrafficker Wilber Varela.[88] However, despite some financial and material transfers between groups, the bargaining process broke down and the remains of Libertadores del Sur remilitarized as the Organización

[87] Salvatore Mancuso, versión libre, Medellín, 15–16 January 2007.
[88] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008.

Nueva Generación (ONG). The Norte del Valle cartel's other principal gang, the Rastrojos, ultimately subjugated ONG, becoming the new hegemon in the department of Nariño (Garzón 2005; Restrepo 2006).[89]

Medellín's Comuna 13: A Neighborhood-level Comparison

In this book, I have defined "local" at different levels of analysis, ranging from municipality to neighborhood and from brigade to platoon, depending on the data availability. I anticipate that the causal effects will be diluted as we move to greater aggregation. Unfortunately, much of the survey data on ex-combatant recruitment and postwar residence exists only at the municipality level and the data on organizational membership documents only the brigade (bloque) level. Hence, it is the municipal and brigade level I use to estimate whether an individual combatant operated locally. In the case of Medellín, however, I am able to examine the more disaggregated levels, where I expect to find similar, and perhaps more pronounced, dynamics.

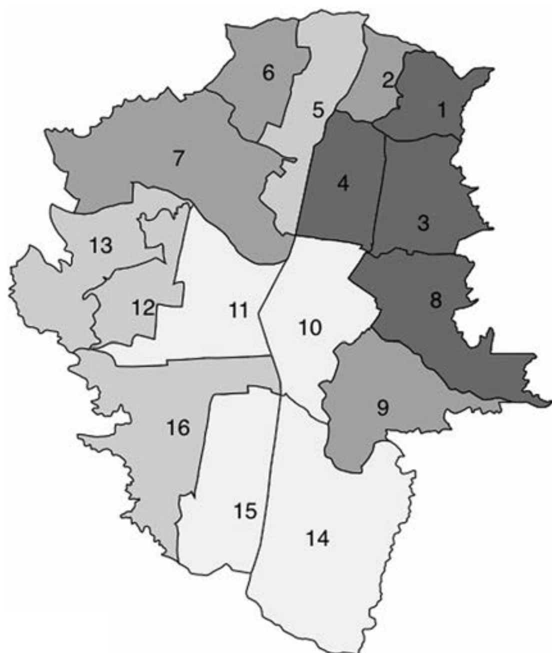
The urban sector Comuna 13 (San Javier) provides a microlevel countercase to the rest of Medellín. The dominant trajectory of the Cacique Nutibara organization, as documented in Chapter 6, was that of a locally recruited armed unit that demilitarized in the aftermath of the peace accords. In one of Medellin's communes called Comuna 13, however, there existed five neighborhoods in which Cacique stationed non-local fighters; these were the barrios of Independencia I, II, III, El Salado, and 20 de Julio. Cacique never recruited fighters from these five neighborhoods;[90] rather it deployed its combatants there from other parts of Medellín after the state's military Operation Orión of 2002, which aimed to expel the guerrillas from the comuna.[91]

Post-demobilization, few ex-Cacique fighters remained in these five neighborhoods of Comuna 13; most returned to the neighborhoods in which they had grown up. Additionally, during the war, the Cacique combatants had occupied homes of victims they had forcibly displaced in these barrios of Comuna 13. The transitional justice process and pressures from the civilian population forced them to return these residences to the rightful owners, resulting in their migration back to their communities of origin in other parts of the city. Whereas between 11 and 19 percent of the Cacique ex-combatants lived in Comunas 1 (Popular), 8 (Villa Hermosa), and 3 (Manrique) after demobilization, less than 1 percent lived in Comuna 13. Only three ex-Cacique paramilitaries remained in the five Comuna 13 neighborhoods in which Cacique had

[89] In these two cases, drug cartels ended up winning out, but theoretically, the state might have defeated these weakly remilitarized groups, filled the power vacuums, and consolidated its institutional presence.

[90] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, El Pesebre, Comuna 13, Medellín, March 2008.

[91] Gustavo Villegas, interview with author, Medellín, March 2008. See also Restrepo 2003; Defensoría del Pueblo 2002; Aricapa 2005. The library in Comuna 13 also collected fascinating social histories of the violence.



MAP 7.2. Number of Ex-combatants by Comuna, Medellín.
Note: These figures are from the Programa Paz y Reconciliación in 2008. The majority of Cacique combatants were concentrated in and local to the communities in dark gray, Comunas 1, 3, 4, 8, and medium gray, Comunas 2, 6, 7, and 9. The communities shown in the lightest shades, including Comuna 13, had low ex-combatant populations (the paramilitaries did not recruit in them). Comunas 5, 10, 11, 14, 15, and parts of 16 border Medellín's river and highways, which run through the city's center. These are wealthier, more developed neighborhoods, which never fell under armed group control. Comuna 13 is thus an exception within Medellín in having a non-local paramilitary forced deployed to it during the war.

operated non-locally; the rest of the ex-paramilitaries in Comuna 13 lived in the neighborhoods of El Pesebre or Blanquizal, where Cacique had recruited locally (see Map 7.2).

After the peace accords, the Cacique Nutibara company that fought in these five barrios of Comuna 13 weakened significantly as a result of the exodus of its fighters, who joined the intact Cacique combatant associations proliferating elsewhere in Medellín where Cacique had deployed locally. The few ex-combatants who remained in these barrios of Comuna 13 kept a low profile.[92] They did not collectively associate, campaign, engage in social work,

[92] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Barrio 20 de Julio, Comuna 13, Medellín, March 2008.

or exercise leverage over civilian affairs in their neighborhoods of Comuna 13.[93] Because the Cacique structures dissolved in Independencia I, II, III, El Salado, and 20 de Julio, they left a vacuum in power. This change in power led armed actors – state and non-state – to enter the comuna. As a result, this sector of Comuna 13 did not witness the same improvement in public order and enhancement of state capacity experienced elsewhere in the city; rather, it remained contested and relatively violent. The OAS Peace Mission reported, "The deterioration of public order in Comuna 13 is evident, especially in the areas of El Salado, 20 de Julio, Corazón and las Independencias I, II y and III." According to information provided by the vicars of local churches in these localities, "It is not clear who has control over the community." The state also assumed a different, more combative, strategy in these barrios than in the rest of the city, maintaining "a permanent presence, both of the troops of the Fourth Brigade and units of the Metropolitan Police."[94]

Can Remilitarization Occur Outside of the Zone Where the Armed Group Operated?

It is worth exploring two additional nuances to the book's theory. Critical to postwar organizational cohesion and power is the geographic clustering of the ex-combatants in their *areas of military influence* (hypothesis 1.3). We should not expect robust collective action by demobilized units outside of the places where they fought. Related to this, we should expect the feasibility of an organization's remilitarization to be somewhat limited to its regions of operation, where it enjoys the most extensive assets: contacts, finances, sanctuaries, and recruits. The example of Bloque Catatumbo offers an interesting case with which to examine these implications, because, although it drew recruits from all parts of northern Colombia, a large share of them came from Urabá. This provides an opportunity to observe a segment of concentrated recruitment within a non-local faction's generally dispersed recruitment, and postwar geographic proximity of a segment of a brigade, outside of its zone of operation, within the broader trend of its combatants spreading out across 1,000 kilometers of territory. Are collective action, networks, and capacity preserved among this segment of the Bloque Catatumbo? I then look to the case of the non-local Bloque Calima of Colombia's Pacific Coast for a further evaluation of this question and to ask, can remilitarization occur outside of the zone where the group operated? Both cases provide insights into what happens when the mechanisms stemming from the geography of recruitment do not all move together.

[93] Reintegration psychologist for Comuna 13, interview by author, Medellín, February 2008. Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Comuna 13, Medellín, March 2008.

[94] OAS Peace Mission Reports.

As we see below, many Urabá ex-paramilitaries who operated locally as part of Bloques Elmer Cárdenas, Héroes de Tolová, or Bananero remained linked to their former organizations and became part of ex-combatant civic associations, businesses, and security forces. However, the paramilitary "returnees" to Urabá – those who had deployed to Norte de Santander and elsewhere, but relocated home to reintegrate – did not belong to any organization comprising former paramilitaries. A civilian community leader in Carepa explained, "The [local] Bloque Elmer Cárdenas and Frente Bananero are more organized than the members of any of the other [non-local] brigades. They have associations. Other brigades need to be brought into the process and need to become organized."[95] Similarly, a former combatant from the Frente Bananero, who had joined one of its successor organizations called Superban, offered, "I would like to see the other muchachos not from Frente Bananero having projects as well."[96] These returnees to the zone retained only attenuated relationships with their leaders and former comrades. According to the Urabá reintegration program director, "The difference between those who arrive having operated elsewhere [such as those of Bloque Catatumbo] and those who operated here is that those arriving from elsewhere come and ask, 'Who is commanding here?' They arrive without their leaders and don't have authority figures or a hierarchical structure. This is very different from those that fought here.... Those that operated elsewhere also tend to maintain a lower profile."[97] These returnees did not have the benefit of existing authority over the civilian communities, having exercised their coercive leverage elsewhere in the country. Their social networks with the local population had also eroded, given that they had spent years fighting elsewhere. I observed little collective action among non-local returnees, even where their numbers were sizeable and one might therefore have expected collective capacity among them to endure.[98]

Another interesting case to explore is that of Bloque Calima under the command of Ever Veloza García, alias "HH." Returning to his home area of Turbo, HH wished to remilitarize there as a returnee, but he lacked the organizational collective capacity to do so because his structure had deployed non-locally and his group's wartime assets were largely tied to territory elsewhere.

During the early 1990s, HH had commanded the Frente Turbo in the northern and eastern zones of the "banana axis" of Urabá. In 1996, he deployed to Valle del Cauca on the Pacific Coast, where he created the Bloque Calima.[99] In 2004, having operated non-locally in Valle del Cauca for eight years, HH

[95] Civilian at "Taller de Formación de Liderazgo," interview by author, Carepa, 26 June 2008.

[96] Ex-combatant, Frente Bananero, interview by author, Caurallo, Urabá, 3 July 2008. Superban patrolled and protected the banana distribution channels from Urabá.

[97] ACR regional director, interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008.

[98] See also Comisión Departamental de Seguimiento y Acompañamiento al Proceso de Desmovilización, Desarme y Reinserción en Antioquia (2007), 40–41.

[99] Comisión Colombiana de Juristas 2008.

demobilized his brigade there and then returned home to Urabá.[100] Although HH "reintegrated into civilian life" in Urabá, his absence from the zone in the years prior meant that he did not enjoy territorial influence. He wished to reclaim it.[101] Urabá was his home, the region he formerly commanded, and a zone of riches. However, he lacked an organization with which to do so because his brigade had stationed elsewhere. It had attracted members as it expanded, and its ranks thus included soldiers from eighty-eight different municipalities. Whereas 75 percent of the ex-combatants from Urabá's Frente Bananero, upon demobilizing, reported that they intended to live in one of five municipalities concentrated in Urabá, those of the non-locally-recruited Bloque Calima chose ninety-seven different municipalities, with no one municipality drawing more than 20 percent of its fighters.[102] Thus, after relinquishing their arms, the Calima paramilitaries, including the second- and third-level commanders, dispersed.

In HH's notoriously honest testimonies under the Justice and Peace Law, he reported "not knowing the whereabouts" of five of his top commanders, known as: "el Rolo," "el Colocho," "Gallo," "Ronald," and "Perro Mocho." Of his remaining leaders, two were in Medellín ("Julián" and "Alex"), three were in prison ("Maturo," "Pata de Palo," and "Pescadito") and the rest were dead ("Julián," "Gregorio," "Juan Onorte," "Martin," "Daniel," and "Bola de Cacao"). Only one of his commanders, his brother Giovanni, had migrated with him to Urabá. In total, only 35 of the 663 ex-Calima members relocated to Urabá after demobilization. As a result, HH lacked a structure to "retake" Urabá. It proved infeasible for him to co-opt or "borrow" a structure.[103] HH sought to eliminate or seduce the leaders of the local urabeño Frente Bananero and then "appropriate the structure, use it, implant himself in it."[104] Given the security, economic, and coercive motivations for rejoining an armed group, it would seem HH could quite easily have achieved his objective of equipping himself with an organization through arm-twisting, forced recruitment, and selective incentives made feasible by his inheritance of Bloque Calima's abundant resources.[105] It was therefore "impressive that HH was not able to

[100] Ever Veloza Garcia (HH) demobilized as the "commander" of the Frente Bananero in Urabá even though he had not operated in the region for years. He did so to protect the reputation of Raúl Hasbún (Frente Bananero's real commander) as an upstanding businessman with no judicial charges against him. The latter demobilized as a foot soldier to avoid enrolling in the Justice and Peace process (Director of Superban, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008; conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008).

[101] Ex-combatants, Frente Bananero, interview by author, Turbo and Apartadó, June 2008.

[102] International Organization for Migration (2004a, 2004b).

[103] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008.

[104] Director of Superban, interview by author, Apartadó, August 2008.

[105] The ex-Calima bloque's financial assets might have diminished over time because its extortion, "voluntary" donation, and narcotrafficking networks were largely tied to its former territory in Valle del Cauca; in Urabá, other actors firmly controlled such financing networks.

co-opt the former Frente Bananero."[106] Other experts offered clues why: "He was not a leader of the zone, didn't have support there," reasoned conflict analyst Gersen Arias. Carolina Rodríguez of the Colombian reintegration program similarly explained, "HH had only recently arrived to the zone.... HH was not really a commander in Urabá. He was the commander over there, of Calima."[107] When the director of Superban was asked if HH had been able to recruit Superban members, he responded, "He took his men from Calima.... He didn't take anyone from Superban *because HH wasn't of the Bloque Bananero*."[108] The social network mechanism seemed to trump the coercive and material ones: the ex-soldiers of Frente Bananero remained loyal to their former armed organization.

Unable to "borrow" the Superban structure or recruit combatants who had operated in Urabá, HH had three possible sources of soldiers to staff a remilitarized organization: ex-Calima militants, new recruits, or returnee fighters. HH enlisted several Calima combatants, but there were only a few in Urabá. He recruited some new youths, but they lacked training, indoctrination, and experience in war or crime. He conscripted former paramilitaries originally from Urabá who had deployed elsewhere and then returned to their families in Urabá post-demobilization. Their structures had largely disintegrated and so these returnee ex-combatants, lacking orientation and looking for someone to command them, became a small puddle of recruits for HH. They were individual recruits, rather than collective ones. Thus HH was able to mobilize only a very small force in San Pedro de Urabá. It was quickly defeated and, in April 2007, HH was arrested.

It is possible that HH would have had greater success had he returned home to a different strategic landscape. He sought to remilitarize in an area dominated by other intact, local bloques and thus gaining a foothold proved difficult. For example, had Urabá instead been host to non-local actors who all had weakened, HH's returning cohort might have been able to exploit the power shift. However, even in a different regional configuration, HH's unit would still have had to mobilize nearly from scratch, with few of its wartime organizational endowments: recruits, resources, local knowledge, and ties with the population; these lacks would have rendered the success of this remilitarization unlikely.

These cases within Urabá suggest the importance of the geographic proximity of the fighters *within* their military spheres of influence for both the endurance of collective action and for the capacity to remilitarize. Offering further support for this claim, Daly, Paler, and Samii (2014)'s study of recidivism found

[106] Academic, interview by author, Bogotá, January 2008.

[107] ACR regional director, interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008.

[108] Emphasis added. Although it may seem unlikely that the director spoke honestly with me about his men rearming, he openly admitted that some of his muchachos had joined the ranks of Don Mario, the leader of the remilitarized "Urabeños" organization discussed below.

that residing after demobilizing in the municipality where one had principally operated militarily significantly raised the risk of recidivism and reduced the likelihood of successful reintegration into civilian life.

STRONG REMILITARIZATION: BLOQUE ELMER CÁRDENAS AND BLOQUE HÉROES DE TOLOVÁ IN URABÁ AND CÓRDOBA

I turn now to the pathway to strong remilitarization, continuing with the case of Urabá, but focusing on the paramilitary factions that were recruited, operated, and demobilized in this region.

Paramilitarism in Urabá and Córdoba

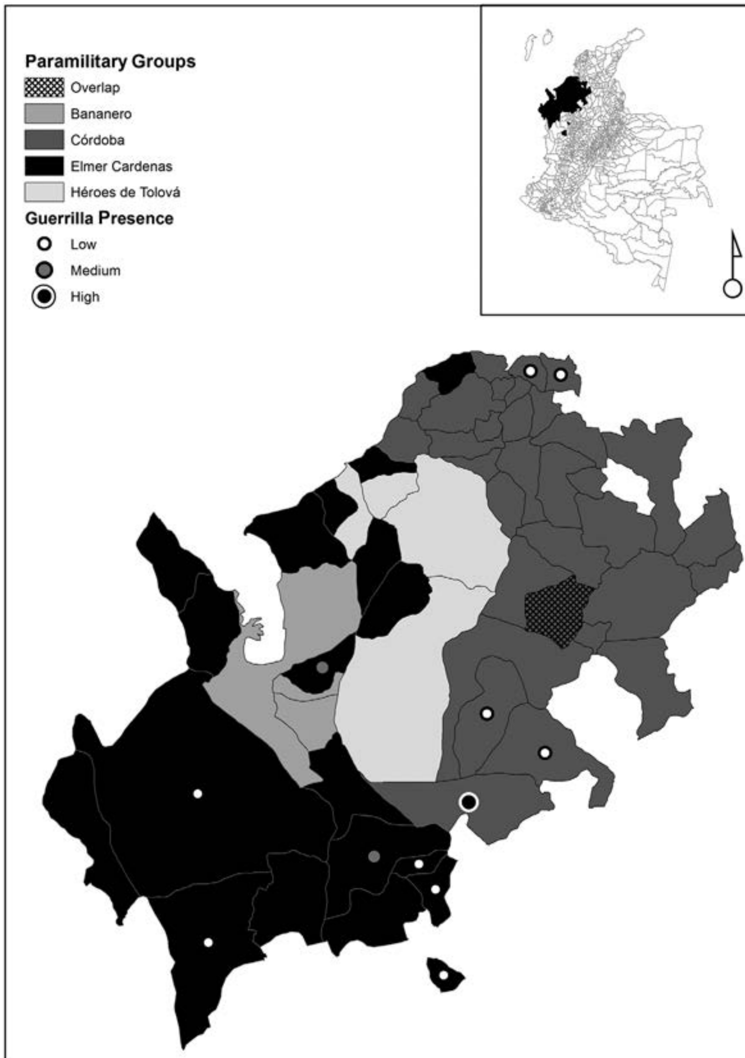
Urabá is the heart of Colombia's agricultural riches: bananas, African palm, wood, and cattle. It boasts an extensive natural port, shares an international border with Panama, and neighbors dense jungle. Accordingly, for four decades, it constituted a "territory of war," attracting all of the country's diverse armed actors.[109] In the 1960s and 1970s, Urabá became an epicenter of Colombian labor activism, unionism, and left-wing guerrilla activity. Each guerrilla group infiltrated a union, formed a political party, and fought a fierce war for the allegiance of the "radical" banana laborers. Beginning in the 1980s, the paramilitaries appeared on the scene in association with the Colombian military, politicians, banana planters, cattle ranchers, merchants, and other members of the business community.[110] These "self-defense" forces comprised four independent groups (see Map 7.3). The Bloque Elmer Cárdenas, under the command of Freddy Rendón Herrera, alias "El Alemán," controlled the north of Urabá Antioqueño and Urabá Chocoano.[111] The Frente Turbo and Frente Bananero, commanded by Raúl Hasbún, alias "Pedro Bonito," patrolled Turbo, Apartadó, Carepa, and Chigorodó.[112] In the zones to the east of Urabá, in the department of Córdoba, operated two other paramilitary forces, the Bloque Héroes de Tolová, under the command of Diego Murillo, and the Bloque Córdoba, under the leadership of Salvatore Mancuso (Martínez 2004). All of these paramilitary organizations reached separate peace accords with President Álvaro Uribe's High Commissioner for Peace; each disarmed and demobilized

[109] Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social (2001).

[110] They first emerged as los Huelengues, "Las 70," and Convivir Popayán. They demobilized briefly in 1990, then reformed in 1991 amidst the war between the FARC and EPL. Dairon Mendoza Caraballo, versión libre, Medellín, 16 September 2008. See also Aranguren Molina 2001; Corporación Observatorio para la Paz 2002.

[111] The original self-defense forces in northern Urabá were formed by the family of the mayor of the town of Necoclí, Carlos Correa (Alejandro Toro, director of Construpaz, interview by author, Necoclí, July 2008).

[112] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, April 2008. The Frente Bananero was also referred to as the Frente Alex Hurtado (*Revista Semana* 2008).



MAP 7.3. Urabá/Córdoba Case Study: Armed Groups' Zones of Operation.

its fighters between November 2004 and August 2006.[113] Thereafter, remilitarization occurred on a massive scale in this region, posing a significant security challenge for the Colombian state.

In this section, I trace the recruitment patterns of these various paramilitary factions and their resultant network structures and cohesion; the bargaining dynamics that transpired as some factions weakened whereas others endured;

[113] Alto Comisionado para la Paz (2006).

and the organizations' eventual return to violence. I demonstrate where my theory accurately predicts the occurrence of events and where it fails to account for the complex social reality on the ground.

My theory has a two-step causal structure: it is variation in the post-conflict durability of the armed groups' networks that explains the preservation or erosion of the groups' power. The geography of recruitment tends to cause variation in the durability of these networks. In the second step, the postwar distribution of power determines whether the groups remilitarize or demilitarize. The Urabá/Córdoba case provides only partial evidence for the theory. It illustrates that, when an organization weakens after demobilization, shifting its balance of capabilities vis-à-vis intact groups, strong remilitarization and high levels of violence result. However, in this case, the power shift cannot be attributed to non-local recruitment. This case therefore enables exploration of what else causes organizations to weaken in the aftermath of peace accords. Specifically, I investigate the role of leadership by examining a group that lost its command cohort. I then look to several other regions of Colombia that fit both steps of the theory.

Mapping Local Recruitment and Networks

The paramilitary organizations that operated in the northwest corner of Colombia comprised mainly local recruits. In his testimony under the Justice and Peace Law, the Commander of Bloque Elmer Cárdenas, known as "El Alemán," referred to his armed group's territory as the "communities that we influenced and *from which came our men*."[114] He went on, "65 percent of the group's members were Afro-Descendants, 32 percent *chilapos*, and 3 percent indigenous because they were the inhabitants of the zones of operation."[115] The ex-combatant surveys indicate that 80 percent of Bloque Elmer Cárdenas fighters were local to their place of deployment. Although inevitably some transfer of members occurred between the battalions, former political commander Alejandro Toro confirmed that, "Each of the Cárdenas fronts comprised people who were native to each zone. In northern Urabá, we recruited from Necoclí and Arboletes. In Chocó, we recruited chocoanos, etc. We did not send people from Urabá Antioqueño to fight in Chocó because it didn't work. They did not know the zone; they weren't accustomed to the rivers, to the mosquitoes.... Many of the fighters even lived with their families while they were operating with our self-defense forces."[116] Bloque Tolová and Bloque Córdoba similarly drew from local recruit bases, with 72 percent and 63 percent of their members, respectively, local to their combat zones, whereas

[114] *Revista Semana* (2004a). Emphasis added.
[115] Freddy Rendón Herrera, alias "El Alemán," versión libre, Medellín, 5–6 June 2007.
[116] Alejandro Toro, interview by author, Necoclí, August 2008.

Bananero drew roughly half of its members from its territory of military operation in Urabá's "banana axis."[117]

Local to the zone, the paramilitaries were able to exploit several social webs to fill their ranks: the network of the EPL guerrillas, that of the Convivirs, and that of military veterans.[118] The EPL network became co-optable due to events following the EPL's peace accord with President César Gaviria in 1991 and the bloodbath that ensued.[119] To prevent the demobilized EPL political party from dominating the elections, to punish it for disarming, and to take advantage of the shift in power when EPL dissidents joined its side, the FARC began an extermination campaign against the civilian constituency and demobilized combatants of the EPL.[120] In self-defense, the EPL ex-combatants remilitarized as militias called Comandos Populares.[121] The conflict degenerated; each armed coalition massacred the social base of the other. The Comandos Populares then allied with the paramilitaries and, together, they drove the FARC guerrillas out of the banana and cattle areas and established military, social, and political control. The FARC were forced to withdraw to the jungles of Chocó and Mutatá.[122] In this way, war between the rebels led groups of ex-EPL guerrillas to bandwagon with the paramilitaries, forming an unexpected alliance between insurgents and counterinsurgents.[123] The Urabá paramilitaries thus gained access to and capitalized on the EPL's wide-reaching social web of militants that had been several decades in the making. These ex-EPL soldiers – known as *esperanzados* – were densely bonded and possessed penetrating local and territorial knowledge and intelligence.[124] One of my interviewees described how, fearing for his life, he joined his former enemy's ranks because they promised him protection in exchange for his military savvy, effective reconnaissance, and widespread social network.[125]

Paramilitary leader Carlos Castaño referred to the FARC's extermination campaign against the *esperanzados* as the FARC's "worst error and the first

[117] These data derive from the ex-combatant surveys of all paramilitaries discussed in the Appendix.

[118] Romero (2003); Salinas Abdala and Zarama Santacruz (2012).

[119] Ramírez Tobán (1997).

[120] Duncan (2006).

[121] See Ortiz Saramiento (2007).

[122] García (1996); Madariaga (2006).

[123] Director of Superban, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008. The exact number of *esperanzados* that joined the paramilitaries is a matter of debate. The left and ex-EPL political party tend to underestimate the numbers. However, my interviews point to significant paramilitary recruitment of ex-EPL combatants. Luis Fernando, who worked with the EPL peace process in the early 1990s, claimed that a huge number of ex-EPLs entered the *autodefensas*. Luis Fernando, director of Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA) Programs for Ex-Combatants in Urabá, interview by author, Riosucio, Chocó, July 2008. Demobilized ex-combatants from Bloque Bananero, interviews by author, Apartadó, June 2008. See also García (1996); Romero (2003).

[124] Ex-paramilitary (former EPL member), interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[125] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Necoclí, July 2008.

step to its destruction in the banana axis of Urabá."[126] The paramilitaries married this strong insurgent network with a strong counterinsurgent one: that of the legalized Convivir. For Bloque Elmer Cárdenas, the Convivir Popayán was an especially critical organizational asset.[127] Bloque Córdoba built on the Convivir Nuevo Horizonte.[128] Bloque Córdoba's commander Mancuso also drew his group's original nucleus from his former Colombian military battalion, Cacique Coyará, and the web of Colombian army veterans that had operated in Córdoba.[129] Thus, a majority of the paramilitary combatants and commanders in Urabá and Córdoba enjoyed strong social ties prior to joining the paramilitaries.

After signing peace agreements and decommissioning, most of the local factions' combatants returned home to their "regular residences," often where they had been stationed. In a few rare cases, some relocated collectively for occupational purposes to one of the units' strongholds where agricultural reintegration projects were to be developed. There, they stayed in encampments of former fighters.[130] These two trends in the local soldiers' postwar migration meant that they remained physically clustered within the paramilitary groups' spheres of influence.[131] Eighty-three percent of ex-Cárdenas fighters, 72 percent of Tolová and Bananero combatants, and 70 percent of Bloque Córdoba members continued to reside in the territories they had patrolled during the war.

Most Local Groups Remained Cohesive

For most of the local units – Elmer Cárdenas, Bananero, and Tolová – their multifaceted networks survived the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process. A former Elmer Cárdenas combatant in Caurallo praised "the union, unity, and cohesion among the demobilized of his group."[132] During community gatherings that I attended in Urabá and Córdoba, the Cárdenas, Bananero, and Tolová ex-combatants sat together with their former respective factions; they remained friends; they laughed together; they continued to *parchar* (hang out).[133] In explaining his enduring relationship with his former comrades, one Cárdenas member told me how he does everything with

[126] Aranguren Molina (2001).
[127] Duncan (2006); International Crisis Group (2003a).
[128] Rugeles (2013); *Verdad Abierta* (2014b).
[129] Martínez (2008); *Verdad Abierta* (2010a).
[130] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Bogotá, 24 January 2008.
[131] ACR personnel, interview by author, Riosucio, Chocó, June 2008.
[132] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Caurallo, Urabá, July 2008.
[133] These observations partially derive from meetings I attended, in Carepa and Chigorodó, of the "Leadership Formation Course" run by SENA for ex-combatant and civilian leaders in the communities, June 2008.

the other demobilized; he works with them, studies with them, "we are all very good friends."[134] This theme surfaced frequently in my interviews in Urabá and Córdoba.[135]

Bloque Elmer Cárdenas' collective action persisted in the form of a civic association called Construpaz (Constructors of Peace).[136] All 1,536 Cárdenas ex-combatants "voluntarily" joined the association.[137] Construpaz, operative in Cárdenas' former military zone, retained these paramilitaries' social capital, organizational know-how, territory, command and control, midlevel commanders, recruits, corruptive ties with the state, and tolerance by the civilian communities.[138] Similarly, the Bloque Bananero formed the Association of Demobilized of Urabá (ASEDSUR), comprising two organizations: Superban and the Special Services.[139] Superban monitored and controlled the safety of the domestic distribution of bananas from Urabá.[140] Operating on eight-hour patrol shifts with twenty-five stations on the roads, mobile units on motorcycles, and constant radio communication, it exercised "extensive social influence" over the banana axis.[141] The local population assured that the Cárdenas and Bananero autodefensas' power remained "firmly intact."[142] The Tolová bloque also remained cohesive, taking the form of a nongovernmental organization (NGO), Corporación Avanzando Unidos por Colombia (Coravuncol).[143] Although these groups' access to illicit funding undoubtedly played an important role in enabling them to remain cohesive, establish NGOs, maintain their hierarchies, and continue to employ their foot soldiers, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 6, many other groups across Colombia that had similar access to illegal funding did not form such NGOs or retain intact structures.

[134] Ex-combatant, Coordinator of Construpaz in Riosucio, interview by author, Riosucio, July 2008.

[135] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, June 2008.

[136] Alejandro Toro, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008; Gersen Arias, Fundación Ideas para La Paz, interview by author, Bogota, 17 July 2008.

[137] Ex-combatants, interview by author, Riosucio, June 2008; interview by author, Necoclí, July 2008.

[138] Ex-Elmer Cárdenas commander, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008.

[139] ACR regional director, Urabá, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[140] Director of Superban, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008. Leaders Carlos Vásquez and Raúl Hasbún enjoyed extremely strong relations with the banana plantation owners and knew about all the "skeletons in their closet." Accordingly, under blackmail, the bananeros agreed to a post-demobilization project that would employ the ex-combatants (interview by author, Aguachica, April 2008).

[141] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2006a).

[142] Duncan (2006).

[143] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2007c); Verdad Abierta (2014a).

Anomalous Decline: Bloque Córdoba Lost Its Head

After the peace accords were signed and the bloques had demobilized, the regions of Urabá and Córdoba witnessed a change in the distribution of relative power. Specifically, the transition from war weakened the Bloque Córdoba. This case study does not confirm Step 1 of the argument – that changes in organizational capacity derive from the geography of recruitment. Although most of the groups in the region followed the predicted path – local groups remaining strongly intact – Bloque Córdoba constitutes an outlier case at this stage of the theory, shining light on an alternative source of organizational erosion and cohesion. It indicates the importance of disaggregating different levels of the hierarchy and tracing the trajectories of the commanders. Given differential changes in postwar capacity, the Urabá/Córdoba cases then provide support for Step 2 of the argument: how the regional combinations of relatively strengthened and weakened factions affect patterns of remilitarization. Córdoba's trajectory suggests that the erosion of a structure's networks for reasons distinct from its recruitment geography still seems to spark the same second step in the proposed causal path: changes in relative power, renegotiation of bargains, likely bargaining failure, and resumed violence.

Bloque Córdoba exhibited the characteristics of a local armed faction: it recruited in a relatively geographically concentrated fashion, its fighters possessed prewar networks, and the majority of its members remained clustered in the zone of operation after decommissioning. Where Bloque Córdoba diverged from the other groups in the region was in the breakdown of its chain of command through a process of "decapitation" after demobilization: some of its leaders abdicated and others were assassinated.

In many ways, this seems to be an idiosyncratic occurrence. Bloque Córdoba commander, Salvadore Mancuso, of Italian descent, had belonged to the coastal elite prior to joining the autodefensas; he was always impeccably dressed with Ferragamo shoes, Valentino suits, and designer ties. Upon demobilizing, he wished to return to his former high-status (and legal) position within Córdoba's society and politics. With the parapolítica scandal and adverse turns in the judicial process, strong continued ties to his paramilitary organization might have seemed to threaten this return. Accordingly, his response was to wash his hands of the paramilitaries. He had to comply with the Justice and Peace process, but, unlike his fellow commanders, he did not seem intent on maintaining his territorial influence or control over his men. After a brief symbolic stint of organizing his ex-combatants to manually eradicate coca in Córdoba, as a sign of good will, he seemed to move on: he essentially quit his job as commander. In the process, he decapitated his organization and significantly weakened it. His biographer wrote:

> He had begun to take time away from the war to return and spend time with his family in the countryside. With the idea of preparing himself for a political career, he called together academics, foreigners, Congressmen, senior justices, journalists, clergy, and all

those who, in his opinion, could contribute to his political training. He was no longer the commander who led the battles with admirable and criticized courage. His battlefield, which for years had been the jungle, was now the public. He wanted to return to society (Martínez 2004, 132).

According to various interviews conducted by the OAS Peace Mission, "Mancuso lost much of his command over the Alto Sinú and San Jorge" regions. Even villagers discussed how the former leader of Bloque Córdoba "had lost authority or influence in these areas" (Organization of American States 2007).

The Frente Alto San Jorge (one of Bloque Córdoba's battalions), also lost its commander, Andrés Angarita, in this case, to homicide. His death "opened a space in power to control the armed structure that operated in Montelíbano and Puerto Libertador" (Organization of American States 2007). Chapter 4 demonstrates statistically the importance for a group's endurance of having its commanders also remain in the zone of operation after demobilizing. The case of Bloque Córdoba indicates the potential for erosion of a group's power when its leadership is decapitated.

Information Symmetries and Asymmetries

The preserved networks and command-and-control of Cárdenas, Tolová, and Bananero reduced information problems between their commanders, midlevel leaders, and rank and file. Within the Córdoba cadres, by contrast, the disintegration of these organizational assets created information asymmetries.

"Whereas in other regions, many of the midranking commanders were trying to take pieces of the brigades for themselves, grab at the loot of the brigade, position themselves to have part of the structure, territory, and economic resources after the demobilization, here in Urabá [in the case of Elmer Cárdenas], that didn't happen."[144] The local and enduring nature of the officer core prevented this; remaining in the zone, they left no vacuum for others to exploit. Instead, "the leadership was clear, and Elmer Cárdenas was very unified;… it had a clear command and control structure."[145] After the peace accords, an OAS peace monitor reported, "El Alemán still ha[d] total control.… The demobilized [were] always saying, 'We need to ask our *jefe*'s permission.' The hierarchy [was] intact. The demobilized use[d] the words, '*jefe*' [leader], '*patrón*' [boss].… El Alemán still enjoy[ed] the solidarity and the loyalty of his men."[146] Many even called him *papá* (father).[147] When the authorities ordered El Alemán's transfer to prison, his ex-combatants and even some civilians collected signatures to petition the Colombian Attorney General to annul the

[144] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008.

[145] Alejandro Toro, interview by author, Necoclí, July 2008.

[146] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Cali, November 2007.

[147] *Revista Semana* (2006).

accusations against him and enable him to return home to Urabá. Similarly, when he gave his first testimony in Medellín under the Justice and Peace Law, 150 of his ex-combatants arrived in thirteen buses from Necoclí to show support for their leader.

The Construpaz organization also preserved Cárdenas' management apparatus; the ex-commanders kept tabs on the midranking officers who, in turn, monitored the activities of the former foot soldiers.[148] Construpaz closely replicated the former paramilitary brigade's organizational structure. For example, it had an "advisor" stationed in each municipality who monitored the ex-fighters and reported regularly to the top command in Necoclí.[149] Ex-combatants mentioned that, at Construpaz meetings, the leaders would collect their cell phone numbers and addresses.[150] Construpaz members held identification cards.[151] The "civic association" also provided the former foot soldiers with employment. Cárdenas members were required to invest 80 percent of their individual monthly reintegration stipends in Construpaz, which used the funds to launch "productive projects" producing rubber, yucca, pepper, and wood. These gave the ex-fighters jobs and salaries, tightening their dependence on their superiors and their commitment to the Cárdenas structure. According to former political commander Alejandro Toro, Cárdenas had decided that it needed to support the muchachos in their reintegration process so that they would not "flee the organization."[152] Construpaz ensured that the ex-armed group could outbid the state for the ex-combatants' loyalty by minimizing the former fighters' interactions with the government reintegration program. Essentially, the Cooperative "self-managed" the demobilization of its soldiers, depending only minimally on the state.[153] The leaders had a powerful intelligence network throughout Cárdenas' ex-combatant community and accurately measured this community's pulse. Although only the individual former combatants knew with exact precision their own willingness to remilitarize should the need arise, their superiors had a solid informational basis for estimating this willingness.

Embedded in Urabá's communities, Bloque Elmer Cárdenas, despite having perpetrated extreme levels of violence and atrocity, received intelligence from the communities. "El Alemán" declared during his Justice and Peace hearings, "I knew all of the local authorities and met with all of them."[154] He had ties to the police, army, elite, "everyone."[155] Cárdenas also had ties to the campesino

[148] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Riosucio, July 2008.
[149] Coordinator of Cárdenas ex-combatants, interview by author, Riosucio, July 2008.
[150] Alejandro Toro, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008.
[151] Organization of American States (2006a).
[152] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Necoclí, July 2008.
[153] Gersen Arias, Fundación Ideas para la Paz analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008, May 2009.
[154] Freddy Rendón Herrera, alias "El Alemán," versión libre, Medellín, 5 June 2007.
[155] Interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008. The paramilitaries of Urabá were implanted in the network of the state's coercive apparatus through the commander of Colombia's 17th Army

communities because, according to the social architecture of the Colombian coast, they tended to follow the will and preferences of their patrons.[156] In addition, when the esperanzados (ex-EPL guerrillas) joined the paramilitaries, they brought to the *paras* part of their broad social web of banana-worker unionists, palm, cattle and wood workers, leftist sympathizers of the EPL's political party,[157] and ex-rebels and their families (those that had not been killed or displaced by the FARC).[158] In the IOM civilian survey, 85 percent of the rural community members surveyed confirmed that they had no difficulties accepting the demobilized combatants "because they were native to those communities and/or some had belonged to the self-defense forces that had operated right there."[159] Additionally, "the magnitude of the violence has made it so that in many communities, they have learned to live [as] victims and executioners in a complex process in which the status of one and the other have not always been easy to determine because many inhabitants of the region have been one or the other thing at the same time."[160] The director of the Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (Colombian Agency for Reintegration, ACR) in Riosucio confirmed, "All the [demobilized] are in their communities so there haven't been problems with the victims."[161] Finally, Bloque Elmer Cárdenas maintained high-quality information-gathering capabilities through its sociopolitical organization, Construpaz. Through Construpaz programs, the demobilized combatants continued to intervene in the problems of the communities.[162] "If someone stole something, a chicken, some land, if someone's woman cheated on him, everyone would turn to us.... [We were] used not just by politicians, but also by the very communities to fix the school, build a road, plant seeds."[163] Cárdenas' nongovernmental organizations, cooperatives, media outlets, and

Brigade, General Rito Alejo del Río. The Frente Turbo commander, HH, testified, "I maintained a close relationship [with the military]; between us, we frequently offered each other collaboration. The army gave us information about the guerrillas and their members and other times, turned a blind eye before the actions that we committed. The commander 'Rodrigo Doble Cero' coordinated with the armed forces, he called them by telephone and spoke with them directly." Ever Veloza García, "HH," versión libre, Medellín, 26–27 November 2007. See also Human Rights Watch 2008, 45–47; Human Rights Watch 2004, 2007.

[156] Analyst, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Bogotá, February 2008. See also Duncan (2007). The alliances with the regional leaders brought with them the support of the patrons' laborers, especially in the cattle region of northern Urabá. In the southern region of the banana axis, the workers were less dependent on their patrons, as they were organized in strong unions.

[157] ACR representative, interview by author, Bogotá, January 2008. The EPL's political party, Esperanza Paz y Libertad, was successful politically and very popular.

[158] Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris 2007.

[159] International Organization for Migration (2006). Interview by author, Riosucio, July 2008.

[160] Mejía Walker (2012).

[161] ACR regional director, interview by author, Riosucio, July 2008.

[162] International Organization for Migration (2006).

[163] Ex-Cárdenas commander, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008.

businesses gave it effective means to control the territory and population.[164] Several of its ex-combatants ran for office and won political positions. For example, in Necoclí, Chigorodó, and Rivalino, demobilized combatants won council positions and, elsewhere, they continued to influence the Juntas de Acción Comunal (JAC) and the Juntas Administradora Locales (JAL), exerting a leadership role in the community governance system, with the surveillance that such infiltration provided.[165]

The Bananero and Tolová bloques had similar intelligence apparatuses transmitting data to their commanders on their rank and file and midlevel leaders, on their territories, and especially on the borders of those territories. For example, with its former combatants on motorcycles, operating checkpoints along the roads, and staffing a command center to keep track of intelligence, Frente Bananero's Superban monitored the entire banana axis.[166] It continued "to keep tabs on what [was] moving" throughout the territory (Duncan 2006). Its commander, Raul Hasbún, one of the most prominent banana plantation owners in the region, "had all the links with the *bananeros*, the mayors and the armed forces."[167] These "contacts" provided frequent and accurate surveillance. In contrast, Bloque Córdoba did not form any association of its ex-combatants or any NGOs to maintain influence over civilian affairs and access to neighborhood intelligence. This is surprising given its embeddedness in the communities during the conflict. Lacking corporations, productive projects, and other means by which the remaining leaders could keep tabs on the combatants and their territory after the conflict, Córdoba began to suffer information problems within its organization and vis-à-vis its neighboring groups.

Bargaining Failure and Remilitarization

Prior to demobilization, all of the paramilitary organizations had excellent information about their own units' endowments; their capabilities were demonstrated on the battleground and the loyalty of their members was tested daily. This accurate estimation of their power enabled them to broker deals, transfer territory, and pay each other lump sums to avoid confrontation. These arrangements between the warring factions complemented the formal process with the state and allowed the paramilitaries to disarm and demobilize. According to a demobilized ex-combatant:

[164] Duncan (2006). See also Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2006a).

[165] See also *Revista Semana* (2006). In 2006, El Alemán designed, in collaboration with the government, the Project Social Alternative (PASO). The word *paso* (step) was symbolic of the transition the organization was making from illegality to legality (Alejandro Toro, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008).

[166] ACR regional director, Urabá, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[167] Peace monitor, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008.

I was under [commander] Cepillo. We didn't operate in Nueva Antioquia … because this was of another commander. We had permission to go up to El Tres, but we couldn't cross El Tres because that would be invading another man's territory.… And to the south, we also had our limit as there was another señor, El Alemán, there. So the whole zone was divided up into separate areas of control of different *señores de la guerra* [warlords].[168]

The sister of the former paramilitary commander known as "Doble Cero" reported to me that Cárdenas had paid Tolová $2 million not to enter the zone of Urabá. This sum was the compensation required to offset Tolová's expected net payoff from invading.[169] This is not to say that all of the groups were allied; only Cárdenas and Bananero seemingly had that form of relationship and, at times, it was a strained one. The remaining groups maintained at best merely neutral interactions.

These informal deals, based on solid information between and within the armed groups, produced a cooperation regime such that, in the first years of the peace process, there emerged a "tense calm" in Urabá and Córdoba.[170] The OAS Peace Mission announced, in 2005, its "positive assessment of the effective dismantling of the armed structures [in Urabá].… There is no evidence of incursions of other illegal armed groups.… The reintegration of the demobilized group has advanced positively and within the parameters hoped for."[171] Reports on the rearming phenomena that emerged in 2004–06 listed no remilitarized groups in Urabá and Córdoba.[172] Initially, the empirical reality in Urabá and Córdoba followed the book's theoretical predictions for configurations of all local armed organizations.

This changed in 2007. With the shift in power caused by Bloque Córdoba's weakening, the arrangements between the non-state actors required recalibration. The Tolová bloque believed itself strengthened relative to Bloque Córdoba and wished to exploit its better position to revise the division of territory. The absolute numbers suggest that Bloque Córdoba retained an advantage, with 668 ex-combatants remaining in the region compared with Tolová's 331 demobilized fighters. The Fundación Seguridad y Democracia reported, however, that half of Córdoba's fighters were not part of the military structure, but rather formed its network of informants during the war. In addition, Córdoba's weakening stemmed not from the dispersion of its fighters, but from

[168] Ex-combatant, Frente Bananero, interview by author, Caurallo, July 2008.

[169] Interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008. The time horizon of these bargains was short with frequent renegotiations. Enforcement of these bargains did not change significantly with demobilization. However, the success of the bargaining changed significantly, pointing to the salience of information issues.

[170] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006.

[171] Organization of American States (2005).

[172] MEVEC classified intelligence reports. See also Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2006a).

the breakdown of its command structure with the departure of Mancuso; this is not reflected in the number of fighters.

In response to the power shift, and consistent with my theory, the opposing groups made several attempts at renegotiating the peace bargains. For example, according to diverse sources, Bloque Córdoba granted Tolová the right to control the coca crops located on the side of the road leading to the reservoir of Urrá, an area that had formerly been firmly under Córdoba's control.[173] The OAS Peace Mission also received information that owners of small and medium-sized tracts of land in Bloque Córdoba territory were forced to move so that people associated with the Bloque Tolová could take over the land, in an attempt at territorial adjustment between the two groups. However, these modest concessions were not enough, given Tolová's belief that it would win a large share of Córdoba's assets were the two powers to confront. Why then was Bloque Córdoba unwilling to cede sufficient territory to avert a costly war? This puzzling behavior seems to stem from the development of information gaps within Córdoba's structure after demobilization. As noted above, Córdoba's top commander, Mancuso, had ceased exercising influence over the organization. The next tier of leaders (those who were not also absent or killed) thus inherited responsibility, but they believed that the previous balance of power still largely held. Accordingly, they proved unwilling to make the transfers to Tolová necessary to avoid conflict. Facing stagnated bargaining, in 2006, Tolová remilitarized as an organization called Los Traquetos to seek these transfers by force.[174] This, in turn, sparked Córdoba's defensive redeployment, as the Vencedores de San Jorge.[175]

The Traquetos, local to the zone, were able to remilitarize in a powerful way. As heirs of Bloque Tolová, they had at their disposal a large and complex organization with excellent logistics, communication, and command and control. They were well equipped with rifles, radios, trafficking routes, and detailed knowledge of the terrain. The Traquetos also enjoyed familial and other links with the noncombatant population, making denunciation rare. "Given the extreme complexity of the organization, the armed forces confirm[ed] the link between this group and the former structures of the paramilitaries that [had] operated in the zone."[176]

Meanwhile, the Vencedores de San Jorge arose from the Bloque Córdoba's Frente Alto Sinú and Frente San Jorge (those adjacent to Tolová). The relative erosion of the Córdoba battalions following demobilization meant that their remilitarization proved weak.

[173] Sources confirming this include police, army, religious organizations, journalists, and community members.

[174] Colombian armed forces representative, interview by author, Montería and Tierralta, August 2007; international organization personnel, interview by author, Tierralta, August 2007.

[175] *El Tiempo* (2006).

[176] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Monteria, August 2007.

During this period, Tolová's Traquetos invaded "the lands that were [previously] the domain of Salvatore Mancuso" and Bloque Córdoba.[177] During the first six months of 2006, the cases of violence in the region increased by 75 percent compared with the entire prior year (*El Colombiano* 2006a). "The victims were people close to Mancuso, now dedicated to the eradication of illicit crops in this region of the country."[178] As many as 889 people died in the area of Tierralta during these incursions by the Traquetos; a majority of the victims of this "bloodbath" were Córdoba ex-combatants.[179] Accordingly, little is known about the Vencedores because, soon after becoming visible in February 2006, it withdrew and maintained a low profile.[180] Within a year and a half, Córdoba's Vencedores seems to have disappeared; Tolová's Traquetos had won this war. Its members were observed patrolling the right banks of the Sinú River, "a change in the territorial distribution that had historically [been] maintained in the zone."[181]

Longer-term Dynamics: Spillover of Violence from Córdoba into Urabá

In earlier chapters, I mention the longer-term spillover effects of remilitarization. Although some of these dynamics are beyond the scope of my theory, it is worth exploring them as an epilogue to the case studies of Urabá/Córdoba.

The conflict between the Tolová and Córdoba bloques did not remain isolated to this dyad; rather it had significant externalities and affected the other bargains to which the two armies had committed. Tolová's strengthening as a result of this first war upset the distribution of power relative to the other armed faction to which it was contiguous, Elmer Cárdenas.[182] Tolová had a higher probability of winning a war in Urabá than at the moment of disarmament.[183] It had consolidated power, territory, and narcotrafficking assets, whereas Elmer Cárdenas had remained demobilized. Figure 7.1 shows the number of combatants in each organization. I show only Elmer Cárdenas' Urabá battalions because its fighters on the Chocó front, although potentially able to provide support, did not operate in territory that was adjacent to Tolová. I model Tolová as gaining all of Bloque Córdoba's power (here equated with manpower) after defeating it. The evidence suggests that, after winning the conflict against Vencedores de San Jorge, Tolová absorbed most of the Vencedores fighters (in addition to its territory). The number is likely elevated, given the high death toll in the conflict between Tolová's Traquetos and Córdoba's Vencedores.

[177] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2007c, 5).

[178] *El Colombiano* (2006b).

[179] *El Espectador* (2008); Salinas Abdala and Zarama Santacruz (2012).

[180] *Verdad Abierta* (2010b).

[181] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Tierralta, August 2007.

[182] Sister of paramilitary commander Doble Cero, interview by author, Apartadó, 4 July 2008.

[183] Anonymous respondent, interview by author, Apartadó, July 2008.

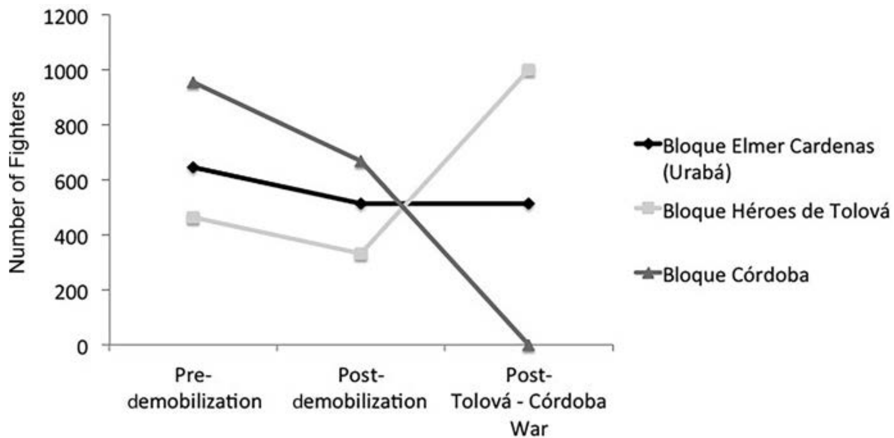


FIGURE 7.1. Distribution of Power, Urabá.

These figures are also only approximations of the balance of power, but they are suggestive, and illustrate why Tolová believed it could move into Elmer Cárdenas' turf in Urabá. That they are approximations is also indicative of the uncertainty likely in Tolová's own estimates of power; it knew itself to be bolstered, but was likely unsure by how much. Although Tolová had excellent surveillance of its own territory, it nonetheless faced difficulties estimating the exact resolve and capabilities of a neighboring armed group that had remained demobilized for some time with its assets thus not manifest. Indeed Tolová seems to have misperceived Elmer Cárdenas' ability and will to remilitarize.[184] It was also in Tolová's interest to strengthen as much as possible; its incentive structure was that of a group at war rather than one at postwar peace. By remilitarizing against Córdoba, it had reneged on its agreement with the state (which required that it remain demilitarized) and thus faced the state's counter-BACRIM units. At this point, it therefore began engaging in offensive expansion.

In mid-2007, under the name los Paisas, Tolová began encroaching on Elmer Cárdenas' territory, seeking to "increase [its] presence in the region."[185] Its fighters arrived first on motorcycles, without camouflage, then began a selective assassination campaign against ex-Cárdenas combatants, and finally they initiated

[184] The timing in the breakdown of the bargain between Tolová and Elmer Cárdenas suggests an explanation centered on information asymmetries rather than one based on commitment problems. Power had already shifted in Tolová's favor and thus future power shifts, although possible given Tolová's efforts at expansion, were not anticipated, especially given the likelihood that the state would increase its countermilitant efforts. A commitment logic would lead us to expect Bloque Elmer Cárdenas to remilitarize first, rather than in reaction to Tolová's offensive.

[185] Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario (2007a, 2007b, 2007c).

more direct offensives.[186] In response, the Cárdenas structure remilitarized as an organization called the Urabeños.[187] "We, the demobilized, are rearming because the Paisas are going to kill us.... We have to unite our demobilized to defend ourselves."[188] Bloque Elmer Cárdenas shifted from an invisible strategy – "the paramilitaries [were] hidden in their activities" – to a visible one.[189] Its military influence went from latent to manifest.[190] Its members who, since April 2006, had been using radios, dressing in civilian clothes, and maintaining a low profile, now adopted a "military profile, patrolling in uniform in groups of twenty, extending a military structure into rural areas, using heavy weaponry, and returning 'to the same as before'."[191] "Until a year ago, the victims were gaining trust and confidence and beginning to talk and become more visible. The armed groups were invisible and not affecting the communities. Then a year ago, the rearmed groups became manifest and now the victims have so much fear. The communities say ... they are the same as before, establishing the law ... engaging in social cleansing and killing and exploiting the communities."[192] In May 2008, the OAS Peace Mission declared a "territorial dispute in Urabá between these two groups with links to the former paramilitaries."[193] (See Map 7.4.)

Local Groups Remilitarize Powerfully

The remilitarized group called Urabeños, constructed on the foundation of the local Elmer Cárdenas organization, was powerful, posing a significant challenge to the Colombian state. According to a lieutenant colonel of the National Police of Urabá, "It is not difficult for 'Don Mario' [the Urabeños' leader] to rearm because of his brother, 'El Alemán,' who gave him all the contacts and the military and organizational structure."[194] A senior government official shared this view: the remilitarized Elmer Cárdenas "is the strongest rearmed group in Colombia," he argued, "because it acquired an already existing organizational structure. It is easy to go from latently to actively armed."[195] The Urabeños

[186] MEVEC personnel, interview by author, Bogotá, January 2008.

[187] The Urabeños were initially called the Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia. Gersen Arias, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2008; Los Paisas also reportedly incorporated members of the Oficina of Envigado.

[188] Remilitarized paramilitary commander, "Don Mario," April 2008. Declaration made in a video circulated by "Don Mario" to defend his taking twenty-five "Paisa" members hostage. OAS Peace Mission report.

[189] Yimmy, Justice and Peace Inter-Ecclesiastical Commission, interview by Human Rights Watch (2010).

[190] Initiative of Colombian Women for Peace representative, interview by Author, Apartadó, June 2008.

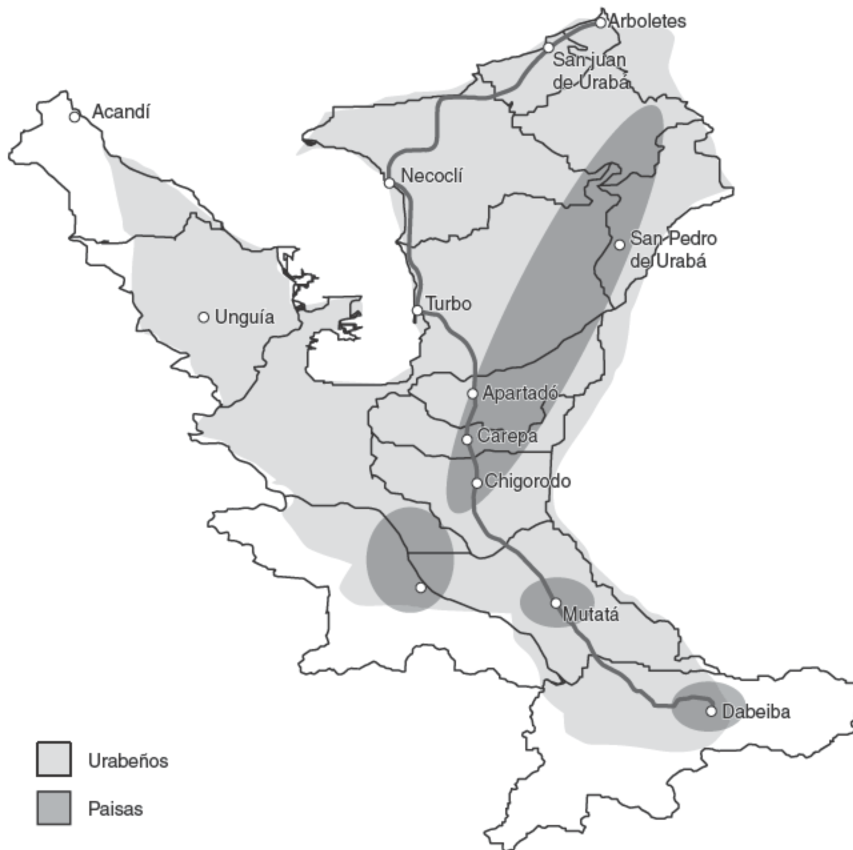
[191] International organization personnel, interview by author, Bogotá, April 2008.

[192] Initiative of Colombian Women for Peace representative, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[193] Peace monitors, OAS Peace Mission, interview by author, Bogotá, May 2008.

[194] Colombian National Police representative, interview by author, Carepa, Urabá, July 2008.

[195] Senior Colombian official, interview by author, Bogotá, January 2008.



MAP 7.4. Remilitarized Groups in Urabá: Zones of Operation.
Source: Data derived from Colombian Army, 17th Brigada.

exploited this social capital to return to militarized illegality.[196] Specifically, it drew roughly two-thirds of the Elmer Cárdenas structure back into arms while leaving the other third as a "front organization" staffed with "civilians" who could serve specific support functions.[197] The vast majority of the Urabeños were ex-paramilitaries; few were new recruits.[198] A conflict analyst explained that it was not like in other places "where the rearming is crime, crime mixing

[196] Colombian Army Intelligence, 17th Brigade, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008; ex-paramilitary commander's family member, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[197] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Bogotá, May 2008.

[198] Colombian National Police representative, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008; Colombian National Police representative, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008. Cárdenas ex-combatants in the municipalities of San Pedro, Riosucio, Chigorodó, and Carepa all joined the remilitarized units.

with individual ex-combatants. In Urabá, it is *only* collectively demobilized ex-combatants."[199]

The remilitarization relied on the intact networks of the former local paramilitaries.[200] The director of Construpaz explained that, "Many who have joined the [renewed] armed groups do so because of their links of friendship, because of the social webs."[201] An ex-combatant offered an alternative mechanism: "If you are friends with someone [who demobilized] and he rejoins an armed group and you are talking with him, you are assumed to be an informant of the group and so you are killed or threatened by the enemy. So basically, you can't even talk with your friends unless you rejoin."[202] A perverse form of social pressure, driven by the enemy's collective targeting based on guilt by association, seems to have become operative.

The pressures also came vertically down the ex-paramilitary hierarchy. The midlevel commanders called mostly on the members of their former battalions to rejoin. They retained the normative authority, respect, and influence to exercise pressure on the demobilized soldiers formerly under their command. They also had the credible sanctions necessary to draw their fighters back to violent and illegal activity. They knew where their former subordinates resided, where they worked, where they hung out, and where their families were, which made punishment feasible and easy. There is evidence that some ex-combatants received death threats for not joining the remilitarized groups.[203] Others reported being forcibly recruited: given the choice to join, die, or leave the area. Many joined. Some displaced, a fact confirmed by multiple petitions from ex-combatants to transfer their "humanitarian reintegration aid" to other municipalities.[204] The wave of selective homicides of demobilized paramilitaries offers further evidence that rearmed groups' threats were not bluffs. The ex-combatants' membership in Construpaz, meanwhile, had kept them "strongly connected and in constant communication" with their superiors.[205] Construpaz kept a detailed database on its ex-fighters.[206] Its meetings

[199] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Bogotá, May 2008. Emphasis added.

[200] Army intelligence unit representative, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008. See *El Tiempo* (2009a).

[201] Construpaz director, interview by author, Necoclí, 3 July 2008. The intact structure further enabled recruiters to offer economic incentives to join the ranks of the redeployed armies. It is estimated that midranking commanders offered ex-paramilitaries 1,000,000 to 1,200,000 Colombian pesos ($500–600) in exchange for their renewal of military service (ex-combatants, interviews by author, Urabá, June 2008). These figures were confirmed by conflict analysts (interviews by author, Bogotá, August 2008).

[202] Ex-combatant, interview by author, Caurallo, July 2008.

[203] Alta Consejería para la Reintegración, Security Division representative, interview by author, Bogotá, September 2008.

[204] ACR and IOM representatives, interviews by author, Bogotá, January 2008.

[205] Conflict analyst, interview by author, Necoclí, June 2008.

[206] Ex-combatants, interviews by author, Necoclí, June 2008.

thus provided the Urabeños natural venues at which to recruit former combatants. According to community member testimonies, Contrupaz' productive projects served as "guises" for "pseudo-clandestine gatherings of former members of the Bloque Elmer Cárdenas."[207] At a Construpaz assembly in Unguía, "it became clear that there were serious doubts about the project.... However, it serve[d] as a recruiting ground for the demobilized to reenter the armed struggle with Don Mario's armed unit."[208]

Not only did the Urabeños acquire an ample and ready pool of roughly 1,000 recruits to lure back into arms, it also acquired intact leadership. It is unsurprising then that, immediately on remilitarizing, it was observed to have a very developed organizational structure with midranking commanders in all of the region's principal municipalities. The Reintegration Program's Urabá director explained, "Bloque Elmer Cárdenas' command structure [was] intact so the leaders [could] be called to rearm at any time, especially in the north of Urabá and in Chocó," Cárdenas' historic stronghold.[209] The Colombian intelligence branch classified the remilitarized Urabeños as having a unified command, intact hierarchy, and the active participation of commanders, midranking commanders, and rank and file. An international aid worker revealed, "El Alemán is directly supporting his brother's [Don Mario's] recruitment of Cárdenas' midlevel leaders."[210] When the army's intelligence unit mapped the Urabeño organization, it found the top two leaders to be El Alemán's brother and his military commander, Jhon Freddy Manco Torres ("el Indio" or "Don Alberto"). It traced the second and third tier of leaders and similarly found them all to be former Cárdenas officers: "Cebecilla," "Yiyo" (head of finances), Juan de Dios Úsuga Davia, "Giovanni" (commander of Turbo), "Nicolás" (leader of Arboletes and Necoclí), "Guerrillo," "El Profe," and "Flaca."[211] These were Cárdenas' cadre, what Philip Selznick calls "the permanent staff of leaders who train recruits and *around whom new units may be built* ... the corps of professional soldiers preserved in peacetime as a basis for ... [remilitarization]."[212]

In addition to its human capital, the Urabeños also exploited the prior structures' financial assets. It appropriated Cárdenas' criminal economies: drug and

[207] Civilian women and men, interviews by author, Apartadó, July 2008.

[208] Community member, interview by author, Unguía, February 2007.

[209] ACR regional director, interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008. It should be noted that the battles between Urabeños and Paisas also occurred in Valencia, Córdoba, where Tolová had formerly enjoyed absolute domination. Eventually, the remilitarized Urabeños claimed these places as their own (Army Intelligence, 17th Brigada, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008).

[210] Interview by author, Apartadó, June 2008.

[211] Army Intelligence, 17th Brigada, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008. See *El Tiempo* (2009a). It proves difficult to verify some of the commanders' identities because they demobilized under different names and different ranks within their organizations. This is the case, for example, with "Mario Alfa 1," "Mario Alfa 5," "Picua," and "El Calvo."

[212] Selznick (1952, 18). Emphasis added.

arms trafficking routes, a widespread extortion racket, and an apparatus to illegally exploit natural resources (*Verdad Abierta* 2012a).

By the end of 2008, the Urabeños reclaimed hegemony over Urabá.[213] "In recent months, the [Paisas] have been *silent*; they have not made a peep," stated the head of the indigenous organization of Chocó, Camizba.[214] The army confirmed that the Paisas were largely destroyed in Urabá.[215] With victory, however, came negative externalities for other dyads in the cooperative architecture of the peace accords as the Urabeño army, made up of 3,000 soldiers, began deploying expeditionary forces east and south into the interior of Colombia. It amassed a force "capable of paralyzing entire populations" (*Verdad Abierta* 2012a). It displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians (*Verdad Abierta* 2012a). In a 2012 "armed strike," the Urabeños completely stopped all activity in sixteen municipalities across six departments, turning them into "ghost towns." In Urabá, virtually all commerce shut down, transportation companies suspended half their service, banks closed, banana plantations were emptied of workers, students missed school, and everyone stayed inside their homes. "Their power was so large that, when they saw fit, they could stop and subjugate everyone in their zone of influence simply by saying, 'here nobody moves'." Colombian military Commander General José David Guzmán described the power of the Urabeños as "soaring" (*Verdad Abierta* 2012b). As of mid-2015, the Urabeños remained among the most powerful illegal non-state armies in Colombia.

STRONG REMILITARIZATION IN OTHER REGIONS OF COLOMBIA

Similar dynamics unfolded in Meta, on the eastern plains of Colombia, where the local paramilitary faction, Héroes del Llano y Guaviare, remilitarized as the Ejército Revolucionario Popular Antiterrorista Colombiano (ERPAC). Along with the Urabeños, this organization posed one of largest threats to Colombian security in the aftermath of the peace accords. During the war, Héroes del Llano y Guaviare had formed an alliance with the non-local Bloque Centauros, 80 percent of whose members originated from the coast, "from the [top] commanders to [those of] the counterguerrillas, companies, and squads" to the foot soldiers.[216] After demobilization, Centauros eroded significantly, its members dispersing home, leaving only a small unit in the eastern plains. This generated a shift in capabilities exploited by the local Héroes del Llano y Guaviare under its former commander, known as "Cuchillo." Cuchillo remilitarized to take advantage of the power vacuum in the midst of failed renegotiations to reallocate the territory.

[213] Army 17th Brigade member, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008.
[214] Indigenous Association, Camizba, president, Riosucio, interview by author, July 2008.
[215] Army 17th Brigade member, interview by author, Carepa, July 2008.
[216] Commander Jorge Pirata, interview by author, La Picota Prison, Bogotá, September 2008.

These cases from Colombia's northwestern frontier to its southeastern border provide support for several implications of the theoretical framework advanced in this book. Organizations made up of recruits local to their zones of military deployment tended to survive the transition from war to peace intact, although aberrant cases, such as Bloque Córdoba, do exist. If the peace bargains were destabilized and recalibration of their terms failed, remilitarization became likely. This redeployment of local groups tended to occur on an intense scale and to pose a major threat to public order and internal security.

CONCLUSION

For many places in Colombia, the peace accords with the paramilitaries brought only a brief interlude of peace; violence returned quickly, perpetrated by the same protagonists. Organizations of ex-combatants remilitarized to exploit power shifts and to protect their fiefdoms against encroachment. The state sought to engage in state-building and to extend its presence in regions that had long been controlled by illicit armed groups. Drug cartels, criminal gangs, and guerrilla factions also perpetrated violence, taking advantage of newly ungoverned territories. Where remilitarization occurred, populations experienced more of the same coercion and horrors as before.

This chapter demonstrates the pathways to weak and strong remilitarization in zones where power shifted after demobilization and the organizations' mechanisms of monitoring, control, and cooperation suffered during the transition. Although all remilitarized actors struggled to gain access to regional riches, the historical accounts and evidence do not substantiate the notion that resources drove the return to violence. In the Urabá/Córdoba cases, for example, despite constant incentives to continue extracting resources, the Bloque Elmer Cárdenas remained demilitarized until August 2007 and only remilitarized thereafter. Additionally, some resource-rich groups such as Bloque Arauca disintegrated in the aftermath of the peace accords and thus became unable to effectively remilitarize to carry out further "greedy" activities.

The empirical evidence also underscores the importance of acknowledging and incorporating into our understanding of post-conflict dynamics the non-unitary nature of non-state actors and particularly the critical interactions among these actors. In many cases, motivated by incentives independent of their peace bargains with the state (namely the shifts in power between and among the illegal non-state actors), these actors reneged on their commitments to the state and returned to violence. During and after violent intrastate strife, the state's institutions are often weakened or crippled, with its territory and power fragmented, resting with regional former armed actors. The state remains absent in many of these localities, reducing its relevance as a player in the regional power struggle. Therefore, at times, the breakdown in peace occurs for reasons entirely independent of the state's policies. We would miss much of the dynamics of organized violence in Colombia were we to treat the

paramilitaries as a single group and to look only at its interactions with the state. The case studies further indicate the importance of tracing the postwar trajectories of the different levels of the command structure: the top commanders, midlevel officers, and also the foot soldiers.

Finally, Colombia constitutes a hard case for demilitarization. Given an ongoing conflict with the left-wing guerrilla armies, rampant criminality, and a robust narcotrafficking industry, we might expect to observe no organizations demilitarizing and no regions experiencing a reprieve from the violence that has plagued the country for most of its history. However, although we may not observe bulletproof peace, we do find suggestions of a trajectory toward demilitarization. From these suggestions, we may extract insights into when we might expect peace to end violence.

8

Beyond Colombia: Transitions from War to Peace in Comparative Perspective

This book illuminates the postwar trajectories of armed groups and their decisions to remilitarize or demilitarize in the aftermath of civil wars by focusing on how the armed groups mobilized, deployed, and decommissioned. Thus far, the main body of empirical evidence has drawn on the contemporary Colombian conflict, a case that controls for many factors while affording significant variation in outcomes. The book's theory is simple and should travel beyond the current time period and beyond Colombia's borders.

Nonetheless, evaluating the generalizability of the proposed remilitarization argument proves challenging for several reasons. Organization-level data on recruitment and postwar trajectories in other contexts does not exist. Because scholars tend to focus on *why* combatants participate, few studies, and no quantitative datasets, to my knowledge, have sought to systematically measure *where* they join. Data on armed organizations, such as the Non-State Actor Data for example, do not capture the geography of recruitment patterns or shifts in the balance of postwar power (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2012). Nor do existing datasets measure remilitarization or demilitarization; rather war recurrence is coded at the level of the country or war, clouding the substantial subnational variation that exists in many contexts.[1] Thus, although we can infer that war "recurred" in Burundi, Liberia, Myanmar, Sudan, and the Congo, we cannot know if all factions remilitarized or not.

The thresholds for violence and the sources for battle-related deaths pose additional challenges to studying this book's outcome of remilitarization using existing cross-national data. Wars are coded as "recurring" only if they cross one of three commonly used death-toll thresholds.[2] However, most

[1] See, for example, Hartzell (1999); Walter (2004).

[2] The Correlates of War Project sets the threshold of war at 1,000 combat-related deaths per year; Fearon and Laitin (2003) at 1,000 deaths over the course of the conflict; and the Uppsala/International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) at twenty-five battle deaths annually.

evaluations using these thresholds are based on English-language sources. Using Spanish-language newspapers, I found in the Colombian civil war that the conflict had actually recurred twenty years before it was coded as such in many of the cross-national datasets. By the time it was coded "1" for presence of war in 1984 in these datasets, the violence in Colombia had already resulted in 8,733 deaths and 3,177 injuries, due to 2,260 instances of combat, 1,103 assassinations, 778 ambushes, 405 terrorist bombings, 388 captures of towns, 173 massacres, and 121 attacks on infrastructure and pipelines, among other violent events. Thus, there may be other cases of large-scale remilitarization worldwide that existing datasets do not pick up. Moreover, we should care about post-conflict violence even if it does not reach the level of civil war recurrence.

An additional omission from the datasets on conflict recurrence is that they examine only rebel groups; they ignore militias, self-defense forces, paramilitaries, pro-state groups, and anti-rebel groups. Only recently has systematic data collection begun on these other critical armed actors, but the variables are limited and do not cover postwar outcomes (Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe 2013). Additionally, this information is not easily integrated with the other datasets on civil wars. Accordingly, we may now have a list of these "non-rebel" actors, but we do not know how they fit into the war onsets, war recurrences, and peace processes on which we have cross-national information. Existing datasets are therefore not well suited to testing the book's core theoretical framework.

To explore whether the applications of the model might reach to civil wars beyond Colombia's borders, ideally I would construct an organization-level dataset for all other civil conflicts, tracing the rebel and militia groups' recruitment and deployment patterns, their networks and power relations, and their demilitarization and remilitarization after signing peace agreements. However, it proves practically impossible to generate data of the fine-grained nature equivalent to that created for the contemporary Colombian case over the course of eight years of fieldwork. To assess whether the causal story operates elsewhere would require rigorous empirics on different levels of analysis; survey and network data; in-depth interviews to trace information asymmetries and perceptions; and detailed knowledge of the postwar trajectories of the belligerent actors. Data of this scope are not readily available for other cases.

Several possibilities do exist, however, for exploring the generalizability of the conditions present in the Colombian paramilitary "laboratory" and the applicability of certain of the theory's mechanisms. First, if we take a leap back a half-century into history, we find another case of variation in armed organizations' postwar trajectories within Colombia itself. In the aftermath of *La Violencia*, Colombia's earlier civil war from 1948 to 1958 between the Conservative and Liberal Parties, remilitarized violence occurred in 45 percent of the municipalities affected by prior conflict (Daly 2014). To explore this era's guerrilla groups and their divergent outcomes, I constructed an original dataset of violent events for the postwar period from 1964 to 1984, reviewed

guerrilla autobiographies and social histories, and conducted in-depth interviews with protagonists of and experts on La Violencia (Daly 2012). Second, I qualitatively probe the plausibility of the theory and scope conditions in other contexts around the world by relying on secondary sources and interviews with country experts. Third, I take advantage of existing ex-combatant survey data from other countries. I describe each of these analytical exercises in the sections that follow.

Given the complexity of every case of civil war and the confines of space, parsimony, and the less in-depth nature of the expertise and information on which these inferences are based, the intent of this chapter is modest and circumscribed. I seek to show that Colombia is not unique, and that the conditions present in Colombia exist elsewhere; to demonstrate that the recruitment and power variables identified in my account matter in other places and vary across cases; and to ask of these cases the same questions I pose to the contemporary Colombian case. Demonstrating, in a preliminary fashion, that the empirical realities of postwar cohesion correlate with the geography of recruitment in other contexts (Step 1 of the book's argument) proves easier than illustrating that strategic interactions between actors of varying recruit bases drive remilitarization (Step 2). This second step in the recruitment geography theory requires more fine-grained information about power shifts, information asymmetries, bargaining, and remilitarized violence, which proves challenging to access without delving deeply into the cases and into the field. Therefore, the evidence that follows focuses disproportionately on Step 1 of this book's theory.

I find that each case exhibits elements that fit with the predictions of my model, and also offers important opportunities to refine my theory. In this way, the chapter extends the discussion begun in Chapter 2 of nuances to my recruitment geography framework by exploring, for example, the implications of a state-caused shift in power, intensive combatant wartime socialization, and varying postwar migration patterns.

LA VIOLENCIA IN COLOMBIA

La Violencia – Colombia's mid-twentieth-century civil war – wreaked havoc across 64 percent of the country's territory and left 250,000 dead (Guzmán, Borda, and Umaña 1962, 287–93). In 1958, the ten-year war came to a close. The two parties to the conflict – the Liberals and Conservatives – agreed to share power equally and engage in peaceful electoral competition in a consociational system called the National Front (Chernick 2008).[3] This arrangement ended the internecine bloodshed between the partisan forces. However, an unintended result of the power-sharing pact was that it reconfigured the state and altered its power and incentive structure vis-à-vis the regional demobilized

[3] On consociationalism, see Lijphart (1977).

guerrilla groups.[4] As Liberals and Conservatives joined forces, their new combined state increased in power relative not only to the non-local guerrilla groups, but also to the local ones. The state therefore undertook more confrontational state-building strategies in the guerrillas' regions, breaking its informal bargains with these demobilized actors. Simultaneously, shifts in the distribution of capabilities occurred between the former guerrilla armies. These two forces sparked remilitarization.

Where the La Violencia-era guerrillas were constructed on local recruit bases, they remilitarized in a cohesive, organized fashion as left-wing revolutionaries, but where they were instead based on non-local recruitment foundations, they remilitarized weakly and quickly dissolved. I elaborate on these dynamics, emphasizing the interesting nuance provided by the fact that, in this case, it is the state's power shift that was the most destabilizing force to the architecture of the peace deal.

Balance of Power Maintains and Pacts Hold: Rebels Take Path to Demilitarization

During the initial phase of the transition, before the effective coalescing of the Liberal and Conservative factions into a unified state, the informal arrangements between the partisan elite and their former guerrilla armies held. The national political party elite accommodated the guerrilla leaders' prerogatives and influence in their regions. These regional leaders demanded that "the army withdraw from their areas and that it recognize a shared form of rule in the area[s] they controlled, 'within a peculiar concept of *bandolero* sovereignty'."[5] The elite acquiesced to these demands. Where army detachments did operate, they "were known to have established a modus vivendi of noninterference" (Maullin 1968, 23). In fact, these fiefdoms proved "unresponsive to government actions to improve social and economic conditions in their areas *unless* it was coordinated through former guerrilla leaders."[6] Meanwhile, the party elite preferred "to let [the former mid-tier officers] rule over [their] fairly isolated domain [rather] than to pursue [them] actively in [their] own territor[ies]" (Maullin 1968, 7). Thus, during this period, a type of collusion emerged whereby the former guerrilla leaders maintained their "sovereign" republics in exchange for not engaging in violent actions against the unity government.

This truce arrangement led to a sharp decline in violence (Hobsbawm 1963). As a result of these tacit agreements, the former battalions remained

[4] In another work, I argue that the state broke its arrangements with the regional guerrilla armies as a result of power-sharing's mechanisms of commitment, socialization, and in-bidding (Daly 2014). Here, I focus on the impact of the power-sharing arrangement on the absolute and relative power of the state.

[5] Comando del Ejército, case 38, cited in Sánchez and Meertens (2001, 81).

[6] Rempe (2002, 138). Emphasis added.

latently organized groups, but were not militarized. They were "largely inactive … relatively passive. [They] caused little interference in government affairs" (Rempe 2002, 149). The weapons "were buried" and "rehabilitation involved the return of the former guerrillas to their [agrarian] activities" (Zuluaga 1993, 109). They called themselves "ex-combatants" and stated that, "We are not interested in armed struggles" (Sánchez 1985, 271–3). The former local guerrilla groups proved able to preserve their collective structures and capacity for collective action as regional strongmen and political entities.[7] Because the bargain with the state held and the guerrilla leaders' "law was strictly abided," the regions under their control became "completely pacified" (Sánchez and Meertens 2001, 56).

Colombia thus reached an equilibrium. The elite and new state gained order without having to stretch their inadequate institutions, seriously weakened by a decade of brutal war, across Colombia's vast territory. For their part, the former guerrilla field officers "seemed content to run things in [their] section[s]" of the country (Maullin 1968, 7). As Hobsbawm (1963, 254) wrote, "their political horizon is completely local; if left alone they concentrate on their own region, and hardly even challenge the higher levels of administration and economic activity. Viotá, for instance, lives in a state of informal coexistence with the central Government." Accordingly, this period has become known as an intermission of peace, as the guerrillas began down the path to demilitarization.[8] Although a different Colombian conflict, different state, different actors, and different era, we see a dynamic taking place reminiscent of the later Medellín case, where the state respected Bloque Cacique Nutibara's sovereignty and allowed it to govern its territory in exchange for a reduction in violence, leading to Cacique's demilitarization into a sociopolitical entity.

Power Shifts and Bargains Break Down: Rebels Remilitarize

However, in contrast to the contemporary Colombian state, the National Front power-sharing arrangement, once it took hold, dramatically altered the configuration of power in mid-twentieth-century Colombia, bringing together the two major power-holders into a single government.[9] The top party leadership became socialized into cooperation that "transcend[ed] the segmental or subcultural cleavages at the mass level" (Lijphart 1977, 16).[10] Cárdenas García (1958, 80) writes, "It is an obvious fact that Liberals and Conservatives … have ended up growing closer together until their ideological boundaries are

[7] Álvaro Villarraga Sarmiento, interviews by author, Santa Marta, May 2009 and Bogotá, May 2009.

[8] Low-level criminal violence continued for several years, but the political guerrillas became, according to the U.S. and Colombian governments, "latent" zones, amenable to the elite's accommodation strategies. See Rempe (2002), which draws on U.S. military archives.

[9] Alfredo Molano, interview by author, Palo Alto, CA, November 2002.

[10] See also Schmidt (1974, 109).

now meshed." Once the gap between the former adversaries narrowed, the two parties began to act as a unified state with common statehood goals, such as a desire for a Weberian monopoly over the means of violence, and an aspiration to extend state presence from border to border. Regions kept autonomous under guerrilla control came to violate this preference for singular national sovereignty; the new state enjoyed enhanced power relative to the regional guerrilla groups and therefore sought to renegotiate its bargains with them.

According to the recruitment geography theory, the state and local groups should have renegotiated their bargains successfully. However, as I mention briefly in Chapter 2, the state faces considerations that go beyond the distribution of power. Specifically, in this case, the ruling Liberal Party[11] became vulnerable to a process of "in-bidding." The Liberal leadership began to see its former adversary's elite as the key to maintaining power. The Conservative elite criticized the Liberal leaders' accommodation of their former guerrilla subordinates and demanded that they break their bargains with these regional "warlords." In particular, Conservative opposition politicians began to oppose the rehabilitation (DDR) programs, claiming they were a payoff to former bandits (Dix 1987, 377).[12] For example, when ex-guerrilla officer Pedro Brincos received a "rehabilitation" loan, the Conservative newspaper *El Colombiano* made it a nationwide scandal, denouncing the loan as "the macabre symbol of a tolerance mentality." *La Patria* argued that the monies of the Rehabilitation Office – created for La Violencia's victims and to help former combatants return to peaceful activities – were really "a crime fund."[13] Another report described the Liberal Lleras administration's efforts as "strongly identified, rightly or wrongly, with an appeasement policy toward the bandits" (Rempe 2002, 43). "Voices that opposed a 'social' strategy … began to speak more openly, both in and out of Congress. Some repeatedly called for a purely military response" (Sánchez and Meertens 2001, 174). For example, in famous impassioned speeches in 1961, Conservative Senator Álvaro Gómez Hurtado denounced the independent republics that remained outside the state's control and called for state-building through "blood and fire" (Pizarro Leongómez 2004a). These Conservative preferences gained sway over the Liberal Party elite at the expense of the views of their partisan regional guerrilla officers and rank and file. Liberals were now in bed with Conservatives, and the Conservatives demanded an exclusive relationship.

Accordingly, we observe little attempt at renegotiation between the state and the local groups. Instead, the unity government changed course and began to engage in military actions against the ex-guerrilla fiefdoms aimed at undermining the guerrillas' local power and autonomy: this was state-building

[11] Under the National Front, the parties alternated the presidency, beginning with the Liberals, 1958–62.

[12] DDR: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration.

[13] *La Patria*, 23–24 June 1959.

through force rather than through alliances of noninterference. For example, in "Operation Sovereignty" of May 1964, the army sent thousands of troops in a large-scale "military offensive" into the "independent republics" of Marquetalia, Guayabero, Río Chiquito, and El Pato (Casas 1987). In other attempts, the army, "now under the command of the [power-sharing] state executive" (Barbosa Estepa 1992, 163) "aimed to liquidate the amnestied liberal guerrilla leaders" (Pizarro Leongómez 1991, 92).[14]

Although the power shift created by the state's power-sharing pact proved dominant in this case, regional changes in the distribution of capabilities between "pure" liberals (*liberales limpios*) and communists also occurred.[15] These changes destabilized the former alliances and pacts between these two sets of actors. For example, in the eastern plains, conflict erupted between the local forces of Guadalupe Salcedo and the non-local forces of the Fonseca brothers, originally from the *cordillera* (mountains). The department of Tolima also witnessed a "territorial re-partition." The "pure liberal" guerrillas sought to "maintain [their] political dominance in their former areas of operation." They occupied Planadas, Herrera, Ataco, and Rioblanco, preventing the communist groups' entrance into these territories. At the same time, they also began encroaching on localities that non-local communists had held during the conflict (Alape 2004).

Variation in Remilitarization Strength

Remilitarized violence, however, did not emerge in all municipalities that had been plagued by La Violencia; rather, it erupted in only 45 percent of them (Daly 2014). The violence did not recur everywhere because the guerrillas did not all have access to durable organizational capacity; rather, there existed variation in the sustainability and rates of erosion of demobilized "rebel capital." In locations where the armed units of the previous war built on a local social infrastructure, they tended to remobilize in a strong manner. In localities where the factions were instead non-local to the regions in which they operated, they tended to redeploy in only a weak fashion and disappear over time.

Non-local Guerrilla Units Remilitarize Weakly

During La Violencia, some armed units deployed their fighters away from their hometowns, whereas others focused their recruitment efforts in concentrated localities and stationed their fighters "in the same area where they recruited."[16] Variation in postwar organizational capacity resulted, in part, from the paired strategies of forming roving groups of guerrillas (such as the "comisiones

[14] The government also shut down the rehabilitation and civic action programs.

[15] "Liberales limpios" were "clean" Liberal Party members who were orthodox liberals, not "contaminated" by communism.

[16] Fernán González, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006.

rodadas" or "rolling forces"), and mobilizing local armed bands that protected villages and farms.[17] For example, in 1950, the communist guerrillas "abandoned their historical areas of influence" to move to the south of Tolima on a "Columna de Marcha"; they then deployed "rolling forces" to far-off areas of Huila and eastern Tolima (Pizarro Leongómez 1991, 102). Additionally, massive displacement caused some units to operate far from their towns of origin: some guerrilla forces were formed by individuals as they fled partisan violence and engaged in "armed colonization of new territories" (Pizarro Leongómez 1991, 113, 133). For instance, "leaders from the cordillera, fleeing persecution in their regions of origin, arrived in the eastern plains and managed to ascend to positions of power there" (Barbosa Estepa 1992, 255). Landowners also sponsored the transfer of certain armed units. For example, Liberal politicians and coffee growers in Quindío – especially in Calarcá – collected funds to bring guerrilla commander Chispas and his fighters from Southern Tolima. Similarly, officer Efraín González, a native Santandereño, operated in far-off Quindío. Some armed groups operated away from their towns of origin to win over areas under the partisan enemy. For instance, so as to ensure their members' allegiance, militias deployed to the eastern plains "relied heavily on Conservative party, Indian-mestizo recruits from Andean departments such as Boyacá and Nariño, a people quite different in cultural as well as political character from the mestizo-white [Liberal] people of the plains" (Maullin 1968, 10).

These armed groups that operated away from their home regions were, although militarily strong, constructed on "more improvised" recruit bases and lacked combatant networks (Sánchez and Meertens 2001, 67). They also tended toward greater dispersion of their fighters post-amnesty as "two weeks after the surrender they returned to their places of origin" (Sánchez and Meertens 2001, 50). Thus, when these factions later attempted remobilization, their remnant units were subject to degradation and could remilitarize only in a weak fashion. Non-local to their communities, they were also easily targeted and captured (Policía Nacional de Colombia 1962, 125). This was the trajectory of the guerrilla armies of Valle del Cauca, Caldas, and northern Tolima which, when they sought to redeploy collectively, instead splintered into 90 to 150 bandit gangs totaling more than 2,000 members. The gangs, such as those of fighters known as El Mosco, Zarpazo, La Gata, Chispas, Capitán Venganza, Desquite, and Sangrenegra, eventually disappeared (Sánchez and Meertens 2001). Narratives recounting their trajectories sound not dissimilar to stories from Norte de Santander of the Águilas Negras after the paramilitaries' decommissioning in 2004. In this 1950s case, too, we observe non-local warring factions remilitarizing in only a weak fashion.

[17] Maullin (1973); Vargas Velásquez (1989).

Local Guerrilla Units Remilitarize Powerfully

In contrast, the collective capacity of locally recruited groups tended to endure. In this category fall groups such as those of Eliseo Velásquez and Guadalupe Salcedoin in the eastern plains, Juan de la Cruz Varela in Sumapaz, and Captain Juan de J. Franco in western and southeastern Antioquia. These groups built on strong community and familial ties and decades of organization, having co-opted communist enclaves and labor mobilization (Pécaut 1987). For example, the Tequendama–Sumapaz–southern Tolima guerrilla corridor of the 1950s was a bastion of agrarian unions and peasant leagues in the 1920s and 1930s. Similarly, San Vicente de Chucurí in Santander had a long history of mobilization dating back to protests in the 1920s.[18] In addition to networks derived from prior organization, it was also very common to find strong family and community ties among the ranks of these local armed groups. The guerrillas in southern Tolima, for example, began under the command of Gerardo Loaiza, his five sons, his relative Pedro Antonio Marín, and his father. The nuclei of other battalions consisted of the members of single families: the Borja brothers and Bautista brothers in the eastern plains and the Calvo Ocampo family in Córdoba. In one of my interviews, an ex-guerrilla described how there were three to four generations of rebels in these zones. He said, "When you ask combatants why they joined … they respond: 'My five brothers, my uncles, my father, my grandmother, my great-grandfather … were all in the guerrillas. It is a family tradition'."[19]

Because these fighters deployed locally, they tended to remain in their communities after disarming. This geographic clustering of their networks preserved their organizational capacity. Additionally, it provided the local units social ties with and information from the civilian population.[20] These ex-guerrillas were admired "as the defender[s] of local political and social interests.… Relatives and trusted friends scattered throughout [their] territor[ies] [thus] acted as [their] eyes and ears and provided refuge when needed" (Maullin 1968, 10). These collective structures endured as local power-brokers and political entities, similar to the paramilitaries' sociopolitical associations, though with a far less criminal flavor.[21] Julio Guerra, for example, formed the Juntas Patrióticas (Patriotic Boards),[22] "designed to be the government of the region" (Zuluaga 1993, 111). These boards intervened in conflicts between farmers, resolved problems of boundaries, and encouraged the organization of the population.

[18] Fernán González, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006. This raises an alternative ideological explanation positing that only communist enclaves remilitarized. Daly (2014) offers some evidence against such a "political exclusion" account of the return to violence.

[19] Ex-EPL guerrilla, interview by author, Cúcuta, April 2008.

[20] Roldán (2002); Andrés Peñate, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

[21] Álvaro Villarraga Sarmiento, interviews by author, Santa Marta, May 2009 and Bogotá, May 2009.

[22] Álvaro Villarraga Sarmiento, interviews by author, Santa Marta, May 2009 and Bogotá, May 2009.

Meanwhile, in the areas of Ariari, Viotá, Tequendama, Sumapaz, El Pato, Guayabero, Río Chiquito, 26 de Septiembre, and Marquetalia, the guerrillas formalized their "independent republics."[23] These essentially constituted proto-states in which approximately 6,500 former guerrillas exercised influence over the social, political, and economic lives of the civilian population. The capital in Bogotá enjoyed little if any control.[24] Similarly, in the eastern plains, ex-commander Dumar Aljure set up a shadow governmental structure. In these communities, "the guerrillas were everything. They were the law, they imposed the rules regulating daily life, they resolved everything in these municipalities from marital problems to the cantina's operating hours … everything. They were the authority and were just accepted."[25]

As a result of this preserved organizational capital, locally recruited units could redeploy in a more powerful fashion when faced with military aggression by the unified state and when presented with opportunities generated by regional power shifts between guerrilla forces.[26] The local army led by mid-level commander Rafael Rangel throughout La Violencia remobilized in the 1960s as the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) in Magdalena Medio.[27] "The majority of [its] combatants were familiarly linked with the liberal guerrilla protagonists [of the 1950s] and even with the Bolshevik movements of 1929,"[28] building on "the combative experience and tradition" of the local communities (Alonso Espinal 1997, 1–2).

Similarly, Julio Guerra, a well-known politician in the south of Córdoba, raised a self-defense army in 1948 that was active until 1958. His combatants then "silenced their rifles and abandoned all military activity" and Guerra became Chief of the Juan José Police (Calvo 1985, 44). In 1967, when the power-sharing government changed course because of the mechanisms described above, Guerra declared to his ex-rank and file: "I inform you that we are living in a dark time … in which the government is pursuing all of us. Therefore I call upon the old and new fighters to take up arms and to prepare ourselves to deal with the offensive being prepared" (Zuluaga 1993, 110). He reactivated his local self-defense organization to form the rebel group called the Ejército Popular de Liberación, EPL,[29] building on the "tradition of struggle and the remains of the liberal guerrilla structures" (Calvo 1985, 44). He,

[23] Andrés Peñate, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006.

[24] Rempe (2002); Francisco Gutiérrez, interview by author, Bogotá, July 2006; See also Alape (2004).

[25] Defensoría del Pueblo representative, interview by author, May 2008.

[26] The battalions did not preemptively remobilize, because they did not anticipate that the elite would renege and they did not wish to lose their judicial and political benefits.

[27] Álvaro Villarraga Sarmiento, interviews by author, Santa Marta, May 2009 and Bogotá, May 2009.

[28] Vargas Velásquez (1989, 55).

[29] Álvaro Villarraga Sarmiento, interviews by author, Santa Marta, May 2009, and Bogotá, May 2009. This was confirmed by Hernando Corral, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006.

along with other prominent midlevel leaders such as Pedro Vásquez Rendón and Libardo Mora Toro, retained the dense social ties, leadership, and respect that allowed them to exercise pressure on their "reservoir" of demobilized soldiers who clustered in certain localities of Córdoba.[30]

Regions with intact ex-guerrilla organizations also contributed to the birth of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC.[31] After the state launched "Operation Sovereignty" to establish singular rather than shared sovereignty over the "independent republics," ex-guerrilla officer Manuel Marulanda remobilized his latent structure into the rebel organization that became known as the FARC.

It was thus the strongly networked guerrilla groups from La Violencia and their powerful remilitarization that ushered in a new era of rebellion and civil war. They "scrap[ped] [their] self-defense doctrine[s] and create[d] a more aggressive insurgency that would fight to install a Marxist regime."[32] Meanwhile, the non-local groups generated only weak remilitarization, characterized as little more than sporadic banditry.[33]

SCOPE CONDITIONS: APPLICABILITY OF THE THEORY BEYOND COLOMBIA

Although the cases of Colombia's 1950s left-wing rebel armies provide some evidence of my theory's applicability to other armed organizations, it is worth also considering the cross-regional resonance of the account and exploring other places on which this book's geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization might shed light. The most apt application of the book's framework should be to civil wars that closely resemble that of Colombia. Colombia's conflict is characterized as non-ethnic and is clearly multiparty, with many non-state actors at all points along the ideological spectrum. It is drenched in the illicit drug trade, a high degree of criminality, and other sources of resource richness. Relative to many nations in conflict, Colombia constitutes a middle-income, well-functioning state in its administrative centers. This has enabled the state to auto-manage its peace processes without relying on large international intervening forces or United Nations peacekeepers. At the same time, the Colombian government has been historically absent from much of the country's territory and, as a result, has often outsourced security and governance to non-state actors. Its military capacity also has not, until very recently, proven sufficiently strong to eliminate or defeat the illegal non-state actors;

[30] Maullin (1973, 23); Fernán González, interview by author, Bogotá, August 2006. See also Vargas Velásquez (1989).

[31] These intact ex-guerrilla organizations were partially displaced geographically, but were still cohesive structures.

[32] Otis (2001, 1).

[33] Eduardo Pizarro Leongómez, interviews by author, Bogotá, July 2006; Santa Marta, May 2008. See also Calvo (1985).

all of Colombia's conflicts have ended through negotiated settlements rather than military victory. Locality possesses great salience in Colombia. Because of its rough topography, Colombia is a highly regionalized country; different places, even if separated by only small distances, feature differences in accents, slang, skin color, and cultures that, to most Colombians, make "locals" and "non-locals" easily distinguishable. Colombia is such a large and rugged country that geographic dispersion can occur on a significant basis, separating ex-combatants by hundreds of miles and several mountain ranges. Many Colombians believe that these contours of their experience with violence are not generalizable or applicable to other contexts. However, every conflict is unique and idiosyncratic in some ways. The question becomes whether these factors render the mechanics of the book's causal logic inoperative in other places.

Although the values of the variables, their relative importance, and the nature of their interactions likely differ in other contexts and the units of analysis may diverge from those that I have explored in the Colombian civil war, there is reason to believe that asking the same questions of other cases would yield insights into the transitions from war to peace in places beyond Colombia. What is the nature of the recruitment patterns and how do these patterns affect armed groups' networks and ability to preserve a collective structure postwar? Do these patterns of sustained collective action affect the balance of power after war? If so, does this destabilize or reinforce the peace accords?

Although asking these questions of all types of conflict may prove fruitful, the book's framework most clearly applies to multiparty wars, given the important interfaction dynamics proposed.[34] The book tells a story about territorial control and thus should shed light on non-state actors characterized as territorial in nature. Whereas the dynamics between non-state factions prove central, those with the state are also critical. Therefore, the theory will face limitations in accounting for postwar trajectories in environments of state failure.[35] The framework should translate best to other contexts in which the belligerent factions ended their wars through negotiated settlement rather than through military victory.[36] Finally, although the argument may

[34] Christia finds that 32 percent of conflicts involve more than two groups. Myanmar, for example, had at least seventeen groups that agreed to a formal ceasefire and hundreds of militias. Moreover, some conflicts often counted as two-party in nature are actually multiparty. For example, the FMLN in El Salvador comprised five factions, and the rebels faced not only the state's forces, but also militias (ORDEN) and death squads (ARENA).

[35] The theory should best apply to conflicts of "military asymmetry" between armed actors, in contrast to those characterized by "symmetric nonconventional warfare." According to Kalyvas (2005, 425), this latter type of fighting can be observed in civil wars that accompany processes of state collapse and entail "the disintegration of the state army and its replacement by rival militias."

[36] Toft (2010) estimates that 41 percent of conflicts that ended after the Cold War terminated in negotiated settlement.

travel best to other cases of militias, much of the theory centers on organizational variables that should depend little on the ideological creed or purpose of the group. All armed groups recruit and deploy; all possess social ties and tactics for overcoming information problems. They strategically interact with the state, other non-state actors, and the civilian population. The dynamics of their evolution may therefore prove similar across warring factions of differing convictions.[37] Evaluating how ethnicity as a dominant cleavage and peacekeepers as relevant actors interact with the theory could prove a rich avenue for future research.

There exist numerous other civil wars to which the theory's predictions might – or might not – apply. My evidence is only exploratory, but it suggests the potential importance of investigating this phenomenon in other contexts. I show that the conditions present in Colombia exist elsewhere and that similar variables relating to recruitment and power appear at play beyond its borders. I also empirically explore several conceptual possibilities outlined in Chapter 2, when the mechanisms sparked by recruitment patterns do not all move together in the proposed fashion and other factors intersect with the nodes in the theory's causal process.

STEP 1: THE EFFECTS OF GEOGRAPHIC PATTERNS OF RECRUITMENT ON POSTWAR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

I first probe the potential generalizability of Step 1 of the theory: the relationship between armed groups' recruitment patterns and their ability to retain a cohesive capacity for collective action after demobilizing. I examine the trajectories of militias across Latin America, scan other regions for glimpses of the recruitment story at work, and then analyze ex-combatant survey data from Sierra Leone to adapt the book's methodology to another context.

Nicaragua: Contra Factions Vary in Recruitment and Cohesion

In Nicaragua, we find marked variation in the geography of recruitment and in the durability of the organizational legacies of war. After the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) rebels defeated the army of Augusto Somoza's regime in 1979, Nicaragua experienced a Cold War proxy conflict between the then ruling leftist FSLN and the rightist "Contras" (Frente Democrático Nicaragüense, FDN). The conflict lasted from 1982 to 1990 and terminated with a peace agreement, the Tela Accord. One faction of the Contras, the Anti-Sandinistas

[37] Labels can mislead. Over the course of the conflict in Sierra Leone, the government changed hands four times, turning "rebels" into militias and "counterinsurgents" into insurgents. Similarly, in Nicaragua, paramilitaries became rebels.

Popular Militia (MILPAS)[38] "came from and relied on a particular *local* populace. When tactically feasible, a unit was most active militarily in or near the communities from which its [FDN combatants, called] Comandos[,] came."[39] These Contra forces' recruitment was "highly concentrated" from a "historically, geographically and ethnically homogeneous populace" centered in the Segovian highlands. "More than 80 percent of these Contras were highland peasants" (Brown 2001, 3, 8).

As a result, "about 70 percent of the highlander Comandos were linked by blood or marriage as members of some thirty extended family … clans." These units also drew on the children and grandchildren of the network of veterans of the Sandino army (1918–33). Their members were linked to each other and were "planted" in the local peasant communities through the "[correo (intelligence runner)] networks, along with clandestine support committees," that "supported their recruiting efforts" and "were their extended eyes and ears" (Brown 2001, 6–8, 124).

Other factions of the Contras comprised far fewer local recruits. For example, the former members of Somoza's Guardia Nacional came, in large part, from the Pacific coast and from urban centers. Accordingly, in their sphere of military deployment in the highlands, the population perceived them as an "outside group" (Brown 2001, 108). Many Contras had their origins in places outside of Nicaragua. The most influential Contra faction, the Legion 15th of September, came into existence in Guatemala City, founded by Guardia members and Nicaraguans living in Guatemala and the United States. Other non-local Nicaraguan Contras active in Guatemala included the Unión Democrática Nicaragüense, the Fuerza Armada de Resistencia Nicaragüense, and the Frente Revolucionario de la Liberación de Nicaragua. Contra armies composed of non-local recruits also mobilized from across the border in Costa Rica (the Southern Front, YATAMA, and Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática), in Honduras (Los Zebras and a cadre led by Comandante "Bravo"), and in the United States.[40] These Contra factions exhibited thinner prewar networks.

In 1990, newly elected Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro asked the Contras, as part of the peace process, to lay down their arms. "Divisions within the Contra force had been palpable throughout the war." Thus, each of the three major groups of the Contras wound up negotiating "a separate peace" with the Chamorro government, underscoring the existence of a multiplicity of actors within seemingly unitary armed groups (Spalding 1999, 39).

[38] The MILPAS Contras were former anti-Somoza Sandinistas of the FSLN's northern Carlos Fonseca Front (Horton 1998, 95–96). As in Colombia, the militias in Nicaragua formed a confederation, within which each group operated relatively autonomously.

[39] Brown (2001, 92–93). Emphasis added.

[40] Yatama: Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka ("Sons of Mother Earth," Nicaragua).

After concentrating in the predesignated areas, the local rebels of the MILPAS faction "returned to their places of origin" (Brown 2001, 114). These fighters remained geographically proximate after demobilizing, with their recruitment patterns dictating their postwar migration:

> More than 100,000 other persons accompanied the [MILPAS fighters] back to their communities, where they were received by an additional 400,000 to 500,000 other Resistance activists. Beyond the numbers, their return demonstrated the impressive homogeneity of the geographic and social origins of the rebels.... The great majority ... returned to communities along the Río Coco and Bocay River valley corridors in the heart of Nicaragua's northern highlands, or those of the Tuma/Río Grande de Matagalpa to the south (Brown 2001, 116).

The locally deployed MILPAS Contras remained strongly networked and intact. In contrast, after surrendering, the non-local Contra groups "began drifting away" to heterogeneous localities "in search of postwar futures." These organizations weakened as a result (Brown 2001, 172–3).

Guatemala: Local Civil Patrols Remained Networked, Cohesive, and Well-informed

In nearby Guatemala, we similarly observe recruitment patterns influencing armed groups' ability to remain cohesive after disarming. The last chapter of the protracted Guatemalan Civil War between the state forces and the leftist revolutionary confederation, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), lasted from 1982 to 1995. The conflict terminated with a peace agreement in 1996. The pro-government militias, Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil (Civil Self-Defense Patrols, PAC), "were recruited from and stayed in their own communities during the war" (Hauge and Thoresen 2008, 213). These local organizations "consisted of men who lived near each other, and each small group was assigned patrol shifts in their neighborhood" (Bateson 2013, 66). As a result, the group members possessed strong, multifaceted bonds that preceded their entry into the war.

This local character meant that the patrollers remained geographically concentrated where they operated after the war, facilitating the endurance of their structures (Hauge and Thoresen 2008, 216). As Bateson (2013, 67) observes, "Most former civil patrollers can still recite the names of everyone from their patrolling group, and they routinely see their former patrol-mates around town." Their leadership endured and the fighters enjoyed persisting social networks and "frequent contact" with their former patrol-mates. The regular communication and face-to-face interactions provided by their physical proximity minimized information asymmetries within the former patrol units. Serving as "an alternative power structure in the countryside" and embedded "in specific micro-neighborhoods," the former patrols also maintained detailed intelligence on what was occurring within their territories. These local militias

remained firmly intact and conserved their power as they demobilized in the aftermath of the civil war.

Peru: Local Militias Stayed Intact

The Peruvian militias largely mirror those of Guatemala.[41] The civil war in Peru lasted from 1980 to 2000 and involved the state forces, the rebels – Partido Comunista de Perú-Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path, PCP-SL) and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, MRTA – and the antirebel militias. The most brutal fighting ended with a 1993 peace agreement between the state and Sendero Luminoso's leader Abimael Guzmán. Some factions, however, continued their armed struggle.

While the Comandos Especiales became "mixed units" in their recruitment geographies, nearly all other Peruvian militia units were embedded in the local communities (Fumerton and Castelein 2012, 21). Specifically, the Rondas Campesinas militias "used local ties of kin and friendship to promote the revolutionary cause" (Starn 1995, 551). Neighboring communities, "related through marriage and kinship," were then "linked to each other through a hierarchical, segmentary system of command and communication" (Fumerton and Castelein 2012, 14).[42] As Starn (1995, 563) describes it: "thousands of peasants across hundreds of mountainous miles [were] organized into a strong network of patrols." The general membership of the Defensa Civil Antisubversiva (DECAS) militias similarly was made up of every able-bodied adult of the communities. Their multiple bonds thus predated the war (Fumerton 2002, 116). As the fighting drew to an end, the militia members stayed in their towns of origin, enhancing their cohesion and lubricating the channels of information between them. Through their postwar role in community policing, they preserved an "intimate knowledge of the local geography and the human terrain" as the civil war "dried up" (Fumerton and Castelein 2012, 15, 25).

Uganda: Local "Arrow Group" Endures after Demobilizing

In other parts of the world, we similarly find recruitment patterns correlating with the nature of armed groups' social networks and cohesion. In Uganda, the militia group of the Teso region, Arrow Group, in its fight against the 2003 invasion by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), used the preexisting social web of the demobilized Teso-based insurgent Uganda's People Army (UPA). The UPA had waged an armed struggle against the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni from 1986 until

[41] The militias in Peru, as those in Colombia, could be disaggregated into different groups. These included the Rondas Campesinas, Montoneros, Defensas Civil Antisubversiva (DECAS), Comités de Defensa Civil (CDC), Comités de Autodefensa y Desarrollo (CAD), and these groups' various constituent sub-groups.

[42] See also Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación (2003).

the UPA signed a peace accord with the government in 1990. Through these UPA rebel veterans, the Arrow Group militia recruited all local combatants.[43] According to Fumerton and Castelein (2012), "2,000 ex-UPA rebels in Teso immediately enlisted to take up arms against the LRA.... Having already soldiered together in the jungles and swamps of Teso, these seasoned fighters would form the nucleus of Arrow Group. Their presence imbued and reinforced the militia with internal cohesion, combat experience, leadership skills, and a unique esprit de corps." The authors document how recruitment through these prewar networks and local deployment meant that Arrow Group retained organizational coherence after disbanding in 2006. "Paramilitary practices remain alive and well in Teso society," they wrote in 2012.

Indonesia: Non-local Militias Dissolve, Local Rebels Survive Transition to Peace

In Indonesia between 1976 and 2005, the government recruited most of its Resistance Front against GAM Separatists (FPSG) militias from the island of Java and deployed them non-locally to the Aceh province to fight a separatist insurgency by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). The GAM rebels were local to the communities of Aceh, having mobilized around preexisting family and veteran networks from the earlier Darul Islam revolt of the 1950s (Aspinall 2009). After the peace accord was signed in 2005, the non-local government militias dispersed back to their homes and their organizations disintegrated. Meanwhile, GAM members remained densely linked and physically concentrated. An ex-GAM rebel told me, "We were from the communities where we fought and so we didn't need to be 'reintegrated' or 'reinserted'; we were already there."[44] Face-to-face interactions proved frequent and the GAM command structure survived. The Step 1 mechanisms linking recruitment and cohesion appear to have been operating in this Indonesian setting.

Skimming the World and History

There exist other contexts in which we observe variation in the geography of recruitment, the implications of which merit exploration. During the Second Chechen War (1999–2009), the whole spectrum of recruitment existed among the counterinsurgent combat forces including local Chechen units, non-local Russian units, and mixed units (Lyall 2010). When the Russian forces withdrew, this variation in the geography of recruitment may well have translated

[43] Fumerton and Castelein (2012) document the existence, but not the postwar trajectory, of one exception, the Arrow "Clandestine Squad" composed of 200 men, which operated seemingly non-locally as "highly mobile platoons."

[44] Nur Djuli, ex–Free Aceh Movement (GAM) rebel, interview by author, Santa Marta, 8 May 2009.

into differences in the organizational capacity of the units and a shift in the balance of power on the ground.

In other periods in history, too, deployment patterns have varied. In the United States in the 1650s to 1700s, although units trained together, "militia companies, battalions and regiments rarely entered active service intact. Instead, they became the pools from which authorities could obtain volunteers or draftees. The individuals thus … formed into new units, under officers with whom they were not familiar" (Mahon 1983, 1–2). Deployed non-locally, these fighters enjoyed few prewar bonds with their comrades or leaders in arms.

Costa and Kahn (2003, 528) describe the large variation in recruitment patterns during the American Civil War. They find that Union army "regiments were typically formed from men who came from the same area. Each company would generally contain bands of men who had known each other in civilian life." Soldiers who came from companies in which birthplace heterogeneity was high, meanwhile, proved more likely to desert. This variation in the geographic dispersion of recruitment patterns may have also resulted in variation in companies' trajectories after the war.

In France, during the revolutionary Paris Commune in 1871, the neighborhood-based local battalions of the Paris National Guard proved far more cohesive than the non-locally deployed volunteer Guard units that "were recruited without regard to residence" (Gould 1991, 720). It may be possible to trace the durability of these networks in the aftermath of the insurgency in the Paris Commune.

Sierra Leone: Surveying Ex-combatants in Another Context

As an additional exploration of the generalizability of the conditions present in Colombia, I examine survey data from the case of Sierra Leone collected in 2003 by Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein.[45] This nationally representative survey of 1,043 ex-combatants provides information on both the insurgent and militia factions of the 1991–2002 civil war. These include the rebel group called the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which entered Sierra Leone from Liberia in 1991 to battle the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), and the Civil Defense Forces (CDF), a militia group that joined forces with President Kabbah's government when the country returned to civilian rule in 1996. The survey data map the fighters' locations of recruitment, wartime deployment, and postwar residence and also chart their network structures. Therefore, the survey data present the chance to learn whether the book's theoretical mechanisms centered on recruitment and networks travel beyond Colombia's frontiers. The case affords known variation in recruitment patterns and the opportunity to explore the role of combatant socialization in strengthening bonds of non-local groups. Use of ex-combatant survey data from an African

[45] For publications based on these surveys, see Humphreys and Weinstein (2007, 2008a, 2008b).

conflict also illustrates how the methods of this book might apply to other contexts. As the following material shows, preliminary analysis of the main factions in the Sierra Leonean civil war conforms to several of the book's expectations about the inner workings of armed organizations.

Local versus Non-local Recruitment Patterns

To capture the proportion of local combatants in each faction during the war in Sierra Leone, I take the average at the organizational level of the individuals who operated where they were recruited. I examine two units of analysis. First, is the most aggregate level: that of the CDF and RUF organizations.[46] I then look at the self-reported subfactions.

The CDF proved significantly more local in its recruit base than the RUF. Forty-nine percent of the CDF members were recruited locally at the chiefdom level (the third-level administrative unit) compared with 36 percent of RUF members. Using a more aggregated indicator of local recruitment, the district level, I find a larger divergence in recruitment patterns: 69 percent of CDF members constituted local recruits compared with 53 percent of RUF members. This result accords with the established qualitative evidence on these armed groups. The CDF constituted a collection of semi-autonomous regional civil militias "identifying themselves both as members of the umbrella CDF organization and as members of more localized units (Kamajors, Gbethis, Donsos, and the various subsets of these collectives)" (Hoffman 2007, 75, 647). They "were decidedly 'local' forces"[47] that "deployed strictly in their own chiefdoms" (Human Rights Watch 1998). "Unlike, for example, the RUF, combatants with the CDF did not necessarily see themselves as outsiders to their social landscape" (Hoffman 2007, 647). Indeed, they were recruited with the expectation that they would be "willing to stay within the community until the crisis was over" (Humphreys and Weinstein 2008b, 438).[48] In contrast, RUF recruits came from Liberia, refugee camps, or village raids, and they often deployed non-locally.

Prewar Networks

These recruitment patterns are reflected in variation in the preexisting social ties between the combatants. To examine these networks, I looked at survey questions similar to those employed in Colombia. I created an average of three indicators of social connectivity within the units: the share of individuals in each unit who had friends, family, or fellow community members in the group

[46] The Sierra Leone sample includes only small numbers of fighters from the Sierra Leone Army (SLA); the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), a group of soldiers that overthrew Kabbah in a coup in 1997; and the West Side Boys (WSB), a militia group formed in 1998, which incorporated elements of all the factions.

[47] Hoffman (2007, 643).

[48] There seems to have occurred change over time in recruitment patterns. For example, as the Kamajors expanded to the north, they engaged in some recruitment by abduction and less local deployment (Cohen 2013; Richards 2003).

at the time of entering. Using this simple index, I observe that CDF members exhibited considerably stronger bonds to members of the faction prior to joining than did participants in the RUF. The mean score of the index (with a range from 0 to 1) equaled 0.16 for the RUF whereas for the CDF it assumed a value of 0.78, a substantively and statistically significant difference.

Many commentators have emphasized this absence of ties between the RUF and the communities from which they mobilized recruits.[49] RUF leaders kidnapped most of their rebel group's members, many of them as children; their "recruitment strategies of killing parents and other family members forced young people to join by destroying their primary relationships" (Bolten 2012, 499). In contrast, the local CDF possessed networks that predated the conflict. "Elders actively managed the important question of who could become a Kamajor." Specifically, "paramount Chiefs … called upon local Town Chiefs and Section Chiefs to submit lists of men who had good records in their communities and who were physically fit to bear arms. It was understood that local chiefs were to vouch for the character of the men whom they put forward for militia service" (Forney 2012, 6). To recruit, the CDF actively employed these "pre-existing patronage social networks that were crucial to everything from employment opportunities to ritual initiations to individual identity."[50] Hoffman (2007, 640) captures the relationship between recruitment geography and militia social structures in Sierra Leone: "the CDF has always been better understood as the militarization of a web of social relations."

Postwar Dispersion and Cohesion

I examined locational data on the ex-combatants' postwar places of residence to see whether they remained clustered where they fought or instead dispersed. The data suggest that a significantly higher proportion of CDF fighters, 52 percent, stayed where they deployed militarily, compared with 33 percent of RUF combatants. Postwar, CDF members also proved more geographically proximate than RUF militants. Although this is a very rough indicator, the average count of chiefdoms in which respondents lived postwar was 8.3 for CDF subfactions and 10.8 for RUF subfactions.

I also assessed the cohesion or disintegration of the units after the peace accords. Specifically, I employed survey measures that capture the extent to which the demobilized individuals maintained linkages with their factions. I took the average at the unit level (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007). The first question asked individuals with whom they spent their time. The second asked, were they to start a business, with whom they would partner. For each of these questions, the options available to respondents included "Friends that I met in my faction during the war." The final question asked individuals about the avenues they pursued in the postwar period when confronting personal problems.

[49] See, for example, Gberie (2005); Humphreys and Weinstein (2008b).

[50] Hoffman (2007, 641).

Analysis of these postwar networks demonstrates more contradictory results. An index based on the questions about leisure-time companions and preferred business partners suggests denser ties between ex-RUF fighters than between former CDF members, although the values for both factions measure very low and the difference between them is not statistically different from zero. These results are not entirely surprising, because the variance for each component of the index proves low.[51]

As an alternative measure of postwar networks, I examined the proportion of the armed group's members who believed that recourse to other members of their faction was among the most effective ways to deal with their most salient problems. On this measure, the factions diverged significantly and in the expected direction, with 28 percent of CDF ex-combatants turning to their former armed structures in contrast to 15 percent of ex-RUF members (see Table 8.1). This question might provide a better indicator of the strength of postwar networks and organizational endurance because it implies not just contact with but also reliance on one's former comrades. The question also likely better gauges vertical relationships in addition to horizontal ones.

An analysis of the subfactional level displays similar results (see Table 8.2). The correlation between local recruitment (at the chiefdom level) and the index of prewar network density is positive (0.52) and significant, as is the relationship between local recruitment and "remain in the area of military operation" after war (0.62). Whereas the index of "spending time with ex-combatants" is negatively and significantly correlated with local recruitment (−0.45), the correlation between local recruitment and the belief that "recourse to one's faction" would solve one's salient problems remains positive (0.33) and significant.

Exploring the nature of postwar networks in qualitative depth in Sierra Leone reveals that the local militias sustained their organizational structures. The former commanders remained "able to mobilize ex-fighters through still active chains of command … with remobilization occurring along … former fighting faction lines" (Small Arms Survey 2010, 266). The RUF, meanwhile, remained more cohesive postwar than the book's theory would predict. Its command structure did seem to weaken significantly. The International Crisis Group (2003c, 15) reports: the RUF "has poor prospects for survival.… None [of the leaders] commands much rank and file loyalty, and even if they wanted to, it is extremely unlikely they could rally ex-combatants, who show no desire

[51] Only fifty-three respondents (or 5.5 percent of the sample) answered that they spent most of their free time with ex-combatants, whereas only twenty-nine respondents (or 3 percent of the sample) said they would choose to start a new business with an ex-fighter. As in Colombia, the question wording could account for this low variance. The survey allowed only one response category. A vast majority thus answered both questions with the "family" or "friend" responses. For some interviewees, these familial and friendship categories likely overlapped with the ex-combatant category, with the tendency for overlap more pronounced among CDF members. When choosing between the response options, social desirability bias and the primacy of family may well have caused combatants to opt for the family category.

TABLE 8.1. *Recruitment, Clustering, and Networks at Faction Level, Sierra Leone*

	Mean CDF	*Mean RUF*	*Mean (CDF) – Mean (RUF) > 0*
Local recruitment (chiefdom level)	0.49	0.36	$p = 0.0000$
Prewar networks (index)	0.78	0.16	$p = 0.0000$
Remain in area of military operation (chiefdom level)	0.52	0.33	$p = 0.0000$
Return to area of origin (chiefdom level)	0.47	0.34	$p = 0.0000$
Postwar networks:			
Spend time with ex-combatants (index)	0.021	0.07	$p = 1.0$
Recourse to one's faction to solve salient problems	0.28	0.15	$p = 0.0000$

TABLE 8.2. *Recruitment, Clustering, and Networks at Subfaction Level, Sierra Leone*

	Correlation	
Local recruitment and prewar networks	0.52	$p = 0.0015$
Local recruitment and remain in area of military operation	0.62	$p = 0.0001$
Local recruitment and return to area of origin	0.54	$p = 0.001$
Local recruitment and postwar networks:		
Spending time with ex-combatants (index)	−0.45	$p = 0.0075$
Recourse to one's faction to solve salient problems	0.33	$p = 0.056$

to return to war." This is, no doubt, partially a result of the military deterioration of the RUF before the end of the war. However, the RUF's horizontal ties proved more durable, pointing to the importance of an alternative mechanism: intensive wartime socialization.

Although socialization and indoctrination prove unable to compete with the explanatory power of prewar networks in the Colombian case, in theory, intensive wartime socialization should help compensate for non-local groups' low levels of cohesion. The RUF case provides support for this claim. The RUF operated as informal "adoption" and thus "relationships similar to extant practices of child fosterage and clientelism emerged within cadres" (Bolten 2012, 499). Cohen (2007, 8) writes about one of the RUF's indoctrination practices, the commission of sexual violence: "[Committing] rape bonds together people in social groups, and plays an especially important role in groups with low cohesion, in which the members know very little information about each other. Performing acts of brutal violence against noncombatants appears to

have been an important part of the process of integrating membership." As a result of this intense socialization, after the war, in certain localities, the RUF "ex-combatants socialized mainly with each other and … lacked the ability to converse with civilians" (Bolten 2012, 497).

Socialization not only generated much stronger networks within the RUF than would have existed otherwise, but also influenced the migration patterns of the combatants. One former RUF child combatant reported, "I can't go home because my family cannot accept me" (Themnér 2011, 97). As a result of family rejection, homeward relocation proved less common for the RUF in Sierra Leone than in other contexts (Human Rights Watch 1998). Additionally, socialization rendered migration decisions more interdependent, producing segregated communities of RUF ex-combatants. These served to preserve the networks between the former combatants (Bolten 2012). Thus, socialization enhanced the post-conflict organizational capacity of the non-local RUF. Both the RUF and the CDF remained fixtures on Sierra Leone's political, security, and governance landscape after the fighting ended. The "strategies, tactics and networks of power learned and created during the civil war, not least by ex-combatants, [remained available to be] re-animated and exploited" (Christensen and Utas 2008, 520–522, 538).

Mozambique: Non-local Combatants Stay Where They Fought

The Mozambican case similarly demonstrates what happens when the mechanisms of the model, specifically those centered on postwar migration, diverge. In particular, during the Cold War proxy conflict 1977–92, the anti-Communist Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) and its enemy, the leftist government army called the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), "recruited young men and women en masse.… A new recruit went into the armed group with friends, relatives, and peers." However, despite this concentrated and networked recruitment, which often involved abduction, the leaders then dispersed the soldiers and deployed them away from their homes, generating non-local factions. "Recruits from the same village were often not placed in the same battalion, to prevent them from teaming up and fleeing," a risk, given the large number of abductees. "Consequently, many ex-combatants lost touch with their co-recruits" (Wiegink 2013, 123–4). Meanwhile, the coercive nature of the recruitment, as in the RUF case, disrupted the normal patterns of migration after the Rome General Peace Accords of 1992. In contrast to ex-combatants in most transitioning environments, many demobilized soldiers in Mozambique did not return to their villages of origin, in part because of the shame associated with their abduction into the war and also because of the fear of being harmed by or accused of witchcraft.[52] Instead, the majority of

[52] Coelho and Vines (1994); Wiegink (2013, 124).

ex-RENAMO combatants settled in RENAMO strongholds after demobilization. Schafer (2007, 98–99) writes:

> Maringue was particularly attractive for RENAMO veterans because it was familiar territory, as during the war many RENAMO combatants got to know the movement's main base that was located in the district. From the end of the war until 1997, the district was governed by an administration that had apparent links with RENAMO and today a RENAMO military base is located in the area.

Thus, despite non-local deployment, a large share of combatants remained in their former armed group's zone of military operation, enhancing postwar clustering[53] and enabling the RENAMO organization to remain somewhat intact and to preserve its organizational power (Wiegink 2013, 109).

STEP 2: THE EFFECTS OF REGIONAL CONFIGURATIONS OF ARMED GROUPS ON REMILITARIZATION

Although assessing the generalizability of Step 2 of the theory proves more challenging than that of Step 1, several cases illuminate pieces of the argument and nuances within and beyond it. In particular, I explore alternative sources of power shifts: those originating from the state and from still-militarized non-state actors. I also probe the implications for the postwar trajectories of military defeat and organizational bankruptcy. I first discuss examples of remilitarization and then turn to illustrations of demilitarization. These varied cases suggest the difficulty of evaluating the argument in other contexts for which expertise, deep knowledge and detailed data are lacking, but they also indicate the great potential value in undertaking this analytic exercise.

Nicaragua: Groups in Local–Non-local–State (L-NL-S) Configuration Remilitarize

In the aftermath of the peace accords in Nicaragua, the warring factions engaged in large-scale remilitarization. Although an understanding of the exact dynamics behind their remilitarization proves elusive without in-depth fieldwork, at least two factors seem to have been at play. The first suggests power shifts between the various rebel forces of varying recruitment types (local and non-local [L-NL]) and the second recalls the post–La Violencia scenario between a reconfigured state, increasing in power, and local former partisan armies (L-S).[54]

[53] See Table 4.3 for the book's predictions of postwar clustering given varying postwar migration patterns.

[54] This Local Group–State (L-S) dynamic is also seen in other cases. For example, in the Philippines, following war with the Japanese, the reconstituted government confronted the "demobilized"

As to the first impetus, as discussed earlier, that there were both local and non-local Contra organizations during the war in Nicaragua correlated with divergence in the organizations' postwar cohesion. Specifically, after demobilization, there emerged "MILPAS/Guardia/Sandinista tensions at FDN headquarters in Yamales … Many former [non-local] Guardia … began drifting away in search of postwar futures. With many of the former Guardia gone, military leadership reverted to [local] Milpistas who had been with the movement from the beginning." This generated a power shift in the local Contras' favor. The MILPAS seemingly remilitarized to exploit the non-local groups' relative weakening (Brown 2001, 172–173).

In the second dynamic, President Chamorro "chose against all expectations to govern not in alliance with those who elected her but rather in conjunction with the Sandinistas" (Brown 2001, 175). As part of the agreement Chamorro made, she permitted the Sandinistas to "continue to command the army without civilian supervision and let their intelligence apparatus keep its autonomy, authority and power." At the same time, the United States withdrew its support for the Contras. This change in the allocation of power between the state and the Contras incentivized the bolstered unity state to be more aggressive toward former Contra areas, both local and non-local. "Largely as a consequence of the Chamorro-Sandinista pact … armed violence continued … [with] violent attacks against former [Contra] Comandos or their families.… The vast majority of the perpetrators of these acts were Sandinista army, police, or party activists" (Brown 2001, 176).[55]

The local Contras remilitarized defensively, commencing the Re-Contra war of 1990–96. These "postwar events … indicate that these [MILPAS] networks remained intact, strongly suggesting that they had and still have an existence and strength independent of the rebellion itself" (Brown 2001, 93). The networks could easily remilitarize because disarmament, as in Colombia, proved largely symbolic. "Some Comandos … had retained arms in secret caches … as had the Sandinistas.… [They] dug up their guns and returned to the

local Hukbalahap rebels with "state-building." In response, the communist New People's Army built on the local infrastructure of the prior Hukbalahap insurgency to remilitarize (Kerkvliet 2002). The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) also "resumed the armed struggle" (Noble 1981) when challenged by state-building in the aftermath of the peace accords (Raymundo Ferrer, Lieutenant General of the Filipino Army, interview by author, Santa Marta, 6 May 2009; Gaudencio Pangilinan Jr., Brigade General of the Filipino Army, interview by author, Barranquilla, 7 May 2009). In Afghanistan, evidence suggests that changes in relative power at the center led the government to contest the power of "disbanded" local warlords in the regions, sparking their remilitarization (Marten 2006/07; Mukhopadhyay 2014). In Myanmar, power changes emboldened the state to break its tacit territorial arrangements with local groups and to enter their "essentially independent mini-states" (International Crisis Group 2011). "Ceasefire groups" such as the Kachin Independence Organization remobilized in response (East-West Center 2013; Kramer 2009).

[55] Future research could probe whether the state disproportionately targeted areas where non-local Contra factions operated.

mountains" (Brown 2001, 177). Networks proved the important factor determining capacity.

Thousands of former Contras began to reorganize in military formation. By 1992, official estimates held that 22,835 irregular troops had rearmed and reverted to military struggle as the "Re-Contras" (Spalding 1999, 43–44).[56] The importance of the organizational legacies of the prior war and the striking relationship between the periods of armed mobilization become clear when we compare the OAS map of the remilitarized Re-Contra violence in 1990–95 with the Contra War rebellion in 1979–90 (Brown 2001, 177). More nuanced mapping could serve to locate the configurations of local and non-local armed factions and to superimpose them on these patterns of renewed conflict. Although this case illustrates the relationship between shifts in power and remobilization, more research is needed to understand how information problems may have contributed to the bargaining failure that resulted.

Angola: Shifts in Power and Information Asymmetries Spark Remilitarization

In-depth interviews with the commander of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Jonas Savimbi, provide a rare window into the role of these information problems and of perceptions of power during transitions from war to peace. UNITA's Cold War–era armed struggle against the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) ravaged Angola from the time of its independence in 1975 until Savimbi's death in 2002, with several brief interludes of failed peace. In the aftermath of the Bicesse Accords in 1991, the transition period from war "upset the balance of power between the two militaries" (Stedman 1997, 37, 40). The shift seemingly stemmed more from postwar cantonment of the armed groups than from their initial recruitment geographies. Like abduction and socialization, this cantonment interrupted the link between recruitment and postwar migration observed elsewhere and served as an alternative means, to homeward relocation, of keeping the ex-combatants geographically clustered and the former armed structure intact.[57] "The cantonment process had worked decisively in UNITA's favor; UNITA's army maintained its discipline and remained a unified force that could be mobilized quickly for fighting purposes" (Stedman 1997, 37, 40). Ninety-four percent of UNITA troops were quartered in cantonments, compared with 50 percent of government troops (Porto and Parsons 2003). Partially because of its relative geographic dispersion, "the government's army …

[56] Discharged soldiers and officers from the Sandinista army, police, and security agents remilitarized as the "Re-Compas."

[57] Although it is difficult to estimate the exact recruitment geography of UNITA, a majority of UNITA forces were seemingly stationed as local defense militias, guerrillas, and semiregular battalions. The remaining troops deployed non-locally as regular battalions.

suffered from poor morale; desertion and drunkenness were rife" (Stedman 1997, 37, 40). Many government fighters "self-demobilized," or deserted, and as many as 12,000 soldiers became unaccounted for (Sogge 1992). This eroded the strength of the MPLA and generated information problems within its ranks. Meanwhile, although UNITA leaders maintained knowledge about their subordinates, cantonment isolated them from their civilian eyes and ears on the ground, generating additional information asymmetries between UNITA and the MPLA. The demobilization-induced shift in the balance of power combined with the uncertainty of the estimates surrounding the shift likely contributed to bargaining failure and UNITA's return to war. Based on interviews, Stedman (1997, 37, 40) concludes that:

> Savimbi's generals informed him that Angola could be taken by a military surprise attack.… The change in power positions of the two main players, the MPLA and UNITA, also worked against the inducement strategy. By October 1992 the peace process had greatly strengthened UNITA; Savimbi was confident that UNITA could win the war and *he underestimated the resolve and capability of the MPLA to fight*.[58]

In 1992, UNITA reverted to full-scale organized violence, returning Angola to a state of war.

Guatemala: Shifts in Power Spark Collective Vigilantism

In postwar Guatemala, we observe the remobilization of the intact local militias described earlier. The power shift in this case originated not from the disintegration of non-local groups, but from a still-militarized non-state actor: organized crime. The Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil "formally demobilized at the end of the conflict, in 1996." However, when criminal organizations such as Mara Salvatrucha, Calle 18, and other strengthening gangs began to encroach on the PACs' territories, the strong organizational remnants of the local wartime patrols allowed "for rapid mobilization for collective vigilantism."[59] The residents of Joyabaj, for example, formed an extralegal policing group known as Los Guardianes del Vecindario, or the Guardians of the Neighborhood, to "defend themselves and protect their territory" against the invasion of criminals (Bateson 2013, 36, 77, 172). It is unclear why the self-defense patrols' intact structures did not deter the postwar crime wave and why the patrols proved unable to bargain with the gangs to prevent their encroachment as in the Medellín case. Potentially, the gangs underestimated the patrols' power because they were seen as "demobilized." Without local intelligence networks, the gangs may have faced information asymmetries vis-à-vis the patrols, as in the Colombian Urabá case. Responding to the breach of their zones, the Guatemalan patrols proved able to remilitarize in a powerful fashion, as "a

[58] Emphasis added.
[59] Regina Bateson, interview by author, Cambridge, MA, May 2010.

direct extension of the wartime civil patrol" with a "ready leadership structure and organizational framework" and "a large stockpile of firearms" (Bateson 2013, 81, 168). Meanwhile, given the patrols' intact coercive capacity, the tacit pacts with the state held and the state respected the patrols' territorial domains. Bateson writes, "The legal status of the Guardianes is further complicated by the fact that the mayor of Joyabaj and the governor of El Quiche have both visibly endorsed the Guardianes" (Bateson 2013, 88).

The Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil did not universally redeploy in all parts of Guatemala; rather, in localities in which they had no wartime presence, such as the town of Agua Blanca in Jutiapa, little collective vigilantism existed after the conflict (Bateson 2013). This microcase mirrors the lack of remilitarized violence in Colombian municipalities that were never the site of paramilitary presence; there were no groups present to redeploy. Variation in the organizational legacies of violence and repositories of high-risk collective action, derivative of where the armed groups recruited and operated, can help explain this divergence in remobilization.

Indonesia: Total Organizational Bankruptcy Preserves the Peace

Similarly, in Indonesia, when the entirely non-local Resistance Front against GAM Separatists retreated after the war, no rump militia units remained in Aceh. This meant that, although power shifted significantly in this L-NL configuration, as predicted by the book's model, there existed no remnant non-local faction for the local group to fight. Accordingly, the local ex-GAM forces did not need to remilitarize to exploit the change in power in Aceh. They could assume hegemonic control without opposition, and so they demilitarized. A village head reported, "We have already accepted into the community those who have returned. There's no hostility because they too are a part of the community. Their families live here."[60] Embedded in the local communities, GAM transformed into a highly successful political party, victorious in the 2006 elections.

Sierra Leone: Re-equilibrated Power Balance Prevents Remilitarization

Sierra Leone also presents a case of L-NL configurations. By the book's theory, we would expect that where the local CDF and non-local RUF operated in close proximity to each other, they should have remilitarized. However, as discussed earlier, the coerced nature of the RUF's recruitment and its intensive socialization rendered it significantly more cohesive postwar than its largely

[60] Barron, Kaiser, and Pradhan 2004. Muslahuddin Daud and Kusumastuti Rahayu (Aceh Reintegration Program personnel), interviews by author, Santa Marta, 8 May 2009. Eighty percent of Acehnese civilians reported that they would be happy if an ex-GAM combatant married into their families; Patrick Barron (World Bank, Aceh), interview by author, Santa Marta, 7 May 2009.

non-local recruitment geography would have predicted. The power balance was thus maintained in many regions. Additionally, the fact that the RUF was largely defeated before the end of the war meant that the formal and informal territorial accords already reflected its marked decrease in power (Sesay and Suma 2009). Where the RUF weakened further, the international community, through robust military action, served to fill the power vacuums that resulted, re-equilibrating the allocation of power.[61] Accordingly, the death toll decreased after the official end of war in 2002 and never again crossed above the "civil war" threshold. Low-level violence did persist, spiking during the elections in 2002–03 and in 2007–08 (Dowd and Raleigh 2012). For example, in the lead-up to the 2007 elections, "both presidential candidates continued the political mobilization of former combatants, causing a renewal of [low-level] violence all over the country" (Christensen and Utas 2008, 522). However, none of the factions "remilitarized."[62]

Peru: Configuration of Only Local Militias Demilitarize

In Peru, before the end of its civil war, L-NL configurations became instead L-L, generating sustained demilitarization in the conflict's aftermath. The defeat of the Shining Path occurred prior to the Rondas Campesinas' "decommissioning" and therefore few power shifts followed the peace accord. "Almost everywhere in the provinces where they emerged, the basic structures of the [local] Rondas Campesinas remain[ed] intact" (Gitlitz 1998, 24). The implicit accords between the Rondas and the state, and among the Rondas themselves, thus held.[63] The militias "became much less militarized" (Fumerton and Castelein 2012). "Without minimizing Ronda violence … it must be emphasized that killings by ronderos have fallen substantially, [and are] now a relative rarity" (Starn 1995, 567). Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission reported that, in 2003, there remained 8,000 militias, made up of approximately 500,000 members. No conflicts occurred between these local groups and the state that recognized and respected their sovereignty as the "only effective authority after the violence" in some places (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003, 457).

The demilitarized militias' local origins enabled them to become sociopolitical entities. "In large part, the Rondas Campesinas remain … the most important space in decision-making at the local level" (Gitlitz 1998, 24). Embedded in the communities, the Rondas "contributed to a surprising resurrection of

[61] The international community had a strong presence through UN peacekeepers and forces from Guinea and the United Kingdom.

[62] The factions in Sierra Leone also had "returned" to violence in the aftermath of the earlier Lomé Accords in 1999, but evidence suggests that no break in fighting ever occurred due to this peace process.

[63] Professor Miguel la Serna, University of North Carolina, interview by author, Chapel Hill, NC, September 2011.

civil society.... There are regular meetings of the entire village to discuss Ronda business ... open assemblies elect them like other village leaders ... [and] the Rondas themselves have expanded beyond a purely military mission" (Starn 1995, 568). Far from obsolete, the Rondas' intact structures retained political and social influence in their local territories.[64]

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I sought to demonstrate that the conditions present in Colombia exist elsewhere and to examine the geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization in a broader set of empirical cases. Although I am unable to test the entire causal chain rigorously in other contexts, my initial probes of the explanatory leverage of recruitment patterns and configurations of power prove encouraging. This means that the book's theory might help shed light on future war-to-peace transitions, in Colombia and beyond.

The chapter highlighted the data limitations that exist in undertaking cross-national research on armed organizations, and points to research opportunities in this arena. A fruitful approach might be to collect information on post-conflict violence, rather than ceasing the data collection process when the country passes from "1" – presence of war – to "0" – absence of war. A type of information currently missing from existing datasets on armed organizations would map where these organizations recruited and deployed, facilitating further testing of the book's theory. It also may prove possible to exploit existing ex-combatant survey data across conflicts to generate group-level information from individual-level observations across cases. I explore additional areas of future inquiry in the concluding chapter of this book.

[64] In some places such as Huanta, the Rondas assumed a role in fighting common crime. In others, such as the region composed of the Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro River Valleys (VRAEM), they became employed as private security. In Alto and Bajo Tulumayo, they participated in development projects (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003).

9

Conclusion

In its search for an explanation of varying post-conflict outcomes, this book has focused on the primacy of armed organizations. Divergence in the characteristics of these armed actors has powerful implications for what happens in the aftermath of peace agreements. I have argued that variation in the geographies of their recruitment causes some armed groups to dissolve and others to endure, sparking power shifts, and resulting in their remobilization or demobilization. The theory is quite simple, but it has explanatory range over important outcomes and prescriptive richness. The applications of the analytic framework are potentially far-reaching to civil wars beyond Colombia's borders, and several mechanisms of the model may be amenable to human action. The paths of armed organizations studied in this project fundamentally influence postwar patterns of human rights abuses and political stability and shape prospects for consolidating peace and state-building. Policymakers concerned with these outcomes may therefore find these conclusions useful. The theory also has implications for social scientists interested in the processes of transitions from war to peace. Specifying the project's implications is the task of these concluding pages.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP

I first consider the scholarly implications of the book's theory and identify areas of conflict and peace studies rich for future research at different levels of analysis.

Implications for Macro, Country-Level Peace Literature

Most studies of conflict resolution focus on the terms of peace such as political power-sharing, elections, democratization, decentralization, security-sector

reform, partition, external observers, and peacekeepers.[1] However, there exists significant variation in postwar outcomes even where peace terms are similar. Characteristics of the conflict are, at times, used only as a technical fix to address selection issues that arise because the adoption of peace terms is not random.[2] A careful examination of what happened during the war, and most importantly, at the nature of those who fought the war, can provide invaluable insights into what might happen after the fighting ceases. Integrating insights on armed organizations into existing theories of peace provides a promising avenue for future investigation.

A shift away from purely macro or cross-national research to incorporate such meso-level dynamics is a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, we must understand the inner workings of the organizations that remilitarize and demilitarize across the world. On the other hand, the data requirements of this research agenda necessitate subnational analysis or analysis of a limited set of cases for which we can obtain very detailed organization-level information. The next step, it would seem, is to determine how we can aggregate robust meso-level data that is based on in-depth case studies and extensive fieldwork to generate conclusions at the important macro, cross-national level of analysis. From the perspective of this project, the question becomes: how do the trajectories of armed organizations aggregate to determine patterns of violence, peace, and politics, regionally or globally? How do these armed group trajectories interact with variables such as peacekeepers, external guarantees, and power-sharing arrangements that may be best conceptualized at the national or transnational level? Scholars of civil war and peace should remain committed to explaining variation across the world, but to do so we must work up from the organizations that produce recurrent strife or instead break the cycles of violence.

This book also contributes to a recent body of literature that pushes civil war researchers to explore the critical roles of the understudied but widespread militias, paramilitaries, and self-defense forces (Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe 2013). These armed groups can have a significant impact on the transition to peace and therefore merit inclusion in our rebel-dominated theories of conflict resolution. We might ask, in particular, if and how our theories of postwar credible commitments and the role of power-sharing and peacekeepers would change if we looked beyond the state-rebel dyad and included the various anti-insurgent armed actors in our frameworks.

Focusing on organizations in the aftermath of war and on the collective capacity that they maintain further encourages scholars to distinguish the recurrence of conflict from its initial onset, because of the divergent collective-action

[1] Brancati (2006); Brancati and Snyder (2012); Doyle and Sambanis (2000); Flores and Nooruddin (2012); Hartzell and Hoddie (2003); Lyons (2002); Mattes and Savun (2009); Reilly (2002); Roeder and Rothchild (2005); Toft (2010); Walter (2002).

[2] Fortna (2004); Gilligan and Sergenti (2008).

challenges associated with the two, and because of the important organizational legacies of past violence (Daly 2012). By examining a new dependent variable – the remilitarization and demilitarization of armed organizations – this book highlights the importance of studying post-conflict violence before it reaches the intensity of full-scale war; in this way we may better understand the process by which peace breaks down, while mitigating issues of endogeneity.

The macro literature on civil wars draws heavily on the international relations scholarship on interstate conflict. It is from this scholarship's powerful insights on the conditions for rational war that the civil war literature has derived the credible commitment explanation of conflict resolution.[3] However, the interstate rational war literature also has in its repertoire another key pathway to war: information asymmetries. Private information about resolve and might, and incentives to misrepresent this information, exist between states and can lead to bargaining failure and war. The concept of information problems has not been rigorously applied to the intrastate arena. However, we know from the literature on the economics of organizations that information issues arise in all organizations;[4] indeed, Weinstein (2007) shows us how armed organizations, specifically, may be plagued by these problems during their initial mobilization phase. There is little reason to expect that information asymmetries are not relevant to the intrastate arena more broadly. This book illustrates how information problems may resurface during the highly uncertain times of transitions from war to peace; how they exist not only between, but also within armed groups; and when they are likely to become exacerbated, in particular when personal networks erode. This focus on information issues sheds light on the puzzle of why demobilizing groups cannot resolve their territorial disputes without a return to violence, that is, why groups decreasing in relative power do not cede territory to groups increasing in relative power without a costly fight. Future analysis may extend the study of information problems within groups to their role in complicating bargaining processes and may deepen the study of information asymmetries between groups to analyze their contribution to conflict in the intrastate domain.

The historical context within which the book's central empirics unfold presents a fascinating case of negotiation that defies many expectations regarding rational bargaining. It presents the opportunity to develop additional theory on bargaining under conditions of uncertainty and among multiple nonunitary actors, and to seek an explanation for the empirical regularity of unsuccessful backward induction resulting in the election by belligerent actors to sign bargains without effective security guarantees.[5] When and how do groups

[3] Fearon (1995); Walter (2002).

[4] Miller (1992); Moe (1984); Simon (1957).

[5] I find, in the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Peace Agreement Dataset (Högbladh 2011), that sixty-seven agreements (31 percent) had no power-sharing, no peacekeeping, and no oversight. In Barbara Walter's dataset, roughly half of warring factions that were serious

sometimes lose power much more quickly and thoroughly than they expected? It seems a neat trick to be able to get actors involved in a peace process that proves to be their undoing; it would be useful for policymakers to know how it is done. Thus, for both scholarly and policy reasons, this should prove a fruitful area for additional inquiry.

Implications for Micro, Individual-Level Peace Literature

The recent and growing literature on the microdynamics of peace, and specifically on the trajectories of individuals emerging from conflict – their demobilization, political participation, economic reintegration, reconciliation, and psychological transitions – treat former fighters as independent agents, rather than as parts of a web of ex-combatants and armed institutions that structure their postwar paths.[6] This book demonstrates how, as organizations remilitarize and demilitarize, they may pull their combatants with them. It shows the critical role played by social networks in determining postwar outcomes at the organizational and regional levels. It illustrates when these networks are likely to endure and when they are likely to dissolve. Whether the networks survive or not, and whether they are reactivated for violence, redirected toward peaceful politics, or lie dormant, has important implications for the individuals who belonged to these armed organizations. In other words, I argue we cannot understand individual-level trajectories without taking into account these networks and organizational outcomes. Belonging to networks and organizations "makes an enormous difference in the behavior of individuals."[7] These institutions determine the rules of the game and they also condition the incentives, restrictions, and choices of former fighters under the rules (North 1990). For these reasons, organizations must be incorporated into models of the microdynamics of peace. This implication of the book is validated by the Daly, Paler, and Samii (2014) study of recidivism, which finds social networks to be among the most important determinants of whether individual ex-combatants successfully reintegrate into civilian life or instead return to violence. Specifically, whether or not they maintain dense, horizontal ties to their former comrades in arms and vertical connections with their ex-commanders matters significantly for their postwar trajectories. Incorporating these meso-level patterns into models of individual-level behavior in the aftermath of conflict constitutes a worthwhile avenue for future research.

about peace signed bargains that lacked third-party guarantees, and implementation later failed (Walter 2002, 85).

[6] Annan et al. (2011); Bellows and Miguel (2009); Blattman (2009); Gilligan, Mvukiyehe, and Samii (2013); Humphreys and Weinstein (2007).

[7] Miller (1992, 8); see also Williamson (1975).

Implications for Meso, Organization-Level Scholarship

Scholars interested in armed organizations have focused predominantly on their origins and internal characteristics, or their dynamics of contestation and territorial control, stopping their analysis at the war's end.[8] This book extends the discussion of organizations to their postwar period. It emphasizes a different organizational variable than that previously identified: where organizations recruit, instead of whom they recruit. This opens up opportunities for scholars to explore whether variation in recruitment geographies also has implications for how wars are fought: for armed actors' use and repertoires of violence, internal discipline, relations with civilians, and forms of governance during conflict.

The case studies of local demilitarized organizations that maintain extensive leverage over the civilian population also suggest ways to study how the mapping of recruitment affects armed groups' prospects for postwar political participation and for reconciliation with the victims of their wartime atrocities. The case of Cacique Nutibara, in particular, illustrates the governance roles former militant groups may maintain in the post-conflict period. Uncovering when this social and political leverage is sustained, what form it takes (e.g., how and why demilitarized groups co-opt political parties, become political parties, or form sociopolitical associations), and what impact it has on democracy, governance, rule of law, and provision of public goods should prove of interest to scholars in the years to come.

This book advances research on militia organizations, integrating these actors into our understanding of war-to-peace transitions, but also highlighting their varied relations with the state and the roles they can play in contexts in which the state's monopoly over the means of coercion does not fully extend to its borders. Furthering this research agenda and extending it beyond environments of civil war, to the study of contexts of criminal violence, could contribute greatly to our understanding of state formation and state-building.

The geography of recruitment is not random. As a direction of future inquiry, it would be helpful to illuminate why insurgent and counterinsurgent organizations emerge in the specific localities where they do; what forms of co-optable structures of collective action prove most amenable to militarization; why, where, and how armed groups expand; and how they structure the architectures of their organizations and their recruit bases as they grow.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Understanding why some armed organizations remilitarize whereas others demilitarize may prove useful to policymakers focused on the resolution of ongoing civil wars and consolidation of peace. In particular, an explanation for

[8] Kalyvas (2006); Weinstein (2007).

the return to violence in Colombia suggests actionable conclusions for policymakers. I examine several of the instruments that policymakers and outsiders employ to influence or constrain postwar outcomes in light of the theory advanced in this book.

Breaking Up Armed Organizations and Sustaining the Balance of Power

Breaking up armed organizations and dispersing the ex-combatants are among the most common tools used to prevent remilitarization. Academics and policymakers view disbanding of armed organizations to be a prerequisite for the successful reintegration of ex-combatants and the consolidation of peace. Spear (2002, 141) contends that "peace requires breaking the command and control structures operating over rebel fighters … thus making it more difficult for them to return to organized rebellion." Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) similarly state that reintegration demands "that combatants break their ties with the warring factions, so that previous command and control structures no longer operate in the postwar period." The international community's ideology of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) is a noncontext-specific recipe that treats all intact structures as threats to peace.[9] The policy repertoire for disbanding groups includes: (1) homeward relocation of ex-combatants to break chains of command and alter the former commanders' and foot soldiers' incentives for cooperation; (2) related to this, integration of ex-combatants back into their communities, families, and former social milieus to reproduce civilian networks that will compete with combatant camaraderie; (3) economic reintegration to generate alternative sources of income so that ex-fighters cease looking to their former armed employers or to criminal sectors for their welfare; and (4) ignoring the status and rank of midlevel leaders, treating them instead as equal to the rank and file, and thereby undermining their legitimacy and authority.[10]

However, the book suggests potential dangers and unanticipated negative side effects associated with breaking up all organizations and networks. The book argues that remilitarization becomes likely when the distribution of power shifts after peace is brokered and when warring factions disagree on the extent of these shifts. It follows that policy should seek to preserve the power balance and to mitigate information problems within organizations. Dynamics of erosion or maintenance of networks between ex-combatants occur naturally, tied to the organizations' recruitment geographies. Applying a uniform policy of fragmenting the networks without attention to these processes already at play

[9] Sophie de Câmera Santa Clara Gomes (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP), interview by author, Bogotá, 10 August 2007. For examples of this ideology, see Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer (1996); The World Bank (2009); United Nations (2006).

[10] There are special dangers associated with this last policy, linked to status reversal and resentment. See Daly (2014); Petersen (2002).

risks further destabilizing the distribution of power. For example, uniformly sending all combatants home has differential effects on different groups, causing some groups to sustain their organizational infrastructure and power, but causing others to dissolve and weaken. In addition to such risks, the book's theory also suggests a reason to keep the structures intact: if information asymmetries within organizations – between commanders, field officers, and foot soldiers – become pronounced as networks weaken, and if these asymmetries correlate with remilitarization, then encouraging the breakup of these networks may only exacerbate the problem.[11]

If uniform policies are risky, how should policymakers strategize toward the different types of armed actors? The book's framework proposes that, in the short to medium term, they should seek to preserve the power differentials among the warring factions and between these factions and the state. This requires that external actors become cognizant of the critical informal arrangements between non-state actors that buttress the architectural integrity of the peace accords, especially in multiparty civil wars or in bipolar conflicts in which the cohesion of each of the two actors is not assured. The external actors must also recognize the interconnectedness of the system comprising these bargains and how, if one agreement becomes destabilized, others are at risk of failing as collateral damage.

How can those concerned with building sustainable peace maintain the distribution of power on which the bargains were brokered? There are at least two means of doing so, although both raise concerns about social engineering: (1) they could break up all structures equally; or (2) they could keep all structures equally intact. The former case would involve dispersing all armed groups, both local and non-local, and relocating them away from their zones of operation. This could prove challenging, given the strong tendency on the part of both policymakers and ex-combatants themselves to favor homeward relocation, which would privilege locally recruited organizations over non-local ones. Combatants who operated at home are unlikely to displace away from their towns of origin. However, encouraging urban migration, strategically providing job opportunities in spread-out localities or cash incentives to relocate, and focusing especially on the physical separation of commanders and midlevel leaders from the rank and file, might accomplish this objective. These policies would work best if integrated into the process of demobilization, because later attempts to disband the local structures could face strong resistance and could spark remilitarization. Several have proposed the potential value of military integration and security-sector reform (SSR). They do not specify whether integration should occur on an individual or collective basis.

[11] This is especially so because the state and international community are ill-equipped to address information asymmetries: they rarely have access to the private information necessary to resolve these destabilizing information problems.

Breaking apart all groups and incorporating the ex-combatants into the state military forces as individuals is an additional policy option that would serve to equally dissolve all factions. The challenge would lie in sufficiently disbanding the units, and dealing with the many ex-combatants excluded from the security sector.[12] In general, the danger of the strategy of atomizing ex-combatants and evaporating their organizational structures is that it risks producing strong power vacuums that a state recovering from civil war is unlikely to be able to fill. These power vacuums encourage new actors to arm and former militant units to reconstitute themselves.

Alternatively, policymakers could aim to preserve all structures intact. This involves artificially bolstering non-local groups so that they do not weaken. This may be achieved by encouraging non-local combatants to continue to reside where they fought. For example, policies could keep the ex-combatants clustered in cantonments or concentration areas as a temporary solution, or could offer the former fighters occupational opportunities within their former war zones, perhaps bringing their families to join them in these zones.[13] Such interventions may help, but are unlikely to be fully effective at halting the process of organizational erosion and combatant dispersion of non-local groups. It could be useful to provide strong incentives and infrastructural assistance to keep all the units cohesive, such as facilitating their electoral competition. A more risky strategy would be to enact security-sector reform, but keep fighters together with their ex-factions and deploy them in their former war theaters.[14] The goal in each case would be to maintain the power distribution among ex-belligerents. The literature on "soldiers-to-politicians" or "bullets-to-ballots" assumes that armed groups will remain cohesive and able to run for elections, but this is not guaranteed: interventions that allow for political participation must also help the groups sustain the organizational apparatuses necessary to run for office.[15]

At the very least, tracking the armed units' recruitment geographies and understanding the impacts that different policies are likely to have on these units' physical clustering, social networks, and territorial power would be a valuable first step toward designing policies that would do more good than harm. Thus, although recruitment maps tend to influence patterns of postwar migration, cohesion, and capacity, specific policies could disrupt these patterns and seek to maintain some level of unity among all groups, or else dismantle all groups; either approach could reduce the prospect of new power disparities and information problems, and solidify the bargains for peace. In these ways, instead of

[12] Hartzell and Hoddie (2003); Licklider (2014); Sambanis and Glassmyer (2008); Toft (2010).

[13] In Sierra Leone, the state pursued occupational relocation whereby combatants were located to zones with employment opportunities; Megan MacKenzie (Belfer Fellow, Harvard University), interview by author, Cambridge, MA, 10 December 2008.

[14] Military integration of collective factions was realized in Sudan and Bosnia (Licklider 2014).

[15] Acosta (2014); Brancati and Snyder (2012); De Zeeuw (2008); Manning (2004); Matanock (2014); Söderberg Kovacs (2007).

punishing infractions of the peace terms, external actors could instead take steps to alter the incentive structure so as to prevent the infractions in the first place.

At the time of this book's writing, in mid-2015, these policy decisions are very real and salient for Colombia where negotiators for the government and Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC]) rebels debate these divergent strategies. Under one proposal, advocated by some Colombian government officials and FARC representatives, FARC combatants would reintegrate collectively in their zones of operation, maintaining their structures intact. Under an alternative approach, advocated by others present at the peace talks in Cuba and favored by members of the armed forces, ex-combatants would be free to choose their places of residence. Most would likely migrate home, where they would receive their reintegration benefits individually. Under this second scenario, many FARC members would leave their groups' zones of operation and disperse, rendering organizational endurance unlikely. What is not contemplated in these policy debates is that the FARC units have differing recruit bases, ranging from local to non-local. Therefore the proposed policies, envisioned to have a uniform effect, instead threaten to unleash varied and potentially dangerous trajectories.

State-Building

The international community's customary recipe calls for the recapture of state sovereignty in the aftermath of signed peace accords; that is, states should seek to regain legitimate, military, social, institutional, and political control over their entire territories, including zones that have been, often for long periods, under illegal armed group governance. Such reconstruction is a standard part of peace-building; "clear, hold, and build" has become conventional counterinsurgency practice. The book suggests that, in its state-building efforts, the state should strategize differently toward different types of armed organizations based on their structural characteristics. The international community should allow and facilitate such differential policies. Given local groups' organizational endurance and ability to remilitarize forcefully, the theory implies that the state should not directly challenge the prerogatives of these powerful local entities, so that, in return, the local power-brokers will not challenge the state through a return to violence (Migdal 2001). Reconstruction efforts, for example, should work with, rather than challenge, the authority of these local proto-government actors. Ideally, this enables the state to co-opt the actors over time as the latter's redeployment potential erodes, eventually bringing their territories and populations under the state's control.[16] An important analytic

[16] Gaudencio Pangilinan Jr. (Brigadier General of the Filipino Army), interview by author, Santa Marta, 7 May 2009; favela residents, interviews by author, Rio de Janeiro, September 2006; Padre Apollinaire Malu Malu, President of the AMANI Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of Congo, interview by author, Barranquilla, 7–10 May 2009.

step is to understand when these tacit arrangements will enhance statehood and governance, and when they will instead freeze a status quo of incomplete states and the sharing of sovereignty with a nondemocratic actor that rules through fear and latent coercion. When is the winner the state, consolidating the state formation project? When is the winner instead the "co-opted" non-state actor, corrupting the state?[17] When is the outcome positive with former armed groups fully demilitarizing, decriminalizing, and democratizing, and when is the result instead the preservation of authoritarian enclaves and a potentially explosive environment populated by structures able to remilitarize readily on a large scale?

The analysis in this book suggests that the state should fill the power vacuums that result from non-local groups' decommissioning by means of the immediate deployment of state security forces, police, and institutions such as social development programs, legal frameworks, education, infrastructure, and health care. It should further seek to neutralize remilitarization by non-local rump units. If the state does not immediately bring the full force of the government into these territories, other armed actors will quickly fill the vacuum, reproducing the challenge to the state. Indeed, the Colombian case shows how difficult it is to consolidate state presence rapidly and how, in its absence, remilitarization and militarization will result (Isaacson 2012). States and international actors should therefore devote significant resources to localities in which non-local armed actors operated during the conflict.

CONCLUSION

This book illuminates the power of mapping group members' connections in geographical space. It illustrates how physical proximity and social ties maintain organizational cohesion, information, and power during transitions. It narrates how the geographical distribution of groups, built upon varying recruit bases, helps determine the balance of power and the effectiveness of bargaining in the aftermath of peace accords. It marries an understanding of the dynamics within armed groups with an understanding of the strategic interactions between them. In so doing, it brings together prominent insights from classic and recent works on civil and interstate conflict. It offers a new, empirically validated theory for why some coercive actors silence their guns after agreeing to peace, while others remilitarize and return to organized violence. Although we may not find perfect peace, we do find glimmers of hope amidst the recurring stories of atrocity. I have sought to extract maximum explanatory leverage from these glimmers, hoping that the forces that reduce levels of remilitarization, if magnified, may help generate sustainable demilitarization.

[17] For critiques of these types of pacts, see *New York Times* (2012); Torres (2014).

Appendix

APPENDIX MATERIAL FOR CHAPTER 2: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

This project draws on data from eleven surveys. This section outlines each of these surveys.

Baseline Ex-combatant Survey

International Organization for Migration (IOM) personnel were present in the "concentration zones" of each of the paramilitary bloques prior to their demobilization, 2003–06. While there, they surveyed nearly the entire population of paramilitaries who collectively disarmed: 31,472 of 31,638. The survey had three main objectives. The first was to obtain an assessment of the basic characteristics of the population as well as their expectations for the future in order to design a reintegration program that would meet its beneficiaries' needs. Second, the survey constituted the baseline data for the Sistema de Acompañamiento, Monitoreo, y Evaluación (SAME), which was created to "accompany, monitor and evaluate" each individual ex-combatant's route back into civilian life.[1] Third, the survey aimed to extract information on demobilized combatants' intended destination of postwar migration. This information was intended to help choose the locations of the government's reintegration program offices.

Given that this survey interviewed nearly all the ex-paramilitaries, it provides basic information on this entire population and, using the individuals' identification numbers, enables me to merge all of the other surveys. I have access to similar data on the 23,111 individually demobilized Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC]), Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army [ELN]), and Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army [EPL]) guerrillas and on the 3,456 individually demobilized paramilitaries.

[1] IOM representative, interview by author, Bogotá, November 2007.

Follow-up IOM Ex-combatant Surveys

Following the initial survey, the IOM continued to monitor and evaluate the reintegration program (through SAME), conducting monthly surveys on the services provided. It also realized a more comprehensive ex-combatant survey of 11,703 former paramilitaries between 2005 and 2006. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gain insights into ex-combatants' perceptions of their reintegration processes. Specifically, it asked them to reflect on their integration into their communities, reconciliation experiences, family relations, intrafamily violence, emotional control, consumption of psychoactive substances, and management of sexual behavior.

The target population was all ex-combatants in the reintegration program. The sampling frame was the ex-combatants in the IOM's zones of operation; although coverage was extensive, it did not have personnel in the entire country. The survey was administered by the IOM supervisors who conducted semi-structured interviews with each of their ex-combatant beneficiaries (123 per supervisor). The reasons for individual nonresponse to this IOM survey included: (1) the individuals could not be located; (2) they had security problems and thus preferred not to respond to the survey; (3) they were away at the time of the survey application; or (4) they were deceased, detained, or in psychiatric clinics.

Given its incomplete coverage, the IOM, in collaboration with the government's reintegration program, Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración (ACR), administered an additional survey in 2007 to collect all missing data and additional information on the population of ex-combatants with which the program had contact (28,235). The survey sample was almost perfectly proportionate to the ex-bloque populations, suggesting that nonresponse was not associated with membership in any particular ex-faction, giving greater confidence in the representativeness of the survey.

This survey collected information on ex-combatants' towns of origin and current residences, basic demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, family structure), employment and educational histories and future trajectories, reintegration program services, health care, judicial status, security threats, and offers to rejoin armed groups. Combined, the IOM follow-up ex-combatant surveys provide relatively detailed information on 82 percent of the paramilitary population.

IOM Civilian Survey

The IOM administered a survey between 2005 and 2007 to 5,004 civilians living in communities with a significant ex-combatant presence. The survey's objective was to gain insights into community members' assessments of the reintegration and reconciliation processes.

The target population was all stakeholders in the 450 neighborhoods selected for the survey because of their large populations of ex-combatants.

Stakeholders were defined as "relevant people in the political, civic and religious realms," and in the "dynamics of the community, such as community leaders, mothers, housewives, members of the JACs [Community Action Committees], teachers,"[2] as well as "mayors, leaders of the taxi drivers, NGOs, priests, etc." These individuals were believed to have "an objective reading of the communities."[3]

After mapping the stakeholders according to their power and influence, communities were grouped into strata based on the number of total inhabitants and number of ex-combatant inhabitants living in the neighborhoods. After sampling communities in each stratum, a random sample of participants was then drawn. The survey was administered by enumerators with previous knowledge of the neighborhoods who thus could identify the selected respondents.

The interviews were semi-structured: in addition to answering all of the questions on the survey instrument, the enumerators also engaged in open conversations with the respondents to touch on all of the specific themes of reconciliation. This strategy was adopted in order to reduce mistrust and gain more accurate answers. To improve the quality of the data collected, 84 percent of the surveys were administered in the respondents' homes, in an environment of confidentiality. The remaining surveys were carried out in public places such as churches, stores, schools, and clinics.

Unfortunately, the survey was administered not across Colombia, but only in certain communities concentrated in Medellín, Urabá, Córdoba, and Norte de Santander, which do not constitute a representative sample of Colombian regions. However, the survey provides reliable data in these cluster sites, which constitute the case study areas of this book. The survey offers a window into relations between former fighters and civilian communities.

Comprehensive Ex-combatant Survey

For a large-scale, individual-level survey of demobilized paramilitaries, I worked with the ACR, which surveyed 14,090 ex-paramilitaries and ex-guerrillas between 2007 and 2008. The survey asked, among other things, about the ex-combatants' experiences in the armed groups, social networks, participation in ex-combatant nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), productive projects, political campaigns, businesses, and the conditions under which they deemed remilitarization justifiable.

This survey's target population was all ex-combatants in Colombia. The ACR administered monthly stipends, schooling, training, and psychological and social aid to nearly all of the demobilized individuals at forty Centers of Service.[4] Each ex-combatant was assigned to a *tutor* (psychologist), with

[2] Mitchell, Angle, and Word 1997.

[3] IOM personnel, interviews by author, Bogotá, January 2008.

[4] Of the total ex-paramilitary population, 25,318 or 82 percent regularly went to these centers.

no more than 120 former fighters per tutor. The tutores conducted house visits to every ex-combatant (and their families) once per month to track their reintegration. Additionally, they carried out weekly workshops with the program's beneficiaries. These tutores conducted the survey. They had established relationships of rapport and trust with the ex-paramilitaries. Additionally, the tutores were trained as social workers and psychologists and were therefore well suited to interview this vulnerable population. They enjoyed access to nearly the entire population of demobilized ex-combatants. Thus, the sample frame was all ex-combatants in the ACR.

The survey was piloted on 158 respondents in four locations across Colombia with the goals of clarifying the hypotheses, refining the survey questions, and establishing the infrastructure for the full-scale survey. Focus groups were then held with the enumerators of the pilot surveys to gain their feedback on the survey instrument and administering procedures.

The survey was then conducted on a total of 14,090 ex-combatants, of whom 10,941 were ex-paramilitaries and the rest were ex-guerrillas. The populations of ex-combatants in the sample were proportionate to the number of ex-combatants in each ex-paramilitary bloque.

However, there were several sources of coverage error that applied to this survey and to all of the ex-combatant surveys listed so far. At the time of this survey, 1,477 ex-paramilitaries had been killed, 2,476 were imprisoned, and 9,057 had exited the reintegration program. To test for bias, I examined covariate information on the entire population of ex-combatants at the time of each survey. I used the Pearson's chi-square test for nominal covariate variables, Mann-Whitney test for ordinal variables, and logistic regression for continuous variables. These tests are sensitive to detect divergent compositions of two pools when *n* becomes large. Given the large sample size, the tests suggest statistically significant but not substantively large differences between the sample and non-sample and between the sampling frame and population of inference.[5]

Family Survey

Reintegration psychologists also enumerated a survey of 2,245 nuclear families of ex-combatants between 2007 and 2008. The idea of this survey was to triangulate the information given by the ex-combatants and to gain insights into the reintegration process from multiple perspectives. This survey was conducted in the ex-combatants' homes, but without the former fighters present, in order to create an environment of confidentiality.

[5] To further understand the ex-combatants outside of the sampling frame, I interviewed the 226 reintegration psychologists. Many ex-fighters exited the reintegration program and then later returned to it. I thus asked the psychologists why these ex-paramilitaries left the program, what they were doing while outside the program, why they returned, and whether they differed from the rest of the demobilized population in any systematic ways. The psychologists believed that they did not.

The survey assessed six domains of the reintegration process: family type, family dynamics, housing characteristics, emotional control, use of psychoactive substances, and interactions with the community. The family members' answers reflected their intimate relationships with the demobilized fighters, but also their status as members of the civilian communities, providing an important triangulation of the other surveys.

The sampling frame was ex-combatants in the reintegration program. The sample was a simple random sample of these ex-combatants. The families of the selected ex-combatants were then interviewed. Eighteen of those in the sample frame were not surveyed, because the ex-combatants lived alone and had no family nearby (fifteen cases), the family was deceased (two cases), or the ex-combatants' family members were not aware that the individuals were demobilized (one case).

Short Survey of Psychologists

In a 2007–08 survey of the psychologists of 2,817 ex-paramilitaries and guerrillas, the sampling strategy resembled that of the family survey: a simple random sample was drawn of ex-combatants in the reintegration program. The survey asked the psychologists to assess these ex-combatants' reintegration process to further cross-check the evidence.

Comprehensive Survey of Psychologists

In 2008, I designed and administered a survey of all of the 226 psychologists working with the reintegration program at the time. Rather than the individual ex-combatant, this survey used the municipality as the unit of analysis. This survey aimed to collect extensive information on the situation of reintegration, reconciliation, and remilitarization in each municipality in which the ex-combatants lived.

The pilot survey instrument was administered to a group of Colombian psychologists in Villavicencio, Apartadó, and Pereira, and was then administered to the entire population of psychologists who had been working in their municipalities for at least two months. The survey was anonymous to address potential sources of bias, namely "employment desirability" bias and "fear of retribution" bias. The tutores received the survey by email and then returned a paper copy anonymously to the ACR's central office in Bogotá. Both surveys of psychologists had minimal unit nonresponse, although some item nonresponse existed for sensitive questions.

FIP Survey

In 2008, the Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP) conducted a survey of 1,485 former paramilitaries and guerrillas. The sample was drawn from ACR lists.

Many of those sampled could not be located. The result was a "convenience sample."[6] While it was a biased sample, the distribution of combatants from local and non-local groups was roughly proportional to that in the population of inference: neither type was less easily located or less willing to participate. The survey was administered by a team of university students.

Prison Survey

In collaboration with the Misión de Apoyo al Proceso de Paz (MAPP) of the Organization of American States (OAS Peace Mission), I designed and conducted a survey of 120 recidivist ex-paramilitaries in 2008–09. The population of inference was former combatants who had remilitarized, that is, they had returned to committing acts of violence after having disarmed and demobilized. The target population was the imprisoned population of former paramilitaries who had rearmed, been arrested, and were in prison at the time of the survey (1,797 ex-combatants).

The project used cluster sampling. First, I established the numbers of "reincidentes" (recidivists) in each prison and then sampled randomly within the five prisons having the largest imprisoned populations, both to minimize cost and to ensure as unbiased a sample as possible. The list of recidivists from which I selected the random sample was compiled using databases from the Attorney General's Office, National Police, and the ACR.

The survey was administered to a sample of 120 ex-paramilitary inmates in Medellín's Bellavista Prison, Bogotá's La Picota Prison, Cúcuta's Prison, and Valledupar's maximum-security and medium-security prisons. Procedures for the selection of subjects within the prison were random and thus fair to all prisoners (each prisoner had an equal probability of being selected) and immune from arbitrary intervention by prison authorities or prisoners. In order to guarantee sufficient information on each of the variables of interest and to select the sample, I also used information on the potential respondents' paramilitary bloques, where they had operated during the war, and what type of crime they had committed post-demobilization.

Before realizing the full-scale survey, we conducted a pilot with five prisoners; with this information, we revised the questionnaire. We also gained a better sense of the prison system and how we could minimize risks to the survey subjects.

It should be noted that, although the prison authorities notified the individuals on the list that we wished to speak to them, we observed no evidence that they used the selection process to favor or punish the prisoners. The prisoners'

[6] Maria Victoria Llorente (FIP Director), interview by author, Bogotá, February 2011.

participation in the research had no consequences in terms of receiving benefits or punishments from the prison officials. If prisoners wished to speak with us and express concerns about the reintegration program or their legal rights, they were permitted to do so, irrespective of their participation in the survey. The respondents were not asked about any specifics of their own or their comrades' crimes or activities during the war, to ensure that they did not get in trouble with other ex-combatants and to ensure that the study had no effect on their judicial status.

The interviews broke up the prisoners' relatively mundane lives, provided them the opportunity to tell their story, to explain their decisions, and to contribute to the reintegration process in Colombia. There was no compensation for participation, and thus the benefits to the prison survey participants were intangible, moral, or emotional.

ACR Administrative Surveys

Over the course of 2003–13, the ACR realized regular surveys for administrative purposes of all ex-combatants in the reintegration program (approximately 30,000). I gained access to all of these survey data.

Recidivism Survey

The final survey, of a random sample of 1,158 ex-combatants both in and out of prison, was conducted in 2012–13 by myself in collaboration with Laura Paler, Cyrus Samii, and the FIP.[7] The sample consisted of two parts: (1) a sample of 268 ex-combatants who were currently in prison; (2) a sample of 890 ex-combatants who were not in prison.

These sample sizes were determined on the basis of achieving adequate statistical precision.[8] To construct the sample, we first made a list of all municipalities in Colombia that had at least fifty ex-combatants and that were accessible to the OAS Peace Mission.[9] Excluding municipalities with fewer than fifty ex-combatants implied a coverage loss of only 15 percent of the ex-combatant population. Of the 136 municipalities with fifty or more ex-combatants, eighty-three were covered by the OAS Peace Mission. Eleven municipalities on the list had 700 ex-combatants or more; these were selected with certainty

[7] A survey firm, SEI (Sistemas Especializados de Información), with experience interviewing vulnerable populations, administered the survey.

[8] We based the sample size calculations on a simple difference in exposure means for a case-control analysis, where an exposure was the independent variable of interest and the outcome of interest defined case or control status.

[9] We wished to work in places accessible to the OAS Peace Mission to facilitate our strategy of sampling "non-locatable" ex-combatants, those not affiliated with the ACR, and to improve upon the socialization process with the respondents.

as sites for the survey. We grouped the rest of the municipalities on the list into eighteen strata based on region, total number of ex-combatants, proportion of ex-combatants that had been charged with crimes, the proportion of ex-combatants who were guerrillas versus paramilitaries, and the level of violence measured in terms of the homicide rate. We used statistical clustering methods to group the municipalities into these strata. Then, we sampled two municipalities from each of the strata. The design of the sample ensured that the study was representative of all of the regions in the country where ex-combatants were living.

To construct the non-prisoner sample, we determined the number of interviews that we needed to complete in each municipality based on information from the ACR on where ex-combatants were currently living. For the municipalities where the number of ex-combatants was large, we randomly selected clusters of barrios. Given that ex-combatants tended to relocate often, we then had local ACR psychologists update our database and verify the whereabouts of every ex-combatant in order to generate a complete and up-to-date list of ex-combatants in our selected localities. We drew a random sample of these participants, with proportional stratification on former armed group (ex-guerrilla or ex-paramilitary), year of demobilization, whether charged with a crime, department of residence, and Law 1424 status (described later).

To construct the prisoner sample, we made a list of all of the high-security and medium-security prisons in our selected municipalities that contained at least twenty-five ex-combatant prisoners. We checked to verify that individuals in these prisons tended to have committed the crimes in the selected municipalities. There were eighteen prisons that satisfied these criteria. We drew our sample of prisoners from Instituto Nacional Penitenciario y Carcelario (INPEC) lists of ex-combatant inmates who were residing in these prisons. We crossed these lists with data on ex-combatants imprisoned under the Justice and Peace Law to exclude individuals whose acts of violence had been committed *before* demobilizing. The prisoners were selected in a manner that balanced, as much as possible, ex-guerrilla versus ex-paramilitary status. On the basis of data from Colombia's Attorney General, we focused our sampling on prisoners who were already convicted. For more details, see Daly, Paler, and Samii (2014).

Our sampling frame was the best possible in Colombia for studying ex-combatants. Our study was developed concurrently to Law 1424, which mandated that all ex-combatants participate in the ACR reintegration program, engage in reparation, contribute to constructing the historic truth, and partake in community service in their neighborhoods. In exchange, they received a suspension of their judicial sentences. In addition to the robust incentives to become "locatable" provided by the law's structure, a large campaign conducted by the ACR and OAS Peace Mission further guaranteed that the maximum number showed up, thus entering our sample frame. Although those

that did not come forth likely differed from those that did, those that did provided us with some insights into the "non-locatable" population. By comparing reintegration program administrative data from 2010 (pre–Law 1424) with administrative data from 2012 (post–Law 1424), we were able to identify who "returned" to the program. We stratified on this proxy for Law 1424.[10]

APPENDIX MATERIAL FOR CHAPTER 4

This section presents the analyses of selection bias and postwar networks described in Chapter 4.

Recruitment and Selection

A potential source of selection bias affecting the observed relationship between the geography of recruitment and postwar organizational capacity may arise from the nature of the recruits.[11] Different types of individuals may select into local or non-local groups and these different types then may be more or less likely to remobilize after disarming. Using data from the FIP survey of 885 ex-paramilitaries, I constructed a variety of indicators to explore whether local groups' combatants differed from those of non-local groups on prewar observable traits. These included gender, year of birth, pre-recruitment household wealth, urban/rural character of residence, political preferences, military service, marital status, and parents' educational attainment and political participation (Blattman 2009). I also examined combatants' reasons for joining armed units. Table A.1 shows that local and non-local groups' recruits differed little in terms of their motivations, socioeconomic backgrounds, ideological convictions, or demographics. I observe no divergence in conditional mean differences at even the 10 percent significance level for any of the observable indicators.

Postwar Networks

To explore whether geographic patterns of recruitment have implications for the postwar survival of the organizational structures, I examine whether participation in non-local armed organizations is negatively associated with sustained networks between fellow soldiers. I look at a variety of indicators separately in Chapter 4. To identify the common underlying pattern in postwar networks across multiple survey questions asked of a sample of 10,941 ex-paramilitaries, I combined these various indicators into indices (see Table A.2.) The indicators included whether the individuals retained their ex-comrades-in-arms within

[10] We did not gain access to actual data on Law 1424 status until after the data collection was complete.

[11] Recall, however, that both types of groups may remilitarize, depending on their strategic configuration.

TABLE A.1. *Determinants of Individual Recruitment into Local and Non-local Groups*

Pre-recruitment Covariates	Difference in Conditional Means Members of Local Versus Non-local Groups
Gender	0.241 (0.309)
Year of birth	−0.866 (0.562)
Rurality of residence prior to recruitment	0.369 (0.245)
Marital status prior to recruitment	−0.163 (0.203)
Household size prior to recruitment	−1.324 (4.038)
Indicator for refrigerator ownership prior to recruitment	−0.094 (.172)
Indicator for uneducated father	0.035 (.113)
Father's years of schooling	−0.092 (0.180)
Indicator for uneducated mother	−0.074 (0.102)
Mother's years of schooling	−0.153 (0.221)
Father's political participation	0.079 (0.208)
Mother's political participation	−0.318 (0.211)
Prior military service	−0.285 (0.184)
Political preferences prior to recruitment	−0.096 (0.221)
Motivation for joining group (greed vs. grievance)	0.010 (0.203)

Note: Standard errors in parentheses.

TABLE A.2. *Recruitment Geography and Postwar Cohesion*

	(1) Factor-Weighted Index	(2) Factor-Weighted Index	(3) Additive Index	(4) Additive Index	(5) Binary	(6) Binary
Proportion of local combatants	0.02*** (0.01)		0.05*** (0.01)		0.54*** (0.15)	
Local group (Binary)		0.01*** (0.00)		0.02*** (0.00)		0.18*** (0.05)
Constant	0.05*** (0.00)	0.05*** (0.00)	0.13*** (0.00)	0.14*** (0.00)	0.79*** (0.06)	0.89*** (0.04)
Observations	10951	10951	10951	10951	10951	10951

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; $^{*}p < 0.1$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$. Survey-weighted least squares and logit.

their networks of friends and the organizations to which they belonged after demobilizing, and whether they believed turning to their ex-comrades constituted the best way to resolve their problems.

I first show a factor-weighted index (Models 1 and 2) and then an additive index (Models 3 and 4). I also present a binary variable capturing sustained ties to the organization, which assumes a value of "1" if the respondents indicated any links to former combatants; "0" otherwise (Models 5 and 6).

The significant differences between the postwar networks of members of local factions and those of non-local factions are sustained across the various indices, using both a continuous version of the "local/non-local" recruitment geography variable – the proportion of local combatants in the group (Models 1, 3, and 5) – and a dichotomous version assuming a value of "1" if the individual belonged to a local group; "0" otherwise (Models 2, 4, and 6).

Because many variables may affect individuals' social networks, I evaluate whether recruitment patterns influence postwar ties and organizational cohesion even after controlling for these other variables.

At the organizational level, I evaluate whether the groups to which the individuals belonged were resource rich. I measured groups' resource richness with data on the average licit and illicit resources in their zones of operation over the course of their fighting. Resources included drugs, gems, oil, taxable wealth, and royalties from mining. Specifically, to capture illicit resources, I calculated the number of hectares of drugs (coca), using data derived from the reports of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Colombian National Police's Integrated Illicit Crops Monitoring System (SIMCI).[12] For resources available from the licit economy, I created variables capturing the combined royalties the government received from hydrocarbons, emeralds, precious metals, carbon, and iron: resources which are often looted or extorted by armed groups. Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Económico (CEDE) provided me data on these royalties. I also generated a dummy variable, *Gems*, indicating emerald, sapphire, and aquamarine locations identified in *The Oxford Economic Atlas of the World* and the gold and emerald mine sites from CEDE data (Jones 1972). I created a measure *Oil*, coded "1" for municipalities with oil fields, pipelines, or refineries, "0" otherwise, based on U.S. Department of Energy maps. For per-capita taxes, I created a measure from CEDE datasets.[13]

[12] I also tested the apparent number of drug traffickers per 100,000 inhabitants using Fiscalía (Attorney General's office) data. However, this measure is only available after 2010, introducing endogeneity concerns.

[13] I am grateful to Fabio Sánchez for sharing the CEDE data with me. I also include a measure of land value, relying on data on the average quality of each municipality's land on a 100-point scale based on Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi (IGAC)'s Department of Cadastre data. This scale ranges from unproductive to excellent quality, based on the land's geochemical and microbiological aspects, factors highly correlated with its valuation. See Caballero Quintero 2006. Unfortunately, these data are available for only a fraction of the municipalities. I use them as a robustness check.

I constructed an indicator for whether or not the individuals belonged to paramilitary groups characterized by a stronger ideology, based on coding by experts from the OAS Peace Mission, Colombian High Commission for Peace, and IOM who were present at the peace negotiations.

I created a binary indicator capturing the imprisonment, assassination, or extradition of the group's leadership, which might have affected the members' likelihood of remaining connected to their former armed group. I also generated a binary variable capturing whether the group to which the ex-combatant belonged was militarily degraded prior to demobilization. This indicator was based on qualitative data and in-depth interviews with military experts and paramilitary commanders.

At the individual level, I created measures for additional controls that might have influenced ex-combatants' likelihood of retaining ties to the other members of their factions: marital status, age, gender, education level, rank (commander or rank and file) and role (combatant or support), duration in faction, demobilization type (collective or individual), and length of reintegration program exposure. Finally, I generated indicators for contextual variables measuring wartime atrocities committed by the paramilitaries and per-capita homicide rates at the moment of demobilization.

Table A.3, Model 1 presents an additive index of postwar networks, Model 2 a binary variable, and Model 3 a factor-weighted index. I then collapse the results to the bloque level in Model 4. All models include all individual, organizational, and contextual controls.

The data suggest that the relationship between local deployment and intact postwar networks is robust to the inclusion of these controls. Other variables that increase individuals' connections to their former armed groups include: if they demobilized collectively, faced lower exposure to the reintegration program (meaning the program was working to disband units), had higher education levels (potentially linked to status within the group), or belonged to armed units that were more criminal than political in nature, with access to certain types of resources, specifically precious gems. Several of the results appear counterintuitive. Individuals who belonged to paramilitary factions that faced military weakness prior to demobilizing were more likely to remain loyal to their groups. It may be that those who opted to remain in the weakened units and demobilize with them, rather than defect, were particularly loyal. Contextual variables that may proxy for community acceptance and security risks indicate less robust correlations with postwar cohesion. However, these may be measured at too aggregate a level to capture the individual-level experiences. Future research could seek to theorize and further test the relationship between these control variables and postwar networks.

APPENDIX MATERIAL FOR CHAPTER 5

This section describes the analyses of selection bias and of alternative explanations centered on tactical terrain and resources that are laid out in Chapter 5.

TABLE A.3. *Determinants of Postwar Networks*

Variables	(1) **OLS**	(2) **Logit**	(3) **OLS**	(4) **OLS**
Proportion local	0.07***	0.79***	0.02***	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.16)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Gender	−0.00	0.08	−0.00	
	(0.01)	(0.08)	(0.00)	
Age	−0.00	−0.03	0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.00)	
Married	−0.00	0.11**	−0.00*	
	(0.00)	(0.05)	(0.00)	
Education level	0.00***	−0.01	0.00***	
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	
Rank	−0.00	−0.08	0.00	
	(0.01)	(0.12)	(0.01)	
Role in group	0.00	0.09	−0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.06)	(0.00)	
Duration in group	−0.00	0.05	−0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.04)	(0.00)	
Collective	0.03**	0.64***	0.01	
	(0.01)	(0.16)	(0.01)	
Exposure to DDR program	−0.05**	−0.32	−0.03*	
	(0.02)	(0.23)	(0.02)	
Military defeat	0.00***	0.01***	0.00***	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Decapitated leadership	0.01*	−0.01	−0.00	
	(0.01)	(0.10)	(0.01)	
Ideological group	−0.01*	−0.15***	0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.06)	(0.00)	
Royalties	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Per-capita taxes	0.22	−2.46	0.25*	
	(0.21)	(2.74)	(0.14)	
Coca	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Gems	0.05***	0.71***	0.03***	
	(0.01)	(0.13)	(0.00)	
Oil	0.00	−0.49***	−0.01	
	(0.01)	(0.17)	(0.01)	
Wartime abuses	0.00	0.00	0.00*	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Homicide rate	−0.00*	−0.00	−0.00*	
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	
Constant	0.17***	0.65	0.08**	0.13
	(0.05)	(0.54)	(0.03)	(0.2)
N	10,811	10,811	10,811	36

Notes: *$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$. Standard errors in parentheses.

It also presents the multivariate results of remilitarization at the organizational and municipality levels of analysis.

Regional Configurations and Selection

To control for potential selection bias arising from differential premobilization regional conditions, I coded localities along several dimensions: licit and illicit resource richness, state absence, and guerrilla activity in the region prior to paramilitary group formation. These conditions capture economic endowments and also provide proxies for social endowments, which may constrain leaders' recruitment strategies. Resources included drugs, royalties, gems, oil, per-capita taxes, and the proportion of the population with "unsatisfied basic needs" (NBI), the conventional poverty metric in Colombia. To capture guerrilla presence, I used data from the geo-coded violent-event dataset described in Chapter 2 on FARC and ELN activity (attacks, ambushes, takeovers of towns, roadblocks, military bases, and taxation) in each paramilitary group's zone of operation prior to its rise. For state presence, I used the distance to the department capital, road density, rough terrain, proximity to an international border, and population density. I also examined whether, as described in Chapter 5, the nature of recruitment correlated with the size of the armed organization's territory.

In Table A.4, I first use the armed organization as the unit of analysis and compare local and non-local groups on these pre-recruitment conditions in their zones of operation using logit regression (Model 1). Given the small number of observations, I test the bivariate relationships. I then coded the municipalities as producing non-local units or not and analyze the data using a logit model (Model 2). The data suggest little if any relationship between resource richness, state presence, or guerrilla activity and the type of recruitment geography. In the analyses with the organization as the unit of analysis, royalties, border, and land area are significant, but only at the 10 percent significance level and only without the inclusion of controls. In the municipality-level analyses, none of the factors are significant predictors of group type.

Tactical Terrain

In Chapter 5, I examine the tactical terrain argument at the organizational level. Here I examine the municipal-level results. Table A.5 shows the average tactical terrain in municipalities that experienced remilitarized violence and those that did not. The roughness of the topography did not diverge in a significant way and, if anything, remilitarization proved less likely in mountainous areas. Municipalities with low road density were as likely to have remilitarized violence as those with higher road density. Although the incidence of violence by remilitarized groups was slightly higher in places close to international

TABLE A.4. *Determinants of Organizations' Recruitment Geography*

Pre-recruitment Conditions	**Logit**	**Logit**
	(1) **Non-local Group Type (Organization-level Bivariate Analyses)**	(2) **Presence of Local and Non-local Groups (Municipal-level Multivariate Analysis)**
Coca cultivation	0.01	−0.001
	(0.01)	(0.001)
Royalties	0.00	0.000
	(0.00)*	(0.000)
Gems	−0.46	0
	(2.18)	0
Oil	0.42	0.762
	(1.96)	(0.472)
Per-capita taxes	−23.13	5.492
	(25.74)	(3.957)
Guerrilla presence	0.13	0.008
	(0.11)	(0.009)
Distance from state power	0.01	0.001
	(0.00)	(0.002)
Road density	0.93	0.221
	(0.61)	(0.336)
Rough terrain	1.96	−0.752
	(1.97)	(0.498)
Population density	−0.00	−0.001
	(0.00)	(0.003)
International border	7.07	0.857
	(2.76)*	(0.703)
Poverty	−2.674	1.183
	(2.524)	(1.120)
Land area	0.776*	0.249
	(0.338)	(0.215)
Constant		−5.719
		(3.563)
N	37	723

Notes: $^{*}p < 0.1$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{***}p < 0.01$. Standard errors in parentheses.

sanctuaries, there was not a noticeable concentration of violence along the borders (shown in Map 5.7 in Chapter 5).

In order to gauge the size of the population with a low threshold for joining a remilitarized movement according to the opportunity-cost theory of recruitment (Collier and Hoeffler 1999; Oyefusi 2008), I examine a poverty measure, "Unsatisfied Basic Needs (NBI)" and, in Map A.1, overlay it on top of the

TABLE A.5. *Tactical Terrain and Remilitarization: Municipal Level*

		Municipalities with Remilitarized Violence	**Municipalities with no Remilitarized Violence**
Tactical terrain	Average elevation	911 m	1364 m
	Average roughness of terrain	0.84	0.87
	Average road density	10.78	10.05
	Average international border (binary variable)	0.08	0.03

incidence of remilitarized violence. The data suggest the statistically insignificant effect of poverty variables at the subnational level.

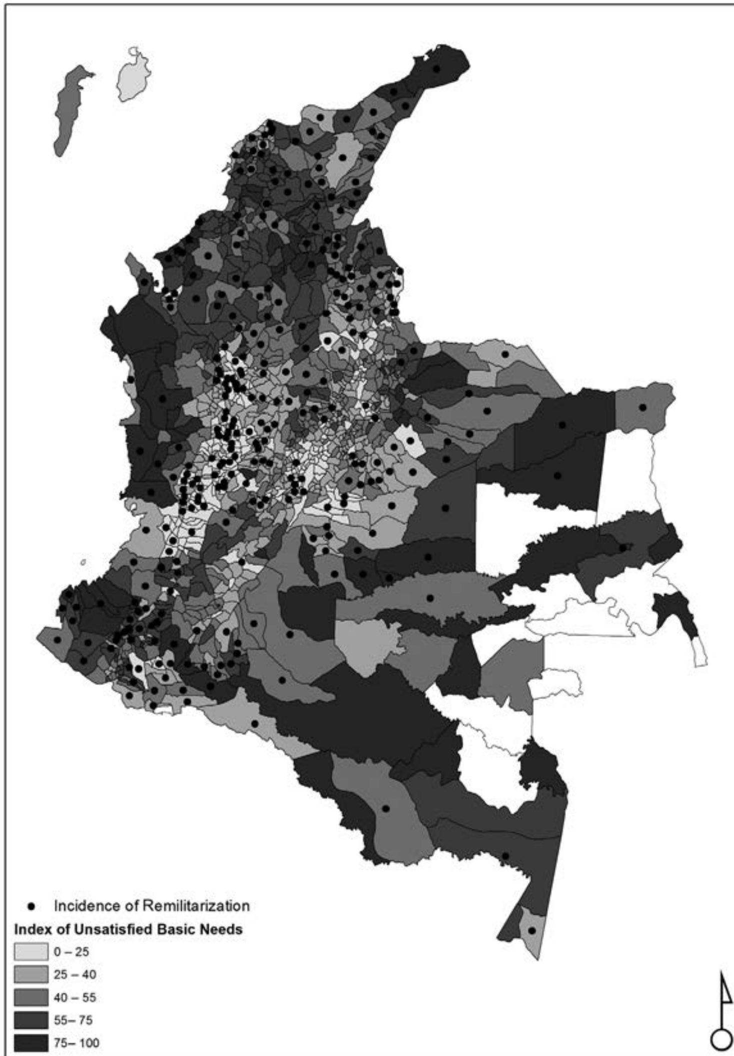
Resources

In Chapter 5, I also examine the resource endowment argument at the organizational level and here explore this argument at the municipality level. I constructed variables to capture the presence of gems, drugs, and oil and rendered each indicator binary. I also generated a variable indicating whether the municipality had any of these resources or not. In Table A.6, I compare resources in municipalities with and without remilitarized violence. Some places with resources experienced remilitarized violence and some were spared such violence. However, I find that the incidence of violence was higher where resources were present.

Multivariate Results

I evaluate whether the variation in the occurrence of remilitarization is related to the configurations of armed groups after we include measures of tactical terrain and resource-endowments. Although involving only a small-*n* (37), I first run the analyses on the organizational level of analysis. Table A.7 shows a nested regression table. It models the explanatory leverage of the tactical terrain and the resources frameworks and then illustrates the added value of the book's geography of recruitment model. At the organizational level, tactical terrain and resources have little explanatory power. The geography of recruitment theory can account for a significantly greater share of the observed variation in remilitarization than can these alternative accounts.

Table A.8 shows the relationship between recruitment and remilitarization at the municipality level, controlling for resources and tactical terrain. To operationalize recruitment geographies for these analyses, I grouped together the



MAP A.1. Poverty and Remilitarization.

configurations that, according to the theory, should have experienced remilitarized violence, and I compared them against the strategic configurations hypothesized to experience demilitarization. Specifically, I coded each municipality "1" if it experienced either the presence of both local and non-local groups during the war or experienced only non-local groups (L-NL and NL-NL configurations). I assigned a value of "0" to municipalities in which only local groups operated (L-L configurations). Again, I present the results as a nested regression table. The municipality-level results demonstrate the impact

TABLE A.6. *Resources and Remilitarization: Municipal Level*

		Number of Municipalities with Remilitarized Violence	Number of Municipalities with no Remilitarized Violence
Resources	Resources (gems, drugs, oil)	136	139
	No resources (gems, drugs, oil)	181	655
	Gems	21	32
	No gems	296	762
	Drugs	86	63
	No drugs	231	731
	Oil	54	65
	No oil	263	729

TABLE A.7. *Determinants of Organizational Remilitarization*

Variables	Incidence of Armed Group Remilitarization				
	(1) Logit Tactical Terrain	(2) Logit Resources	(3) Logit Terrain + Resources	(4) Logit Recruitment Geography	(5) Logit Combined Model
Non-local configuration				3.846	4.933
				(1.170)***	(1.405)***
Altitude	0.000		0.000		−0.002
	(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.003)
Road density	0.808		0.623		−0.281
	(0.685)		(0.734)		(1.128)
International border	4.924		5.201		3.471
	(4.898)		(5.197)		(3.459)
Coca cultivation		0.577	0.349		0.469
		(0.812)	(0.781)		(1.111)
Gems		−0.716	−0.256		−0.186
		(0.701)	(1.305)		(3.219)
Oil		−0.598	−0.654		−1.698
		(0.717)	(0.812)		(0.977)*
Constant	−9.285	0.170	−7.156	−1.281	3.159
	(7.561)	(0.760)	(8.084)	(0.512)**	(12.376)
Pseudo R-squared	0.1086	0.0477	0.1266	0.3897	0.4975
N	37	37	37	37	37

Notes: *$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$. Standard errors in parentheses.

TABLE A.8. *Determinants of Remilitarized Violence: Municipal Level*

Variables	Incidence of Remilitarized Violence				
	(1) Logit Tactical Terrain	(2) Logit Resources	(3) Logit Terrain + Resources	(4) Logit Recruitment Geography	(5) Logit Combined Model
Non-local configuration				0.795 (0.168)***	0.660 (0.182)***
Altitude	−0.429 (0.091)***		−0.342 (0.094)***		−0.366 (0.098)***
Road density	0.454 (0.102)***		0.445 (0.106)***		0.441 (0.107)***
International border	0.629 (0.435)		0.357 (0.458)		0.248 (0.467)
Coca cultivation		0.79 (0.358)**	1.607 (0.555)**		1.474 (0.503)**
Gems		0.374 (0.323)	0.332 (0.363)		0.422 (0.354)
Oil		0.777 (0.227)***	0.501 (0.247)**		0.456 (0.249)*
Constant	−12.940 (1.180)***	−10.329 (0.776)***	−13.061 (1.212)***	−10.370 (0.785)***	−12.992 (1.213)***
Pseudo R-squared	0.205	0.168	0.226	0.162	0.237
N	1,023	1,110	1,023	1,110	1,023

Notes: All models control for logged population size. *$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$. Standard errors in parentheses.

of the recruitment configurations even after controlling for other variables. There remains a striking relationship between recruitment geographies and remilitarization when I control for resource endowments and physical geography. These other variables also matter, however, to explaining which municipalities experienced remilitarized violence. If an organization has remilitarized, deciding where, specifically, to employ violence will become a tactical choice, influenced by topography, strategic importance, and resources. Additionally, groups, once remilitarized, will aim to expand, and will do so according to the standard logics of military strategy.

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Index

Footnote entries are indicated by the letter n followed by the footnote number. Tables are indicated by the letter t. Figures and maps are indicated by fig and map respectively.

abbreviations, xix–xxii
ACR (Agencia Colombiana para la Reintegración). *See* reintegration programs (ACR); surveys
Afghanistan, 241n54
Águilas (remilitarized paramilitary units), 185, 185n69, 186–88, 225
Angola
  MPLA in, 1, 2
  relocation in, 20–21
  remilitarization in, 2
  socialization in, 243
  UNITA in, 2, 66n68, 243n57, 243–44
Antioquia, (Colombian department)
  Bloque Cacique Nutibara and, 150–51
  Bloque Catatumbo recruiting in, 173
  Bloque Libertadores del Sur and, 189
  Murillo Bejarano and, 148
  paramilitaries in, 80t4.2, 183–84
  peace process in, 172n1
  power balances in, 150–51, 155
  Uribe as governor of, 61–62
  wars in, 80t4.2, 140–42
Arauca, (Colombian department), 181n51, 181–83
ARENA (Alianza Republicana Nacionalista) (El Salvador), 3, 229n34
Arrow Group (Uganda), 233–34, 234n43
ASEDSUR (Asociación de Desmovilizados de Urabá), 197
AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia), 51t3.2, 58n37, 58–59, 266
autodefensas (Colombian paramilitary forces)
  defined, 7n15
  ELN collaboration with, 152
  Law 48 and, 53
  in Medellín, 158, 166–67
  state collaboration with, 53, 152
  in Urabá, 196n111
  See also bloques; Frente entries
Autodefensas Campesinas de Casanare, 62n53, 100
Autodefensas Campesinas de Colombia, 58n37
Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá, 58n37
Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio–Puerto Triunfo, 150–51, 152–54
Autodefensas Campesinas de Meta y Vichada, 62n53, 100, 123, 127
Autodefensas Campesinas de Ortega, 50, 117–18, 132
Autodefensas Campesinas Unidas de Norte, 189
Autodefensas de Chepe Barrera, 55–56
Autodefensas de Mamey, 55–56
Autodefensas de Palmor, 55–56
Autodefensas del Sur del Cesar, 55–56
Autodefensas Héroes del Pacífico, 189
Autodefensas Independientes, 58n37
Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia. *See* AUC

BACRIM (Bandas Criminales Emergentes), 114, 114n13, 116–17, 117n20, 123, 210
Bailey, Norman, 129
bandas (organized crime units: gangs), 143–44
Barco, Virgilio, 53
bargaining process
  divergent outcomes in, 14–15, 17–18, 70
  failures of, 24, 33, 98, 206–9, 210n184, 215–16
  networking and, 75
  paramilitary power in, 60, 63–67, 70
  power distribution and, 110–13
  remilitarization and, 206–9
  as research focus, 250–51
  territorial, 153, 153n54
  theories of, 12–15, 24, 25–26
  weakness in, 24, 33, 98
  See also paramilitaries
Barrera, Chepe, 55–56
Betancur, Belisario, 51t3.2, 54
bloques (Colombian paramilitary forces)
  autonomy of, 51t3.2
  vs. guerrillas, 50
  listed, 51t3.2, 107t5.1
  peace accords and, 50
  subway map of, 103–5, 104fig5.1
  See also autodefensas; Frente entries; *specific Bloques*
Bloque Arauca, 181n51, 181–83, 216
Bloque Bananero, 56–57, 150, 193, 198–99, 200–1, 203–6
Bloque Cacique Nutibara
  Bloque Metro and, 143n17
  Bloque Noroccidente Antioqueño and, 154–55
  case study of, 140
  Comuna 13 and, 190–92
  as Corporación Democracia, 146–47, 148–49
  creation of, 141–42
  demilitarization of, 138, 157–61, 222
  demobilization of, 145–47
  disarmament of, 145, 145n22
  drug trafficking by, 160–61
  vs. ELN, 150–51
  embeddedness of, 55–56, 149, 162–67
  Frente Bajo Cauca and, 154–55
  guerrillas and, 142, 143–44, 150–51
  illegal activities of, 159, 159n82
  La Sierra neighborhood and, 162–63, 162fig6.2
  local recruitment geography of, 142–43
  local vs. non-local returnees in, 147–48
  in Medellín, 145–46
  membership in, 144
  military strength of, 153
  networks of, 156, 158
  as NGO, 161, 168
  non-local combatants in, 190–92
  non-state actors and, 155, 157–61
  organizational capacity of, 167–69
  peace accords with, 145–50
  post-conflict reconnaissance maintained by, 149
  postwar cohesion and, 150
  as postwar governance model, 252
  remobilization and, 157, 168
  social leverage of, 163–67
  state collaboration with, 155–57, 169, 170–71
  territories ceded to, 153
Bloque Cacique Pipintá, 62n53
Bloque Calima, 56–57, 192, 193–95
Bloque Catatumbo
  atrocities committed by, 139
  Camilo as commander of, 176
  Catatumbo brigade, 180n46, 180–81
  Colombian army veterans joining, 176–77
  creation of, 173
  demobilization of, 178–80, 181–83, 194
  disarmament of, 178–79, 183–84
  embeddedness of, 184, 204
  Frente Bananero and, 174
  geography of recruitment of, 173–78, 198–99
  guerrillas and, 181, 186
  local groups and, 202–3
  military effectiveness of, 85–86, 139
  non-local combatants in, 174–76, 177, 179t7.1
  non-local networks in, 178–80
  operating zone of, 181, 182map7.1
  organizational erosion of, 181–83
  peace accords with, 181
  remilitarization of, 138, 185, 186–89, 188n86
  rump units of, 180n47, 180–81, 185, 185n69, 186–88
  social networks of, 183–84
  state collaboration with, 181, 181n50
  Urabá and, 192
  weakening of, 202–3
  See also Catatumbo
Bloque Centauros, 55–56, 56n31, 85, 100, 153n54, 215
Bloque Central Bolivar, 56–57, 58n37

Bloque Córdoba
  Bloque Héroes de Tolová and, 125–26
  embeddedness of, 206
  geography of recruitment of, 198–99
  guerrillas and, 181
  information problems in, 206
  offshoots of, 208
  origins of, 200
  peace accords with, 196–97
  postwar cohesion and, 203–6
  power shifts and, 125–26, 202–3, 209
  recruit bases of, 198–99
  reintegration of, 200
  remilitarization of, 123, 138
  renegotiation and, 202
  as study focus, 117
  weakening of, 207–9
Bloque Cundinamarca, 153n54
Bloque Élmer Cárdenas
  atrocities committed by, 139
  vs. Bloque Héroes de Tolová, 209–11
  boundaries of, 99
  civic organizations formed by, 193
  command structure of, 214, 214n211
  creation of, 196–97
  demobilization of, 145–50, 209
  disarmament and, 201
  El Alemán as commander of, 211
  embeddedness of, 204–5
  financial assets of, 214–15, 216
  in guerrilla strongholds, 103
  informational structures of, 203–6
  local recruitment geography of, 198
  name variations of, 116n17
  networks of, 145–50, 203–6, 205n156
  operating area of, 150
  politicization of, 206
  postwar cohesion of, 203–6
  as study focus, 117
  in Urabá, 193
  Urabeños and, 211, 213–14
  violence perpetrated by, 204, 205
  See also Construpaz; Urabeños
Bloque Goyenche, 153n54
Bloque Héroes de Granada, 142, 143n17, 146, 150–51
Bloque Héroes de Tolová
  Bloque Córdoba and, 125–26
  vs. Bloque Élmer Cárdenas, 209–11
  disarmament and, 201
  expansion of, 210
  geography of recruitment of, 198–99
  informational problems of, 206
  informational structures of, 203–6
  Los Traquetos and, 208–9
  postwar cohesion of, 200–1
  recruit bases of, 198–99
  remilitarization of, 196–97
  state power and presence and, 210, 210n184
  strengthening of, 208–9
  as study focus, 117
  Urabá paramilitaries and, 193
  See also Paisas
Bloque Libertadores del Sur, 56–57, 123, 189–90
Bloque Metro, 143, 143n17
Bloque Noroccidente Antioqueño, 150–51, 154–55
Bloque Norte, 55
Bloque Pacífico, 99, 189–90
  See also Autodefensas Héroes del Pacífico
Bloque Sur de Bolívar, 181, 185
Bloque Tolima, 53, 62n53, 123, 127, 153n54
Bloque Vencedores de Arauca, 100, 132
Bloque Vencedores de San Jorge (remilitarized group), 208–9
  See also Bloque Córdoba
Bloque Vichada, 127
Bonito, Pedro. *See* Hasbún, Raúl
Borda, Orlando Fals, 19n19, 20n21
Bosnia, 255n15

Camilo (Bloque Catatumbo commander), 176
case studies
  areas of, 39map2.1
  functions of, 138
  goals of, 139
  as research methodology, 37, 38–41, 43, 138, 138n1
  See also Norte de Santander; Medellín; Urabá/Córdoba
Castaño, Carlos, 53, 58–59, 61, 199–200
Castaño, Fidel, 50–51
Catatumbo (Colombian region), 101, 181, 186
  See also Norte de Santander
CDF (Civil Defense Forces) (Sierra Leone), 235, 236–40, 238n51, 239t8.1, 245–46
CEDE (Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Económico), 42, 119, 133, 269, 269n15
CERAC (Centro de Recursos Para el Análisis de Conflictos), 38n32
Chamorro, Violeta, 231, 242
Chechen War (Second), 234–35
Christia, Fotini, 17

chulavitas (paramilitary group), 49n9
CINEP/PPP (Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz), 38n32
civil war onset, 13n2, 15n9, 15–16, 50, 117n19, 249–50
civil war recurrence, 2n5, 12, 14, 15n9, 15–16, 99, 117n19, 218–20
Civil War (U.S.), 82, 235
CODHES (Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento), 38n32
cohesion. *See* postwar cohesion
Colombian Agency for Reintegration. *See* ACR
Colombian National Police (SIJIN), 41, 51t3.2, 116, 119, 133, 186, 187
Comandos Populares, 199
combos (neighborhood gangs), 142, 142n14, 143–44
communism
  in Colombia, 1, 51t3.2, 224, 224n15, 226, 226n18, 227, 228
  in Peru, 233, 246–47
  in the Philippines, 241n54
  post-communist Europe, 61n48
Comuna 13 (Medellín locality), 100–1, 149, 155, 190n91, 190–92, 191map7.2
Construpaz (Bloque Élmer Cárdenas civic association), 204, 205–6, 213–14
Contras (FDN), 2, 23, 230–31, 242–43
  See also Nicaragua
Convivirs (Cooperativas de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada) (private security cooperatives), 51t3.2, 53–54, 174, 199–200
Córdoba (Colombian department), 38–40, 173, 209–11
Corporación Avanzando Unidos por Colombia (Coravuncol), 261
Corporación Democracia (Bloque Cacique Nutibara civic association), 146–47, 148–49, 156, 162–69
Costa Rica, 231
cross-national research, 50, 218–19, 247, 249
CRS (Corriente de Renovación Socialista), 51t3.2, 55
CTI (Cuerpo Técnico de Investigación), 38n32
Cuchillo (paramilitary leader), 56n31

DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística), 132
Darul Islam revolt, 234
DAS (Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad), 38n32
DDR (Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration), 51t3.2, 90, 201, 223, 253
DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) (U.S.), 141
DECAS (Anti-subversive Civil Defense) (Peruvian paramilitaries), 233, 233n41
defection, 13–14, 20, 63, 85, 127
del Río, Rito Alejo, 53, 204n155
demilitarization
  of Bloque Cacique Nutibara, 138, 157–61, 222
  characteristics of, 3, 114
  vs. civil war correlates, 15
  demobilization and, 216
  embeddedness and, 170–71
  geography of recruitment and, 5t1.1, 97–99
  illegal activities during, 159–60
  in Indonesia, 20–21, 234
  of local groups, 30, 98, 216
  long-term dynamics of, 34
  organizational capacities after, 170–71
  organizational interactions and, 30
  of paramilitaries, 117–19, 118t5.3
  peace accords and, 170–71
  in Peru, 246–47
  power balances and, 24n26, 29, 31, 97–99
  regional configurations and, 10, 99, 118t5.3, 139
  as research focus, 249–50
  in Sierra Leone, 237–40
demobilization
  defeat prior to, 22n25
  demilitarization and, 216
  drug trafficking and, 189
  of FARC, 54, 65
  five-year observational period for, 32
  migration patterns after, 86–89
  non-locals dispersing after, 83
  of non-state actors, 32
  organizational capacities after, 30–31, 97–98, 198
  of paramilitaries, 63, 65, 86–87
  peace accords and, 134
  power shifts after, 30–31, 97–98
  recruitment geographies and, 267
  remilitarization and, 198, 216
  remobilization vs., 169
  renegotiation and, 32
  social networks after, 82–85
  See also case studies; *specific Bloques*
DIPOL (Dirección de Inteligencia Policial), 38n32

disarmament
  of EPL, 199
  of guerrillas, 49–50, 54, 54n22
  incomplete, 23, 35, 114n11
  indoctrination and, 81, 82–83
  international ideology of, 253
  in Nicaragua, 242
  norms of, 90
  organizational cohesion after, 94, 232–33
  of paramilitaries, 57, 67, 68–69, 70, 204, 206, 259
  peace accords and, 134
  remobilization after, 267
  socialization after, 226–27
  state power and, 23–24
  See also demilitarization; demobilization; *specific Bloques*
dispersion. *See* postwar dispersion
displacement, 1–2, 19n20, 28, 50n16, 86–87, 102n3, 119, 187, 225
Doble Cero (paramilitary commander), 141n9, 204n155, 207
Don Berna. *See* Murillo Bejarano, Diego Fernando
Don Mario (Urabeños leader), 195n108, 211, 214
  See also El Alemán
Downes, Alexander, 17
drug cartels
  Cali cartel, 2n3, 51t3.2
  in Catatumbo, 186
  guerrillas and, 114
  independence of, 114
  Medellín cartel, 2n3, 51t3.2, 141–42, 194
  Medellín's combos and, 142
  Norte del Valle cartel, 51t3.2, 114, 123, 189
  paramilitaries and, 114
  remilitarization and, 216
  Sinaloa cartel (Mexico), 47
  the state vs., 190n89
  in zones of weak militarization, 189–90, 190n89
drug trafficking
  autodefensas taxation and, 152
  as *banda* speciality, 143
  by Bloque Cacique Nutibara, 160–61
  Bloque Pacífico and, 189
  data regarding, 269n14
  demobilization and, 189
  FARC and, 57
  guerrillas engaging in, 57
  in Medellín, 160, 160n89
  Oficina de Envigado and, 141, 141n9
  organizational decay and, 169
  by paramilitaries, 47, 50n16, 50–51, 60, 64, 66, 132
  post-demobilization, 189
  prevalence of, 228
  remilitarization and, 132, 133, 135map5.8

Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army). *See* ELN
Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army). *See* EPL
El Alemán (Freddy Rendón Herrera), 58, 196–97, 198, 203–4, 206n165, 211, 214
  See also Don Mario
El Salvador, 3, 47, 229n34
ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional)
  vs. Bloque Cacique Nutibara, 150–51
  Bloque Catatumbo and, 181, 186
  collaboration with autodefensas, 152
  Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris faction of, 55
  emergence of, 49, 51t3.2
  ex-guerrillas interviewed, 37–40
  in Medellín, 140
  mobilization of, 172–73, 227–28
  as non-state actor, 51t3.2
  in Norte de Santander, 172–73
  operational methods of, 49–50
  origins of, 227
  peace accords with, 35–36, 51t3.2, 54
  violent-event data on, 272
embeddedness
  of Bloque Cacique Nutibara, 55–56, 149, 162–67
  of Bloque Catatumbo, 184, 204
  of Bloque Córdoba, 206
  of Bloque Élmer Cárdenas, 204–5
  of Corporación Democracia, 162–63
  demilitarization and, 170–71
  in Guatemala, 232–33
  in Indonesia, 245
  of local groups, 19, 27–29, 77, 91, 143–44
  in Medellín, 168fig6.5
  in Peru, 246–47
  recruitment and, 19
  social networks and, 19–20
EPL (Ejército Popular de Liberación)
  allied with paramilitaries, 55
  battalions defecting to FARC, 55
  Bloque Catatumbo and, 181, 186
  as Comandos Populares, 55
  disarmament of, 199
  emergence of, 49, 51t3.2

EPL (Ejército Popular de Liberación) (*cont.*)
- Esperanza, Paz y Libertad party of, 55, 205, 205n157
- ex-guerrillas interviewed, 37–40
- FARC and, 55, 196n110, 199
- in Medellín, 140
- non-local brigades remaining with, 55
- as non-state actor, 51t3.2
- in Norte de Santander, 46t3.1, 55, 172–73
- operational methods of, 49–50
- peace accords with, 51t3.2, 54
- in Urabá/Córdoba, 199

ERPAC (Ejército Revolucionario Popular Antiterrorista Colombiano), 215
- *See also* Cuchillo; Frente Héroes del Llano y Guaviare

Escobar, Pablo, 2n3, 51t3.2, 141, 152, 159, 160
- *See also* Medellín cartel

Esperanza, Paz y Libertad (EPL political party), 55, 205, 205n157

esperanzados (ex-EPL guerrillas), 199n123, 199–200, 205
- *See also* EPL

Ethiopia, 6–7, 20–21

Fals-Borda, Orlando, 19n19, 20n21

FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia)
- vs. Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio–Puerto Triunfo, 152–54
- vs. Bloque Cacique Nutibara, 150–51
- Bloque Catatumbo and, 181, 186
- cohesion of, 228n31
- demobilization of, 54, 65
- drug trafficking and, 57
- emergence of, 49, 51t3.2
- EPL and, 55, 196n110, 199
- ex-guerrillas interviewed, 37–40
- illegal activities of, 152
- in Medellín, 140
- military strength of, 57, 58fig3.1
- negotiating with the state, 256
- as non-state actor, 51t3.2
- in Norte de Santander, 55, 172–73
- operational methods of, 49–50
- origins of, 228
- peace accords with, 35–36, 51t3.2, 54, 57
- political party of, 54
- recruit bases of, 256
- remilitarization of, 54, 55, 57
- UP and, 54
- weakening of, 57
- in zones of study, 102

FDN (Frente Democrático Nicaragüense). *See* Contras

female combatants, 48, 240

FIP (Fundación Ideas para la Paz), 38n32, 74, 116
- *See also* surveys

FMLN (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional) (El Salvador), 3, 47, 229n34

Fortna, Viriginia Page, 14

FPSG (Resistance Front against GAM Separatists) (Indonesia), 234, 245

France, 82, 235

FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), 3, 240–41

Frentes
- *See also* autodefensas; paramilitaries

Frente Alex Hurtado, 196n112

Frente Alto San Jorge, 203, 208
- *See also* Bloque Córdoba

Frente Alto Sinú, 208
- *See also* Bloque Córdoba

Frente Bajo Cauca, 150–51, 154–55

Frente Bananero
- Bloque Catatumbo and, 174
- as Frente Alex Hurtado, 196n112
- networks of, 195
- Superban and, 193, 206
- in Urabá, 196–97, 199

Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional. *See* FMLN

Frente Frontera, 180–81
- *See also* Bloque Catatumbo

Frente Héroes del Llano y Guaviare, 100, 150, 215

Frente Julio Peinado, 181

Frente Ocaña, 180–81
- *See also* Bloque Catatumbo

Frente Turbo, 193, 196–97, 204n155
- *See also* Bloque Bananero

Frente Vichada, 55–56, 100, 145n24

FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional) (Nicaragua). *See* Sandinistas

Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. *See* FARC

Fundación Ideas para la Paz. *See* FIP

Gaitán, Jorge Eliécer, 51t3.2

GAM (Gerakin Aceh Merdeka) (Indonesia), 234

García, Ever Veloza (HH), 56, 193–95, 194n100, 204n155
Gaviria, César, 199
geographic proximity, 20–22, 28n29, 50, 72, 82, 87t4.3, 102, 150, 192
geography of recruitment
of Bloque Catatumbo, 173–78
demilitarization and, 5t1.1, 97–99
determinants of, 273tA.4
in enemy-controlled areas, 102n3
hypotheses of, 29–30
mapped, 101map5.1
natural resources and, 102–3
network structures and, 18–20, 198
overviews, 3–11, 74–77, 257
peace accords and, 172
policy implications of, 8–9
postwar cohesion and, 97, 268tA.2
postwar violence and, 172
remilitarization and, 5t1.1, 97–99, 123t5.5, 136–37, 139
as research focus, 252
territory size and, 102
geography of recruitment study methodologies. *See* research methodologies
geography of recruitment theory
bargaining process and, 223
beyond Colombia, 229–30
causal process verification, 138
hypotheses, 29–31
implications for scholarship of, 248–57
of remilitarization (overview), 18–29
symmetric/asymmetric warfare and, 228n33
Gilpin, Robert, 36–37
González, Fernán, 19n20
Gould, Roger, 17
Goyeneche, Diego José Martínez, 53
Griffith, James, 83
Guadalupe Salcedo guerrillas, 224
Guardia National (Nicaragua), 231, 242–43
Guatemala, 6–7, 20–21, 23, 231, 232–33, 244–45
Guerra, Julio, 226, 227–28
guerrillas (left-wing rebels)
Bloque Cacique Nutibara and, 142, 143–44, 150–51
Bloque Córdoba and, 181
communism and, 224, 226, 227, 228
defined, 7n15
disarmament of, 49–50
drug cartels and, 114
drug trafficking by, 57
La Violencia and, 38, 49, 221n4, 221–22, 222n8
listed, 51t3.2
military offensives against, 224
National Front agreement and, 51t3.2, 222–23
operational methods of, 49–50
paramilitary activity in areas controlled by, 102, 103
as paramilitary target, 48
peace accords with, 51t3.2, 54
power shifts and, 105–10
presence of, 111map5.3
recruit bases of, 221
remilitarizing, 223–24
the state and, 54–55, 221–22, 223–24
strong militarization of, 226–28
violent-event data on, 42–43
weak militarization of, 224–25
See also ELN; EPL; FARC; M-19; UP
Gutiérrez Sanín, Francisco, 47

Hasbún, Raúl (Pedro Bonito), 194n100, 196–97, 201n140, 206
Héroes de Tolová. *See* Bloque Héroes de Tolová
Héroes del Llano y Guaviare. *See* Frente Héroes del Llano y Guaviare
Herrera, Freddy Rendón (El Alemán), 58, 196–97, 198, 203–4, 206n165, 214
HH (Ever Veloza García), 56, 193–95, 194n100, 204n155
High Council of Reintegration. *See* ACR
homicide rates, 141, 157, 187, 266, 270
Honduras, 231
Humphreys, Macartan, 28n28, 230n37, 235, 253
hypotheses
1.1, 75
1.2, 77
1.3, 86, 192
1.4, 89, 95
2.2, 117
2.3, 30, 196
2.4, 122
2.5, 119
2.6, 123
2.7, 97, 111–12
2.8, 113
2.9, 97, 112

hypotheses of geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization
  hypotheses on dynamics within organizations, 29–30, 32
  hypotheses on interactions between organizations, 30–31, 32–33
  hypotheses on regional dynamics, 30, 98
  overview, 29–31

ICBF (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar), 38n32
ICG (International Crisis Group), 66n68, 157, 238–39, 241n54
ICTJ (International Center for Transitional Justice), 38n32
Ideas for Peace Foundation. *See* FIP
ideological indoctrination, 83n9, 83–84
ideological motivation, 16, 18–19, 42, 81–82, 132, 270
ideologies
  conservative, 1, 48, 222–23
  counterinsurgent, 132
  functions of, 56, 59
  liberal, 222–23
  organizational cohesion and, 93
  recruitment and, 55–57, 102, 132, 268tA.1
  remilitarized violence and, 133
  weakening support for, 56
IEPRI (Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales), 38n32
IGAC (Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi), 128, 269n15
implications of geography of recruitment scholarship
  implications for macro peace literature, 248–51
  implications for meso scholarship, 252
  Implications for micro peace literature, 251
  overview, 248–57
implications for policies regarding remilitarization, 253–57
Indonesia, 3, 3n10, 6–7, 20–21, 234, 245
information asymmetries
  bargaining process and, 24
  causes of, 26, 27
  of local groups, 25–28, 30
  networks and, 254
  of non-local groups, 25–28, 30, 73
  non-state actors and, 29
  organized violence and, 14–15
  power shifts and, 31, 98
  as research focus, 250
  the state and, 254n11
  vertical ties and, 94–96
  See also case studies
INPEC (Instituto Nacional Penitenciario y Carcelario), 116, 266
interviews
  conditions of, 8n20
  as research methodology, 11, 37–40, 38n32, 43, 78–79, 219–20, 266, 270
IOM (International Organization for Migration). *See* surveys
IRA (Irish Republican Army), 3, 3n10
Iraq, 3
Ireland, 3
Isaza, Ramón (El Viejo), 152–54, 153n54

JAC (Juntas de Acción Comunal), 40, 159n82, 163, 166n104, 260–61
JAL (Juntas Administradora Locales), 40, 163, 163n98, 206
Justice and Peace Law (Law 975)
  commanders' testimony under, 57n35, 68n76, 160, 194, 198–99, 202, 203–4
  defined, 10n22, 42n34, 67
  information gathered via, 42, 266

Kalyvas, Stathis, 17
Keen, David, 134
Kocher, Matthew, 17

L group configurations, 5t1.1, 29–30, 72, 98, 124t5.6
La Violencia (Colombian civil war)
  aftermath as study focus (overview), 37–43
  fatalities during, 1n1, 51t3.2, 220
  guerrillas in, 38, 49, 221n4, 221–22, 222n8
  guerrillas mobilizing after, 1
  overview, 220–28
  paramilitaries in, 49
  recruitment patterns in, 226–28
  research strategies concerning, 11
Law 35, 54
Law 48, 49, 51t3.2, 53
Law 975. *See* Justice and Peace Law
Law 1424, 68n75, 266–67, 267n12
León, Juanita, 49–50
Levy, Jack, 36
liberales limpios (pure liberals), 224n15
L-L group configurations, 102–3, 107t5.1, 112–13, 113n9, 113t5.2, 118t5.3, 119, 119n22, 122t5.4, 124t5.6, 136–37, 246, 275
L-L-S group configurations, 30, 35, 98

L-NL group configurations, 100, 112–13, 113n9, 113t5.2, 118t5.3, 119, 121, 122t5.4, 124t5.6, 136–37, 241, 245, 246, 275
L-NL-L group configurations, 100
L-NL-S group configurations, 30, 35, 98
local groups
analysis levels of, 190
configurations and the state, 25fig2.1
defined, 18, 202
See also group configurations under "L", e.g. *L-L*; guerrillas; mixed groups; non-local groups; *specific Autodefensas*; *specific Bloques*; *specific Frentes*
LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) (Uganda), 233–34
L-S group configurations, 241, 241n54

M-19 (Movimiento 19 de Abril), 50–51, 51t3.2, 54, 54n24
Machos (cartel armed apparatus), 114
Magdalena Medio guerrillas. *See* Autodefensas Campesinas de Magdalena Medio–Puerto Triunfo
Mancuso, Salvatore, 58–59, 202–3, 208–9
mapping of recruitment, 5, 74, 81, 97, 139, 198–200, 252
See also geography of recruitment
MAPP-OAS (Organization of American States Peace Mission), 38–40, 43, 116, 126, 265n10
See also surveys
MAQL (Movimiento Armada Quintín Lame), 51t3.2, 54–55
MAS (Muerte a Secuestradores), 50–51, 51t3.2, 274–77
McAdam, Doug, 17
mechanisms between organizations, 30–31, 97–98
Medellín
autodefensas in, 158, 166–67
Bloque Cacique Nutibara in, 145–47, 165fig6.4
case study of, 38–40
combatant-commander relationships in, 147fig6.1
demilitarization in, 100
drug cartel of, 2n3, 51t3.2, 141–42, 194
drug trafficking in, 160, 160n89
embeddedness in, 168fig6.5
gangs in, 140–41
guerrillas in, 140–41
homicide rates in, 141, 157
illegal activities in, 159–60, 244
local groups in, 100, 150–51
paramilitary social networks in, 184
power balances in, 103
reintegration in, 142n14, 158
state weakness in, 103
state-building in, 155–57
zones of operation in, 151map6.1
See also Comuna 13
Mellizos brothers, 181, 185, 188
MEVEC (Mecanismo de Verificación Conjunto de Bandas Criminales Emergentes), 116
MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) (Philippines), 3n10
military defeat, 127, 241
military effectiveness, 20, 73, 83, 85–86
MILPAS (Milicias Populares Anti-Somocistas) (Nicaragua), 230–31, 232, 242
mixed groups (groups mixing local and non-local recruitment strategies)
configurations of, and the state, 25fig2.2
organizational capacity and, 32
in Peru, 233
power shifts and, 24
prevalence of, 23
recruitment strategies in, 32–33
See also LL-NL group configurations; L-L-S group configurations; L-NL group configurations; L-NL-L group configurations; L-NL-S group configurations
MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) (Philippines), 3, 3n10, 241n54
mobilization
of Contras, 243
costs of, 70, 136
of ELN, 172–73, 227–28
future capabilities for, 115
in Guatemala, 244
informational issues and, 250
after La Violencia, 1
remilitarization and, 129
vs. remobilization, 15–16
socialization and, 85n11
as sympathetic to paramilitaries, 61–62
Movimiento 19 de Abril. *See* M-19
Movimiento Armado Quintín Lame. *See* MAQL
Mozambique, 3, 240–41
MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola). *See* Angola

MRTA (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru) (Peru), 233
Muerte a Secuestradores (Death to Kidnappers paramilitary group). *See* MAS
multivariate results, 274–77
Murillo Bejarano, Diego Fernando (Don Berna) (Adolfo Paz), 141–42, 148, 163, 164fig6.3, 169, 196–97
Myanmar, 2–3, 66n68, 135–36, 241n54

Namibia, 20–21
narco trafficking. *See* drug trafficking
National Front agreement (1958), 49, 51t3.2, 220–21, 222–23, 223n11, 224n14
NBI (Unsatisfied Basic Needs), 102, 132, 272–74
networks
  among Medellín paramilitaries, 170–71
  atrocity levels and, 94
  bargaining process and, 75
  components of, 18–19
  geographical, 20n21
  and geography of recruitment, 17–20
  of ideologically driven groups, 93
  of local and non-local groups, 29, 30, 72, 80–82, 94–96
  of local groups, 19–20, 33, 77–82, 170–71
  mapping of, 198–200
  of non-local groups, 19, 33
  organizational capacities and, 22, 74t4.1
  postwar violence and, 33
  prewar networks, 77–82, 78fig4.1, 80t4.2
  rank and, 78–79
  remilitarization and, 23–24, 122–25, 132
  as research focus, 251, 253–54
  of resource-rich groups, 93
  in the U.S. Army, 20n22
  weaponry and, 23
  See also case studies; postwar networks; socialization
NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), 2, 21, 161, 168, 261
Nicaragua, 230n37, 230–32, 241–43
  disarmament in, 242
  postwar cohesion in, 241
  remilitarization in, 2, 241–43
  remobilization in, 243
  Tela accord and, 230–31
  See also Contras; MILPAS; Sandinistas; YATAMA
19th of April Movement. *See* M-19
NL group configurations, 5t1.1, 29–30, 72, 98, 124t5.6
NL-NL group configurations, 102–3, 107t5.1, 112–13, 113n9, 113t5.2, 118t5.3, 119, 121, 122t5.4, 124t5.6, 136–37, 275
NL-NL-S group configurations, 30, 98
non-local groups
  configurations and the state, 26fig2.3
  defined, 18, 75
  as research focus, 255
  See also autodefensas; bloques; geographic proximity; *group configurations under "NL"*; guerrillas; hypotheses of geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization; local groups; mixed groups; paramilitaries; *specific Autodefensas*; *specific Bloques*; *specific Frentes*
non-state actors
  armed, 17, 35–36, 128
  as criminal organizations, 244
  data regarding, 218
  demobilization of, 32
  importance of, 229–30
  interactions among, 6–7, 207, 216
  legal status of, 11, 47–48, 59, 99, 155, 216, 228–29
  listed, 51t3.2
  organized violence and, 14–15, 29
  power shifts and, 40, 112, 241
  as research focus, 254
  security outsourced to, 228–29
  the state and, 7, 14–15, 31n31, 35, 59, 182, 188–89, 216
Norte de Santander (Colombian department)
  Bloque Catatumbo in, 172–73, 174–76, 178, 181, 184–86
  demobilization in, 100–1
  ELN in, 172–73
  EPL in, 46t3.1, 55, 172–73
  FARC in, 55, 172–73
  IOM reports on, 175, 181, 183–84
  paramilitary social networks in, 184
  power shifts in, 40, 188
  remilitarization in, 100–1
  state buildup in, 100–1, 188–89
  as study focus, 38–40
  territorial divisions in, 181
  Urabá combatants in, 193
NRM (National Resistance Movement) (Uganda), 233–34

OAS (Organization of American States). *See* MAPP-OAS
Ochoa, Martha Nieves, 50–51

Oficina de Envigado, 141, 141n9, 159, 211n187
Operation Sovereignty, 224, 228
Organización Nueva Generación, 123, 189–90, 190n89
Organization of American States. *See* MAPP-OAS
organizational bankruptcy, 241
organizational capacities
  among guerrillas, 224, 226–27
  erosion of, 167–69, 170–71
  geographical proximity and, 82–83
  geography of recruitment and, 18–24, 32, 168, 202, 220, 230–41, 267–68
  of local and non-local groups, 74t4.1
  of local groups, 22, 30–31
  militarization and, 31
  networks and, 22, 74t4.1
  overviews, 89–95
  postwar networks and, 74t4.1, 89–95
  power shifts and, 23–24, 30–31, 97–98
  preservation/erosion of, 72–73
  recruitment patterns and, 74t4.1, 82–83
  remilitarization and, 123–24
  variation in, 224–25
organizational remilitarization determinants, 276tA.7
Organski, A. F. K., 36–37

PAC (Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil) (Guatemala), 232–33, 244
Paisas (remilitarized group), 40, 178, 210–11, 211n187, 214n209, 215
Pakistan, 6–7
Palacio de Justicia siege, 54
Paler, Laura, 38, 41, 77, 265
párajos (paramilitary group), 49n9
paramilitaries (Colombian right-wing militias)
  bargaining power of, 60, 63–67, 70
  character of, 47n5, 47–48
  criminal activity and, 65, 66, 132–34, 159n86
  declining in power, 60–61
  defined, 7n15
  demilitarization of, 67, 68–69, 70, 118t5.3
  demobilization of, 69, 70, 91
  disarmament of, 57, 67, 68–69, 70, 204, 206, 259
  drug cartels and, 114
  emergence of, 50–53, 51t3.2
  expansion of, 55–57, 59
  fragmented interests among, 66, 66n68
  franchises among, 54, 56
  vs. guerrillas, 57
  history (overview), 49–60
  informational structures of, 206–9
  La Violencia and, 49
  as laboratory for theory development, 219–20
  leaders imprisoned, 67–68
  legal status of, 47n3, 47–48
  legislators' support for, 61
  listed, 51t3.2, 107t5.1
  locations of, 100, 101map5.1
  Medellín's combos and, 142
  negotiating with the state, 61n50, 61–64, 62n53
  non-unitary nature of, 216–17
  numbers of members of, 48, 48n6
  objectives of, 59
  operational methods of, 1, 57
  overview, 7
  peace accords with, 9, 44–47, 51t3.2, 65–67, 68n75, 69–71
  politicization of, 59, 91
  in prewar networks, 78
  rank among, 65–66, 78–79
  recruitment by, 55–57, 75–77, 81–82
  reintegration of, 67, 67n72, 68–69
  remilitarization and, 55, 70, 114, 117–19, 118t5.3
  social activities of, 59–60
  social mobilization against, 64–65
  state collaboration with, 59, 170–71, 206
  state view of, 48–49
  subway map of, 103–5, 104fig5.1
  support for, divided, 65n64
  terminologies for, 47, 48–49
  U.S. opposition to, 60–61
  zones of operation, 76map4.1
  See also case studies; drug trafficking; ERPAC; MAS; Paisas; reintegration; reintegration programs; surveys; Urabeños; *specific Autodefensas*; *specific Bloques*; *specific Frentes*
parches (neighborhood gangs), 142, 143–44
Paris Commune (1871), 82
Parkinson, Sarah, 17
Pastrana, Andrés, 51t3.2, 57
Pastrana Borrero, Misael, 51t3.2
Paz, Adolfo. *See* Murillo Bejarano, Diego Fernando
PCP-SL (Partido Comunista de Perú–Sendero Luminoso), 233, 246–47

peace accords
  demilitarization and, 170–71
  demobilization and, 134
  disarmament and, 134
  with EPL, 51t3.2, 54
  with FARC, 35–36, 51t3.2, 54, 57
  geography of recruitment and, 172
  literature of, 248–51, 252
  micro-dynamics literature of, 6
  military defeat and, 127
  negotiations vs. military victory leading to, 228–29, 229n36
  peacekeeping and, 126–27
  remilitarization and, 9, 216
  remilitarized violence and, 15–16, 124–25, 134, 216
  renegotiation of, 29
  resource endowments and, 16, 17
  unexpected outcomes of, 69–70
  See also National Front agreement; paramilitaries; renegotiation; *specific groups' peace accords*
People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola. *See* MPLA
PEPES (People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar), 141–42
Peru, 53n20, 233, 233n41, 246–47
Petersen, Roger, 17
Petro, Gustavo, 54
Philippines, 3, 53n20, 241n54
Pirata (paramilitary leader), 56n31
Plan Colombia, 60n46, 60–61
Posen, Barry, 23
postwar cohesion
  bloques and, 150, 200–1, 203–6
  in Guatemala, 232–33
  in Mozambique, 240–41
  in Nicaragua, 241
  recruitment and, 9–10, 72, 220
  socialization and, 73
  variation in, 97
postwar dispersion, 22, 33–34, 88
postwar networks
  data regarding, 94
  determinants of, 267–71, 271tA.3
  geography of recruitment and, 198
  of local and non-local groups, 89, 91, 91n16
  organizational capacities and, 74t4.1, 89–95
  predicted, 95fig4.4
  preservation of, 92
  prewar, 267–68
  research on, 91
  survey questions on, 89–90, 92
  See also networks
postwar violence, 1n2, 1–3, 21, 172
  See also remilitarized violence
power balances, in Medellín, 103
power balances and shifts
  among guerrillas, 105–10
  armed organizations' break up and, 253–56
  Bloque Córdoba and, 125–26, 202–3, 209
  demilitarization and, 24n26, 29, 31, 97–99
  after demobilization, 30–31, 97–98
  local and non-local groups and, 30–31
  among mixed groups, 24
  negotiation advantages and, 31
  non-state actors and, 40, 112, 241
  in Norte de Santander, 40
  regional configurations and, 110–13, 113t5.2
  remilitarization and, 31, 113n9, 172, 202, 220
  as research focus, 255
  in Sierra Leone, 245–46
  state power and, 241
  in Urabá, 210fig7.1
  in Urabá/Córdoba, 202, 207–9
preventative war mechanism, 36
prison surveys. *See* surveys
Programa Paz y Reconciliación (Medellín reintegration program), 142n14
proximity of ex-combatants, postwar, 87t4.3
psychologists. *See* reintegration programs (ACR); surveys

Quintín Lame guerrilla group. *See* MAQL

rank (military), 65–66, 68, 78–79, 89, 95, 178, 253, 270
Rastrojos (cartel armed apparatus), 114, 123, 189–90, 190n89
recidivism. *See* surveys
recruitment
  in American Civil War, 82
  among local and non-local groups, 80–82
  determinants of, 268tA.1
  embeddedness and, 19
  geographic patterns of, 18–24, 29–30, 72
  into illegal armed groups, 102
  of locals by non-local groups, 31n31
  networks of, 80–82
  organizational capacity and, 5t1.1
  organizational capacity effected by, 18–24
  patterns of, 5t1.1
  postwar migration and, 86–87, 88fig4.3

regional configurations and, 3
remilitarized violence and, 137t5.10
socialization and training by type of, 84fig4.2
See also case studies; geography of recruitment theory; hypotheses of geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization

recruit bases
of FARC, 256
of guerrillas, 221
as heterogeneous, 53n20
interaction between, 220
in municipalities, 93n20
network structures and, 19
in Peru, 53n20
in Sierra Leone, 236
See also case studies

recruitment geography. *See* geography of recruitment

recruitment mapping. *See* mapping of recruitment

recruitment model nuances
armed non-state actors and, 35–36
divergent outcomes, 33–34
long-term dynamics, 34
mixed recruitment strategies, 32–33
overview, 32–37
peace considerations and, 35–36
power transition predictions, 36–37
state power considerations, 34–35
wartime alliances and hostilities as, 36

regional configurations
of armed groups, 32–33
defined, 24, 99
demilitarization and, 99, 118t5.3, 139
of local and non-local groups, 3, 5t1.1, 10, 24–29, 32–33
paramilitary demilitarization and, 118t5.3
physical geography and, 99
power shifts and, 29, 110–13, 113t5.2
recruitment and, 3
remilitarization and, 24–29, 71, 118t5.3
remilitarized violence and, 122t5.4
research methodologies for, 99–110, 272–73

reintegration
of paramilitaries, 67, 67n72, 68–69
postwar migration and, 86–87
rank and, 65–66, 68
as research focus, 253, 254–55
in Sierra Leone, 255n14
in Sudan, 255n15
See also case studies; Corporación Democracia

reintegration programs (ACR)
conditions for entry into, 68n75
ex-paramilitary participation in, 68, 90–91, 127, 204, 264–65, 270
family surveys and, 262–63
in Medellín, 142n14
participation required, 266–67
populations participating in, 261n4
psychologists administrating, 41, 41n33, 93n19, 262n5, 263
relocation and, 20–21
services provided by, 67n72, 261–62
See also surveys

remilitarization
in Angola, 2
bargaining process and, 206–9
beyond Colombia, 241
of Bloque Calima, 193–95
of Bloque Catatumbo, 138, 185, 186–89, 188n86
of Bloque Córdoba, 123, 138
of Bloque Élmer Cárdenas, 138
of Bloque Héroes de Tolová, 196–97, 209–11
characteristics of, 2n6, 3, 113–16
in Colombia, 1–2
demobilization and, 198, 216
drug cartels and, 216
drug trafficking and, 132, 133, 135map5.8
of FARC, 54, 55, 57
five-year observational period for, 34, 116–17, 167–68
of Frente Héroes del Llano y Guaviare, 215
geography of recruitment and, 5t1.1, 18–29, 97–99, 136–37, 139
group interactions (overview), 97–137
in Guatemala, 23, 232–33, 244–45
illegal activities during, 114–15, 115n15
implications for policy regarding, 252–57
in Iraq, 3
of local and non-local groups, 30, 98
of local groups, 98, 226–28
long-term dynamics of, 34
measuring, 116–17
vs. militarization, 114–15
mobilization and, 129
motivations for, 133t5.8
at municipality level, 123–24, 125–26, 136–37

remilitarization (*cont.*)
in Myanmar, 2–3
name variations and, 116n17
network structures and, 23–24, 81
in Nicaragua, 2, 241–43
of non-local groups, 30, 98, 224–25
organizational analysis and, 117–19
organizational remilitarization, 136, 276tA.7
outside groups' operational zone, 192–96
peace accords and, 134
postwar migration and, 112n8
poverty and, 275mapA.1.
power shifts and, 31, 97–99, 113n9, 172, 202, 220
predictions regarding, 31fig2.4, 32
regional configurations and, 10, 24–29, 71, 122t5.4
as remilitarized violence, 113
renegotiation and, 29, 172, 202
as research focus, 249–50
resources and, 132–33, 134t5.9, 276tA.6
social networks and, 132
surveys regarding, 261
tactical terrain and, 129t5.7, 130map5.6, 131map5.7
variation in, 117–25, 224–28, 227n26
See also civil war recurrence; hypotheses of geography of recruitment theory of remilitarization; paramilitaries; remilitarized violence; remobilization; strong remilitarization; weak remilitarization
remilitarized violence
allies engaging in, 118
determinants of, 277tA.8
extent of, 116–17, 119–21, 121map5.4
geographies in consideration of, 99
incentives for, 124–25
intensity variation in, 125map5.5
at the municipality level, 122t5.4, 123–24, 125–26, 224
network structures and, 122–25
peace accords and, 15–16, 124–25, 134, 216
postwar organizational weakness causing, 198
recruitment and, 137t5.10
regional analysis and, 119–22
regional configurations and, 122t5.4, 124t5.6
regional dynamics and, 30
remilitarization as, 113
as research focus, 249–50
research strategies concerning, 123–24
tactical terrain and, 128–29
remobilization
data regarding, 42–43, 116
demobilization vs., 169
after disarmament, 267
disincentives against, 168–69
ELN and, 227–28
FARC and, 228
in Guatemala, 244–45
of local groups, 150–51
in Nicaragua, 243
of non-local groups, 225
paramilitary negotiations and, 63, 64
peace accords and, 2n4
peace processes and, 126
recruitment geographies and, 267
in Sierra Leone, 238–39
social networks and, 82, 122, 224
socialization and, 82
See also remilitarization; *specific Bloques*
RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), 3, 240–41
renegotiation
by Catatumbo paramilitaries, 184
demobilization and, 32, 155
by Héroes del Llano y Guaviare, 215
of peace bargains, 24
postwar, 117–18, 154
remilitarization and, 29, 172, 202
successful/unsuccessful, 5t1.1
See also case studies
research methodologies
components of, 11
dispersion data, 88
fieldwork areas visited, 38–40
overviews, 37–43, 74–75
for postwar social networks, 92
for power shifts, 110–13
for recruitment and remilitarized violence, 136–37, 137t5.10
for regional configurations, 99–110
research design and, 37–43
research strategy, 8
for resources, 133
for tactical terrain, 128–29, 272–74
See also case studies; interviews; selection issues; surveys; violent-event data
resource endowment
in Colombian conflict, 228
data regarding, 269, 272, 274
financial, 93, 132–33, 134t5.9, 160–61, 194n105
ideologies and, 132
peace accords and, 16, 17

tactical terrain and, 127–32
in theories of armed organizations, 16–17
See also case studies
Reyes Posada, Alejandro, 50n16
rising power mechanism, 36–37
Rojas Pinilla, Gustavo, 51t3.2
Rondas Campesinas (Peru), 233, 233n41, 246–47, 247n64
RUF (Revolutionary United Front) (Sierra Leone), 235, 236–40, 239t8.1, 245–46

SAME (Sistema de Acompañamiento, Monitoreo, y Evaluación), 259–60
See also IOM; reintegration; surveys
Samii, Cyrus, 38, 41, 77, 265
Sánchez, Fabio, 42, 269n15
Sandinistas (FSLN) (Nicaragua), 2, 230–31, 231n38, 242–43, 243n56
Santos, Juan Manuel, 51t3.2, 57
Savimbi, Jonas, 243–44
Second Chechen War, 234–35
SEI (Sistemas Especializados de Información), 265n8
See also surveys
selection issues, 43, 99–110, 170–71, 248–51, 267–68, 272–73
self-defense forces. *See* autodefensas
Selznick, Philip, 170–71, 214
SENA (Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje), 199n123, 200n133
shadow of future civilian/ex-combatant contact, 21, 21n24, 28, 63, 167, 183–84
Sierra Leone
army of, 235
cohesion in, 237–40, 238n51, 239t8.1
dispersion in, 237–40
international presence in, 246n61
Kamajor units in, 236, 236n48, 237
local vs. non-local recruitment in, 230n37, 236, 239t8.1
networks in, 236–37, 239t8.1, 239t8.2
paramilitary recruit profiles in, 82
power balances in, 245–46
rebels becoming militias in, 230n37
reintegration in, 255n14
remilitarization prevented in, 245–46, 246n62
research data on, 236n46
research strategies concerning, 11
socialization in, 239–40, 245–46
SIJIN. *See* Colombian National Police
SIMCI (Sistema Integrado de Monitoreo de Cultivos Ilícitos), 133, 269
SLA (Sierra Leone Army), 235
social networks. *See* networks; postwar networks
socialization
among local and non-local groups, 82–83
in Angola, 243
cohesion and, 83, 239–40
conflict experience and, 73
disarmament and, 226–27
evaluation of, 83
importance of, 6
of local groups, 84
military effectiveness and, 82–86
postwar cohesion and, 73
remobilization and, 82
in Sierra Leone, 239–40, 245–46
Somoza, Augusto, 230–31, 231n38
Sri Lanka, 20–21
SSR (security-sector reform), 255
Staniland, Paul, 17
state power and presence
disarmament and, 23–24
vs. drug cartels, 190n89
fragmented, 7
vs. guerrillas, 223–24
hypotheses regarding, 30, 98
importance of, 229–30
information asymmetries vs., 254n11
local and non-local group configurations and, 25fig2.2
local group configurations and, 25fig2.1
militarization of, 24
non-local groups configurations and, 26fig2.3
Operation Sovereignty and, 224, 228
power distribution and, 24
power sharing and, 221n4
in recruitment models, 34–35
regional configurations and, 34–35
remilitarization and, 124–25
shifts in, 29, 172, 220–21, 241
territories lacking in, 228–29
variation in, 110map5.2
weakened, 7n17, 48–49, 102, 103, 105, 228–29, 229n35
See also case studies; Corporación Democracia; Medellín; National Front agreement (1958); non-state actors; *specific Bloques*
state-building, 139, 155–57, 170–71, 172n1, 216, 220–21, 223, 256–57

Step 1
of geography of recruitment theory, 5t1.1, 18–24, 32, 42, 97, 202, 220, 230–41
hypotheses on dynamics within organizations, 29–30
recruitment and cohesion, 97, 234
recruitment patterns and organizational capacity, 5t1.1
Step 2
of geography of recruitment theory, 202, 220, 241
geography of recruitment and remilitarization/demilitarization, 5t1.1, 24–29, 73, 202, 220, 241
hypotheses on interactions between organizations, 30, 32–33, 97
hypotheses on mechanisms between organizations, 30–31
regional configurations and remilitarization, 5t1.1
strong remilitarization. *See* Bloque Élmer Cárdenas; Bloque Héroes de Tolová; ERPAC; Frente Héroes del Llano y Guaviare; guerrillas; Paisas; Urabeños; *specific Bloques*
subway map of paramilitary organizations, 103–5, 104fig5.1
Sudan, 255n15
Superban (Frente Bananero successor), 193, 193n96, 195, 201n140, 206
Supreme Court (Colombia), 53, 54n24
surveys
of civilians (IOM), 41, 166, 205, 260–61
of ex-combatants (ACR), 10n21, 41, 88n15, 89, 90–95, 265
of ex-combatants (ACR/IOM), 260
of ex-combatants (author/ACR), 41, 261
of ex-combatants (IOM), 9–10, 10n21, 41, 74, 75, 87n14, 88n15, 259, 260
of ex-combatants' families (ACR), 41, 92, 262–63
of ex-paramilitaries (FIP), 41, 79–81, 80n4, 83n9, 83–84, 90, 92n17, 263–64, 267
in Medellín (IOM), 147n33, 163, 166, 184
prison survey (author/MAPP-OAS), 41, 91n16, 264n7, 264–65
recidivism survey (author, Paler, Samii/FIP), 38, 41, 77–81, 83, 84, 86–87, 92, 95, 122, 131–32, 133, 265–67
of reintegration psychologists (ACR), 263
of reintegration psychologists (author/ACR), 41, 93, 93n19, 93n20, 263
tactical terrain, 127–32, 129t5.7, 130map5.6, 131map5.7, 272–74, 274tA.5
Tajikistan, 134–35
Tela accord (Nicaragua), 230–31
theories of armed groups' postwar trajectories
bargaining theory and, 12–16, 25–26
civil war onset/recurrence and, 15–16
divergence among paramilitaries, 56–57
literature of, 16–18
network structures in, 17–20
overview, 12–43
of remilitarization, 218–19
resource endowment and, 16–17
Tolima (Colombian department), 54–55, 224, 225–26
transitions (war to peace)
actors remaining in arms during, 35
armed organizations during, 4–11
benefits of, 134
beyond Colombia, 228–47
local groups and, 216
network structures in, 3
state power during, 34–35
Traquetos (remilitarized group), 208–9
Trejo, Guillermo, 17

UCDP (Uppsala Conflict Data Program) dataset, 250n5
Uganda, 233–34, 234n43
UNDOC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), 133, 269
See also SIMCI
UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 38n32
UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola). *See* Angola
United States
CIA and, 141
Civil War in, 82, 235
Contras and, 231, 242
DEA and, 141
deployment patterns in, 235
extraditions to, 45t3.1, 68, 69, 141, 148, 169
vs. the Medellin drug cartel, 141
paramilitaries opposed by, 60–61
Plan Colombia of, 60n46
recruitment in, 82, 235
unsatisfied basic needs (NBI), 102, 132, 272–74
UP (Unión Patriótica), 51t3.2, 54
See also FARC

UPA (Uganda People's Army), 233–34
Urabá/Córdoba (Colombian regions)
case study of, 172, 197map7.3, 202, 209–11
demobilization in, 206–7, 207n169
distribution of power in, 210fig7.1
EPL in, 199
ex-paramilitaries from, 195–96
FARC in, 55, 196
Frente Bananero in, 194, 196–97, 199
Frente Turbo in, 56
gangs in, 244
informational structures of, 206–9
local group cohesion in, 200–1
paramilitaries in, 196n110, 196n111, 196–98
peace agreements in, 206–7
power shifts in, 198, 202, 207–9
recruitment patterns in, 197–98
reintegration in, 194, 200
remilitarized zones in, 212map7.4
resources of, 196
state cooperation in, 206
as study focus, 38–40
violence spillover into, 209–11
zones of operation in, 197map7.3
in zones of study, 102
See also Bloque Bananero; Bloque Córdoba; Bloque Élmer Cárdenas; Bloque Héroes de Tolová; Catatumbo
Urabeños (remilitarized group), 40, 175, 211–15, 212n198, 213n201, 214n209
Uribe, Álvaro
as Antioquia governor, 61–62
extraditions ordered by, 68
governing policy of, 64n62
vs. guerrillas, 57, 105n6
National Consolidation Plan, 105n6
negotiations conducted by, 1
paramilitaries and, 63
social pressures against, 64–65
URNG (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca), 232–33
USAID (United States Agency for International Development), 38n32

Valencia, Guillermo León, 51t3.2
variation in the incidence of remilitarization, 117–22, 118t5.3
Vencedores de San Jorge (remilitarized group), 208–9
Verdad Abierta project (FIP), 74
violence and peace overview, 44–49
violent-event data, 42–43, 272

Walter, Barbara, 23, 69, 250n5
weak remilitarization, 29, 186–90, 202, 208, 224–25
See also Bloque Catatumbo; Bloque Córdoba; Bloque Vencedores de Arauca; guerrillas; *specific Bloques*
Weinstein, Jeremy, 16, 26, 26n27, 100, 161, 235, 250, 253
Wolff, Navarro, 54
Wood, Elisabeth Jean, 17

YATAMA (Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka) (Contra faction) (Nicaragua), 231

Zimbabwe, 14

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