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Beyond Linear Transition(s) to Justice:
Intra-Urban Displacement and Transmission of Memories in Medellin, Colombia

Anna Rahel Eva Fischer

Thesis adviser: Professor Graeme Simpson
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Abstract.

This thesis critically interrogates experiences of violence in relation to forced intra-urban displacement and trans-generational transmission of memories in Medellin, Colombia. By situating spatio-temporal violence – *slow violence* in Rob Nixon’s terms – at the heart of its analysis, this study contrasts the enduring experiences of serial displacement with time-limited and linear transitions to justice. First, the study reveals the discursive, legal and political detachment of intra-urban displacement from regional displacement as enshrined in the current Colombian transitional justice framework. It demonstrates how the lived experience of violence exceeds the temporality of those transitional mechanisms. Second, this work exposes the ongoing nature of serial displacement as historical injuries in the form of inherited memories of violence. The latter mark certain places as areas of no-return and assigns territorial stigma to identities in the city. The absence of a justice framework that can respond to those experiences results in a feeling of non-belonging. The latter limits the exercise of full citizenship in Hannah Arendt’s terms. Third, the emphasis of current transitional justice debates on limited understandings of what constitutes violence, harm, and transition effectively obscures the complex repercussions of violence *and* the (re-) construction of justice in the everyday by displaced persons in Medellin. Ultimately, to focus on the *continuity* of the enduring nature of serial displacement and on the political agency of those that experienced serial displacement reveals transformative projects of *systemic justice* as urgent in present times.



“Para que No Regrese el Miedo de Nuestros Papas”¹ – Jóvenes Campesinos de Toledo Norte de Antioquia, Colombia.

“Evoking the experience of violence that has left peasants, the indigenous, and black population without sleep and remembering our history of peace negotiations, the question arises why we, as an urban population who have experienced several decades of violence, we, who have endured the invisible borders, would say no to the “Yes” for peace? Why could we thwart the right of other people to live without fear? Why could we, the urbanites, commandeer the right to not leave the peasant to sleep in tranquility?”²

¹ The slogan „For that the fear of our parents does not return“ has been on one of the banners of the youth organization of the peasants from Toledo de Norte Antioquia which is a rural region close to Medellín that has been heavily affected by violence during the internal Colombian conflict. The youth organization marched in Medellín on the 20th of July in the “Marcha por la Paz” – the march for peace – in order to demonstrate in favor of the referendum for the peace accords in October 2016.

² “Al evocar la experiencia de la violencia que ha dejado sin dormir a campesinos, indígenas y negritudes, y al recordar nuestra historia de negociaciones de paz, cabe preguntar ¿Por qué los ciudadanos que hemos vivido la violencia, que hemos padecido las fronteras invisibles, diríamos no al Si por la paz?, ¿por qué podríamos frustrar el derecho de otras personas a vivir sin miedo?, ¿por qué nosotros, los urbanos, podríamos arrogarnos el derecho a no dejar dormir tranquilamente a los campesinos? ¿Por qué la paz no puede ser de todos?” In: Adrián Restrepo Parra, “Volver a dormir tranquilos,” 19/08/2016, correspondencia con Adriana.

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“The violent event attaches itself with its tentacles into everyday life and folds itself into the recesses of the ordinary.”³

- Veena Das

“Having experienced more than half a century of violence many Colombians, we, have not known what could be a peaceful country.”⁴

- Rodrigo

ii. Introduction.

“When *you* read in a book you imagine how the war would be like, but when you are born here [in Colombia] and you have never known peace, you think that this is the reality, this is the world.”⁵ Maria, further, notes, “I feel that has been [inscribed] already in the memories of my parents and grandparents.”⁶ The account of Maria, who has been displaced in the city of Medellin, Colombia, refers to an inherited memory of war and violence that is transmitted over decades. In my interview in July 2016, she points to a past that has never ceased to be present. Therefore, these inherited past memories live on and inform the visions of peace and violence in the everyday.

Colombia has been internationally recognized as having one of the world’s most severe internal conflict in terms of displacements and disappearances with a number of 6,270,000 people displaced from 1985 to 2016,⁷ or 15,83% of the population.⁸ Forced displacement is

³ Veena Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource] : Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 1.

⁴ “*Teniendo más de un medio siglo de violencia muchos colombiano y colombianas no hemos conocido lo que podría ser un país en paz.*” Interview with Rodrigo, Colectivo de Abogados Carlos Restrepo (Cajar), July 5, 2016, Bogota.

⁵ “*Cuando tu lo lees en los libros te imaginas como será la guerra, pero cuando naces aquí y nunca has conocido la paz, piensas que eso es la realidad, así es el mundo.*” Interview with Maria, who was displaced within Medellin, in July 15, 2016, Medellin. Emphasis by the author.

⁶ “*Así ya lo recordaban mis padres y mis abuelos,*” Interview with Maria, July 15, 2016, Medellin.

⁷ “Colombia,” Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, “accessed January 18, 2017, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/country/?iso3=COL>.”

recurring and permanent in Colombian history. It forms an integral part of the memory of families and communities.⁹ The transmission of those memories of violence, struggle and resistance evoke historical injuries of a decade-long conflict. Historical injuries consist of “forms of violence that are not conceived (within certain theoretical architectures) as such, and therefore are not subject to policies of transitional mechanisms.”¹⁰

Forced displacement obliged the rural population to migrate to the cities.¹¹ There, they were often associated with the culprit of “bringing violence to the city.”¹² Those images of the rural displaced people became imprinted on the urban populations’ minds through inherited memories across generations. This rural-urban divide in the imaginary of violence has been associated with identities in Medellin. This is articulated as *territorial stigmatization*.¹³

Those inherited memories of violence from previous generations not only confine identities; they also mark places. The locations of violent events such as forced displacement leave a stain on the minds of the displaced populations – on the countryside and in the city. In Medellin, regionally displaced persons arrive in fragile neighborhoods where the risk of repeated displacement is high.¹⁴ When they are displaced again, they frequently avoid

⁸ Paula Martínez Cortés, “The Victims and Land Restitution Law in Colombia in Context: An analysis of the contradictions between the agrarian model and compensation for the victims,” *Forschungs- und Dokumentationszentrum Chile-Lateinamerika (FDCL), Transnational Institute (TNI)* (2013): 4.

⁹ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998* (Bogotá, D.C.: Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana, 2001), 18.

¹⁰ Alejandro Castillejo-Cuellar, “On the Question of Historical Injuries: Transitional Justice, Anthropology and the Vicissitudes of Listening,” *Anthropology Today* 29, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 48.

¹¹ Secretaría de Gobierno y Derechos Humanos, Subsecretaría de Derechos Humanos, “Desplazamiento Forzado y Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano: Contexto y dinámica en Medellín durante el 2014,” *Centro Administrativo Municipal* (2015): 25.

¹² Gloria Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado en Colombia: El ‘Reasentamiento de Hecho’ y el Derecho al Restablecimiento en Contextos Colectivos de Urbanización,” in *Desplazamiento forzado, Dinamicas de Guerra, exclusion y desarraigo*, ed. Martha Nubia Bello (Bogota: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados – ACNUR, Unibiblos, 2004): 283.

¹³ Loïc J. D. Wacquant, “The Rise of Advanced Marginality: Notes on Its Nature and Implications,” *Acta Sociologica* 39, no. 2 (1996): 126.

¹⁴ James Bargent, “The Nomad Victims: Intra-Urban Displacement in Medellin,” accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/the-nomad-victims-intra-urban-displacement-in-medellin>.

returning to the very neighborhoods associated with memories of violence — a state of permanent migration that sustains serial intra-urban displacement in Medellín.¹⁵

The interplay of inherited memories of violence over decades and serial displacement in the city points to a dimension of violence that is dispersed in space and time. Rob Nixon coined this type of violence, *slow violence*, which is “decoupled from its original causes by the workings of time.”¹⁶ It is a violence that is incremental, accretive and operating in the everyday. It can account for larger temporalities of lived vulnerability regarding the continuity of regional displacement and intra-urban displacement.

However, in Colombia displacement is legally, politically and discursively detached from intra-urban displacement through the current transitional justice mechanisms. Those programmatic approaches entail an underlying vision of temporality framed by a before-and-after idea of transitions and a focus on specific harm. Those linear transitions reduce complex histories and *slow violence* to singular stories and to a limited set of momentary crime. Transitional justice, then, gains moral traction by agreement: there is a consensus on a specific evil and on the possible tools and options to redress this evil past.¹⁷ This view understands violence as a rupture of the everyday. Yet, this assumption obscures the enduring nature of marginalization of displaced persons in the city.

Nevertheless, the realm of everyday complicates any assumptions on transitions as linear periods from one time to another.¹⁸ It reveals that memory, violence and resistance

¹⁵ Clara Inés Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004,” (MA diss., Universidad de Antioquia, 2007): 56.

¹⁶ Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, US: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

¹⁷ See, David A. Crocker, “Reckoning with Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 13 (March 1999): 45.

¹⁸ Pilar Riaño Alcalá and Erin Baines, “Editorial Note,” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 6, no. 3 (November 1, 2012): 386.

exists simultaneously and continuously. Thus, in the everyday, displaced communities can carve out *meaningful* space in which *systemic* and *transformative* justice can be (re-) constructed.

In this context, I argue, that a shift of focus from current debates in transitional justice to incorporating *continuity* in the everyday is critical. This transformation can account for *slow violence* experienced due to serial intra-urban displacement in Medellin. Because the “creation of new concepts and new ways of conceptualizing [reality] is an eminently political activity,”¹⁹ this shift can render justice as a political project *urgent* in present times.

Ultimately, I do not claim to have an absolute and objective view on these questions, as I am impacted and biased by my own position as an outsider and as a European foreigner. Displacement, when used in the following study, refers explicitly to Colombia, and intra-urban displacement explicitly refers to Medellin and only to the experience articulated in the interviews I conducted. Additionally, this paper is also limited by the focus on secondary literature on Medellin’s history and urban conflict, and by the comparatively short time of the field research.

¹⁹ *Deleuze Y Lo Politico Por PATTON PAUL - 9789875745612 - Cúspide.com*, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.cuspide.com/9789875745612/Deleuze+Y+Lo+Politico/>.

iii. Thesis.

Approaches to transitional justice inherently wrestle with the problem of the continuity of violence. Transitional justice is a spatial and temporal term. It defines the movement *from* somewhere *to* somewhere else, either from distinct places or in time.²⁰ As such, transitional justice always refers to a spatio-temporal marking. Yet, it often proposes an underlying vision of temporality, framed by a before-and-after idea of transitions,²¹ towards national reconciliation and political redemption.²² Within this linear temporality, the field of transitional justice locates a specific moment as the marker of new beginnings and assumes a progression towards closure.

However, I argue that this underlying temporal understanding does not correspond to the very experience of violence of displaced peoples within the city of Medellin. The dynamic of the rural-urban and intra-urban displacement, as well as the memories it generates across several generations, are continuous. They manifest themselves in the everyday. The latter is characterized by simultaneous imaginaries of peace and of violence beyond a serial order of time — there is no linear transition. For this reason, it is critical to shift the focus of transitional justice away from an emphasis on disruptive events.

²⁰ Alcalá and Baines, “Editorial Note,” 387.

²¹ See, “The idea of transition suggests the dramatic end of one era and the commencement of a new one.” Z. Miller, “(Re)Distributing Transition,” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 7, no. 2 (July 1, 2013): 378.

²² I refer to “redemptive” in the account of Makau Mutua. She argues, “the redemption or salvation of the State is solely dependent on its submission to human rights norms,” and “there is also a sense in which human rights can be seen as a project for the redemption of the redeemers.” Makau Mutua, “Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights,” *Harvard International Law Journal* 42 (2001): 207–8. See also in Ruti Teitel’s word the phase II of transitional justice aimed for a form of law that offers “a universalizing language about the aims of forgiveness and the possibility of political redemption.” Ruti G. Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16 (2003): 82.

Focusing on *continuity*, rather than rupture or discreet events, allows the enduring nature of serial displacements in the city of Medellin to come into view. Yet, in Medellin violence of intra-urban displacement is discursively disconnected from the broader internal conflict and relegated to the realm of ordinary crime. Thus, the continuity of violence becomes hidden and therefore difficult to address.

On one hand, multiple displacements result in a pervasive sense of non-belonging and lack of civic trust, which in turn limits citizenship of the displaced persons in the city. This situation presents an inversion of Hannah Arendt's reflection on the stateless: those who are considered to be excluded from the legal citizen status of the State and therefore deprived of their political community.²³ In the context of intra-urban displacement in Colombia, the displaced individual legally constitutes a citizen of the nation but her/his partaking in the political community is limited through territorial stigmatization that generates a feeling of non-belonging, of non-places²⁴ and the absence of substantial rights.

Ultimately, such sidelining dynamics result in a common pattern that speaks to the difficulty of imagining peace. If we do not recognize the continuity and enduring nature of violence as simultaneously existing with the dynamics of peace, it is, in turn, difficult to imagine (and struggle for) peace when violence is ongoing. Hence, through the absent recognition of continuity, those transitions to justice become a space where the evil of specific harms has been discredited and relegated to the past, whereas the future of *systemic justice* and peace is constantly postponed.

²³ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland: World Pub. Co, c1958), 291.

²⁴ Defined in the following as a place where "people are always and never at home." Marc Augé, *Non-Places* (New York: Verso, 2008), 78.

iv. Definitions.

In this study I will draw on the following central notions: Violence, imaginary, memories of violence, and peace.

a. Violence.

Theorizing violence in relation to ongoing displacement – internal and in the intra-urban realm – and trans-generational effects of memories, which mark those spaces of departure and arrival, seeks to reveal the spatio-temporal continuity of injustice. Violence defined as structural violence goes beyond mere negative peace.²⁵ According to Johan Galtung structural violence is unintended, indirect, and refers to social injustice as opposed to violence with a clear subject-object relation manifested in direct action.²⁶ This approach seeks to shed light on forms of violence that are imperceptible. Structural violence also evokes and contributes to the self-maintenance of the social system in which it occurs. As it is hidden, it is normalized in the everyday.

Symbolic violence according to Pierre Bourdieu, refers to the “imposition of classificatory principles which enjoy a compulsory validity.”²⁷ Symbolic violence obscures the larger socio-political context in which violence occurs, often separating violence from the structures that give rise to it. It refers to the naturalization of differences and inequalities without recognizing the true conditions of their creation. As a result “certain indisputable

²⁵ Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 171.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

²⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell, 1990), 136–37.

natural properties”²⁸ are attached to social and political categories without accounting for the power relations in which those categories emerge.

Although both accounts of violence are pertinent for some of the concerns that animate this study, they need to be extended. For instance, Galtung argues, “structural violence is silent – (...) it is essentially static.”²⁹ Thus, this concept of violence – also powerful to illustrate hidden agency in the operations of violence – does not necessarily account for the movements in time and space and sequential change over decades. Yet, the term *slow violence* coined by Rob Nixon refers to questions of time and change. The concept foregrounds “imaginative dilemmas posed not just by imperceptible violence but by imperceptible change” – or continuity – “whereby violence is decoupled from its original causes by the workings of time.”³⁰ Whereas structural violence sheds light on new understandings of hidden causation and agency, slow violence embraces rethinking “descriptive categories of violence enacted *slowly* over time.”³¹ Rob Nixon proposes a framework that accounts for “a violence that is neither spectacular nor instantaneous, but rather incremental and accretive, its calamitous repercussions playing out across a range of temporal scales.”³² This violence then manifests in “the delayed effects that structures so many of our most consequential forgetting.”³³ Thus, this account is insightful for understanding violence as continuity and change over time in relation to intra-urban displacement.

²⁸ Erik Olin Wright, *Approaches to Class Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 111.

²⁹ Johan Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research.”173.

³⁰ Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 11.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 2.

³³ Ibid., 8.

b. Imaginary.

“Imaginary” is a term frequently used in the following study. Although imaginary seems to belong to the canonical vocabulary of sociologist, anthropologist and political scientist,³⁴ it is very scarcely defined.³⁵ This might result from the fact that “imaginary” gains its traction from *imagination*, which, implying the conscious and unconscious, lies beyond any authoritative definition. For John Thompson imaginary is “the dimension through which human beings create their ways of living together and their ways of representing their collective life.”³⁶ In addition to this definition, I would like to think of imaginary as evoking “possibility.” An ‘imaginary of peace’ corresponds to a received idea of what peace is, and to the ability to conceive of peace in a way that would be transformative, which *makes good again*, yet, allowing for continuity in a positive sense. In return, the imaginary of violence refers to the violence that is captured in memory, which is not directly physically lived but transmitted through narratives.

Regarding forced displacement a third kind of imaginary is important. *Spatial imaginaries* correspond to, in Wendy Wolford’s words, “the cognitive frameworks, both

³⁴ There are several works that draw on definitions of the imaginary without explicitly defining the term. Benedict Anderson evokes the power of imaginary in his work “imagined communities;” Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso, 1991); Edward Said draws on the term “imaginative geography” which generates and legitimates “a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding” of its object and space/place [71]. When Said calls the discourse surrounding Orientalism “radical realism,” he refers to a category dealing with “questions, objects, qualities and regions” that is designated by discourse and “then is considered either to have acquired, or more simply to be, reality”[73]. Said points to the fact that “all what we know about time and space or rather history and geography is [...] imaginative.” [55] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* [New York: Vintage Books, 1979].

³⁵ See also, Maaret Jokela-Pansini, “Spatial Imaginaries and Collective Identity in Women’s Human Rights Struggles in Honduras,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 23, no. 10 (October 2, 2016): 1465–79 and Karen Elizabeth Bishop, “Cartographies of Exile : Karen Elizabeth Bishop,” accessed January 19, 2017, //book2look.co.uk/book/pKmkjtrWuE. Steve Graham and Simon Marvín imply the sociotechnical, discursive, legal, geographical and political sphere under their notion of “spatial imaginary.” Steve Graham and Simon Marvín, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (Routledge, 2002); Henri Lefebvre implies “images” and “imagination” under his third category of space, which is “relational space.” Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Wiley, 1992).

³⁶ John B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Oxford: In association with B. Blackwell, 1984), 6.

collective and individual, constituted through the lived experiences, perceptions, and conceptions of space itself.”³⁷ This understanding accounts for the nature of serial displacement as an enduring violence: not only directly physically experienced, but imagined through inherited past memories and spatial categories.

c. Memories of Violence.

Memory loosely refers to “dealing with foundational, often traumatic, collective experiences after the fact.”³⁸ Memories are to be understood as subjective processes anchored in experiences and in symbolic and material markers.³⁹ Memories of violence or memories of traumatic events⁴⁰ refer to the ongoing and transmitted experience of extreme political traumatization, defined as “large-scale armed conflict [that] has taken place [and] that has seen not only the loss of life and a range of other human rights violations but also the destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods.”⁴¹

d. Peace.

Rather than envisioning peace as “the vast region of social orders from which violence is absent,”⁴² in this study I would like to refer to “popular peace”⁴³ drawing on an emphasis on

³⁷ Wendy Wolford, “This Land Is Ours Now: Spatial Imaginaries and the Struggle for Land in Brazil,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94, no. 2 (2004): 411.

³⁸ Definition given to memory in the term course “Memory in Migration” by Jonathan Bach at the New School for Social Research, Fall Semester 2016.

³⁹ Elizabeth Jelin, *Los trabajos de la memoria* (Siglo XXI de España Editores, 2002), 41.

⁴⁰ I am interchangeably referring to trauma and memories of violence in the section “*Transmission of Memories of Violence: The Imaginary of Non-Peace*” for the purpose of this limited study. Yet, I am aware of the fact that the undifferentiated deployment of the notion of memory and trauma has to be complicated given the criticism in response to trauma studies in the past decades in relation to peace-building, transitional justice and humanitarian interventions.

⁴¹ Brendon Hamper, “Dealing with Painful Memories and Violent Pasts: Towards a Framework for Contextual Understanding,” *Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 11* (2015): 3.

⁴² Galtung, “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research,” 168.

the construction of peace in the everyday. This emphasis on everyday practices contributes to the development of local peace based on the sense of (in-) justice of the communities affected by violence. In this regard an “everyday peace,” in David Roberts terms, is one “in which a population’s preferences are recognized beyond narrow liberal confines.”⁴⁴

e. Justice.

Justice in the following study refers to two frameworks that acknowledge the continuity and possibilities of change of slow violence in the everyday. First, it refers to *transformative justice* as it embraces “concerns such as structural and everyday violence” and focuses on “transformative change that emphasizes local agency (...) and the challenging of (...) structures of exclusion.”⁴⁵ Second, it also entails Pablo de Greiff’s three goals related to justice: recognition, civic trust and social solidarity.⁴⁶ In the following, I call the intersection of those concepts *systemic justice*.

v. Methodology.

This study draws on qualitative data gathered through a one-month field research to Medellin, Colombia, in July 2016. I conducted the research through the non-governmental organization *Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado* (MOVICE) – National Movement of the Victims of State Violence. Their members define themselves through their shared experience of crimes inflicted by the State and socio-political violence. I, particularly,

⁴³ David Roberts, “Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, Liberal Irrelevance and the Locus of Legitimacy,” *International Peacekeeping* 18, no. 4 (August 1, 2011): 414.

⁴⁴ David W. (David Wesley) Roberts, *Liberal Peacebuilding and Global Governance: Beyond the Metropolis* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 90.

⁴⁵ Paul Gready and Simon Robins, “From Transitional to Transformative Justice: A New Agenda for Practice,” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 8, no. 3 (November 1, 2014): 340.

⁴⁶ Pablo De Greiff, “Justice and Reparations,” *Oxford Scholarship*, (2006): 451.

approached this organization since their chapter members in Medellin focus their claims in relation to a set of massive forced displacements that occurred throughout the past decade. Illegal armed groups in cooperation with the State perpetrated those forced expulsions in Medellin's most fragile neighborhoods. The cooperation with MOVICE explains why the interviews of this study only refer to displacement due to actors such as the police, military and paramilitary. Forced displacement generated through guerilla groups might have caused different repercussions and dynamics for the affected communities. Thus my field research through MOVICE limits the scope of this study and needs to be considered when assessing findings of this work.

The research included 15 semi-structured qualitative interviews. As I am referring to transgenerational effects on memory and the experience of violence, I interviewed three different age groups, affected by a) only intra-urban displacement, b) only internal displacement or c) by both types of displacement. The first age group ranged between 21 to 28 years old. The second age group referred to interviewed persons between 39 to 51 years old. The third group implied displaced persons from 69 to 82 years old. All interviewees were current inhabitants of Medellin at the time of the interviews, but as a result of internal displacement, not all of them are originally from the city of Medellin.

Unintentionally, the groups consisted predominantly of women, which speaks to a gendered dynamic. I chose to not include a gender lens in this study because of the limited scope of this thesis. However, previous research by scholars revealed that particularly the transmission of memories of violence involves different gender-related practices.⁴⁷ Similarly, the interviews demonstrated that the dynamics of intra-urban displacement affect men and

⁴⁷ See, Marianne Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (March 20, 2008): 104.

women differently. Women, – as far as my study goes, – are more strongly affected by structural marginalization in the city. However, women often experience empowerment and education from previous traditional gender roles when they arrive in the city.

Moreover, this study is also limited in its scope to account for the different generational experiences regarding rural-urban and intra-urban displacement. Youth are differently affected by forced expulsions from their neighborhoods. They frequently cope more easily with a necessary adaptation to new social environments than older generations.

Seven additional interviews regarding intra-urban displacement include the accounts of experts from two local NGOs – *Forjando Futuro* and *Corporación Región* – and by scholars of the University of Antioquia. All interviewees were current inhabitants of Medellín at the time of the interviews, but as a result of internal displacement, not all of them are originally from the city of Medellín.

My objective was to understand the interplay between memories of violence and trauma with internal and intra-urban displacement. Since the accounts of the interviewees refer to larger temporalities of violence, the time frame of my findings involves the experience of conflict over several decades. Nevertheless, the Colombian transitional mechanisms that most affected the interviewees in their current living condition were implemented after 2005, beginning with the Justice and Peace Law. As the interviews are conducted according to a case study design, the findings do not allow for any generalizability beyond the local experience of intra-urban displacement by the persons interviewed in Medellín.

Chapter I – Transitional Justice in Colombia

The IDP population in Colombia is the second largest after Syria.⁴⁸ 7.037.962 of the 8.299.334 victims of the Colombian conflict registered at the *Registro Único de Víctimas* (RUV) in 2016 are victims of forced displacement.⁴⁹ The region of Antioquia, where Medellín is situated, recorded the highest number of victims of displacement when compared to other Colombian regions, with a number of 1.606.878 persons until December 2016.⁵⁰

However, in Colombia the applied transitional justice laws and mechanisms address a limited temporality of injuries. Therefore they fail to render intelligible the structural and spatio-temporal dimensions of violence. Those mechanisms displace responsibilities by scratching out historical continuities, repetitions and causalities of injuries. Especially the enduring violations of intra-urban displacement cannot easily be captured in the range of addressable dimensions of violence; it is particularly difficult to establish causality between enduring dispossession and expropriation with forms of individual violence that is more easily recognized by the law.

a. Rural-Urban Dynamics of Forced Displacement in Colombia

Forced Displacement in Colombia provoked a wide-range of analysis and explications. According to Julio Roberto Meier, Representative of the UNHCR in Colombia, forced displacement emerges because the State cannot prevent the violation of rights of the persons that are displaced. According to him, forced displacement is massive in terms of the number

⁴⁸ “Global Overview: People internally displaced by conflict and violence,” *Norwegian Refugee Council*, accessed on November 23, 2016, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/library/Media/201505-Global-Overview-2015/20150506-global-overview-2015-en.pdf>.

⁴⁹ “Inicio,” *Registro Unico de las Víctimas*, accessed on November 28, 2016, <http://rni.unidadvictimas.gov.co/RUV>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

of persons affected, it is systemic due to multiple violations of rights and it is continuous, since those manifold violations persist in time until recovery is achieved.⁵¹ The displaced population is conceptualized in two ways. First, the population is conceived as suffering from the collateral effects of armed conflict and therefore subject to humanitarian assistance. Second, displaced communities are seen as a group directly victimized by conflict, whose rights were violated and therefore should be restored.⁵² Both of those views diverge from schemes understanding forced migration as part of the process of establishment of the cities or as result of modernization.⁵³ Moreover, the mechanisms that account for forced migration in Colombia mostly disregard forced displacement inflicted by the State.⁵⁴

In the 1980s isolated massacres in rural zones emerge, which introduce the phenomenon of forced internal displacement.⁵⁵ Because of the anti-insurgency strategies of the military and the paramilitary groups and the desire to regain social control by the guerilla groups, actions of expulsion of the local population increased.⁵⁶ Those dynamics of forced displacement refer to a strategy of fear and terror as a part of belligerent tactics.⁵⁷ Thus, forced displacement generates changes in the social structure of society, which implies

⁵¹ Julio Roberto Meier, "¿Por qué son víctimas las personas desplazadas?" accessed on December 22, 2016, http://med.javeriana.edu.co/vidas_moviles/Documentos/victimasdesplazados.pdf.

⁵² Donny Mertens, "Forced Displacement and Gender Justice in Colombia: Between Disproportional Effects of Violence and Historical Injustice," *Case Studies on Transitional Justice and Displacement, Brookings-LSE*, (2012): 5.

⁵³ See, Clara Inés. "Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004." Naranjo, "Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia."

⁵⁴ Clara Inés Atehortúa Arredondo, "Límites para el concepto de desplazamiento forzado intraurbano.: El papel de la acción de tutela y de la jurisprudencia en su construcción," *Diálogos de saberes: investigaciones y ciencias sociales*, no. 30 (2009): 255.

⁵⁵ "Violencia del derecho humanitario en Antioquia," Pablo Emilio Angarita Cañas and INER (Organization), eds., *Balance de Los Estudios Sobre Violencia En Antioquia*, 1. ed (Medellín, Colombia: Municipio de Medellín : Editorial Universidad de Antioquia, 2001), 69.

⁵⁶ Martha Nubia Bello, ed., *Desplazamiento Forzado: Dinámicas de Guerra, Exclusión Y Desarraigo*, 1. ed (Bogotá, D.C., Colombia: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Sede Bogotá, 2004), 24.

⁵⁷ Fernán E. González, *Violencia Política En Colombia : De La Nación Fragmentada a La Construcción Del Estado* (Bogotá: CINEP, Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular, 2002), 22.

ruptures and losses that continue to live on in a collective and individual memory across generations after the specific moment of injury.⁵⁸ Thus, legal responsibilities for this type of lasting crime are very difficult to pinpoint.⁵⁹ Consequently, a multiplicity of actors still benefit from those displacements including all armed actors, the Colombian state as being one of them,⁶⁰ and local and international companies to the point that "there are no displaced persons because there is war, but there is war to have displaced persons."⁶¹

Responding to the increased number of regional displacements, the Colombian transitional justice process implemented a number of complementary mechanisms for redress relevant to forced displacement.⁶² Those mechanisms included Law 387 of 1997, which established for the first time the legal status of the displaced and adopted measures for assistance and prevention of internally displaced populations⁶³; Law 975 of 2005, also known as Justice and Peace Law, which addressed the demobilization of paramilitary groups; Law 1448 of 2011 as so-called Victim and Land Restitution Law aimed for providing compensation and recognition for the victims in the Colombian armed conflict. In July 2012, the Colombian government also established a legal framework for peace. This incorporated Article 22 of the political constitution, which introduced "the right to peace" and a platform for a possible political transformation and demobilization. More recently, peace talks in Havana, ongoing

⁵⁸ Bertha Lucia Castaño, "A proposito de lo psicosocial," in *Desplazamiento Forzado*, ed. Martha Nubia Bello, (Bogota: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados – ACNUR, 2004), 195.

⁵⁹ Castillejo-Cuellar, "On the Question of Historical Injuries," 54.

⁶⁰ Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, "Estructuras Criminales Al Interior Del Estado Colombiano – Analisis y Propuestas de Paz," 14.

⁶¹ Bello, *Desplazamiento Forzado*, 25.

⁶² Additionally, there exists national transitional justice mechanisms that are not necessarily relevant for internal and intra-urban displacement. Those include the National Commission for Reparations and Reconciliation – CNRR of 2005 (closed in 2011), Decree 1290 of 2008, Law 1424 of 2010 introducing mechanism for truth for non-judicial truth seeking.

⁶³ In the relation to Law 387 two rulings by the Colombian Constitutional Court, ruling T-227 of 1997 and ruling T-327 of 2001, also recognized the necessity to provide measures for redress for violations resulting from intra-urban displacement a part of the internal conflict.

negotiations with the *Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia* (FARC) and the *National liberation Army* (EPL) since 2012, and several historical and truth commissions, two of the most famous ones being the *Historical Memory Group* (GMH) and the *Comisión Histórica del Conflicto y sus Víctimas* (CHCV) aimed for a closure of the conflict. After an earlier rejection of peace agreements on October 2, 2016 by a negative referendum, the government and the FARC signed a revised peace accord on November 24 of the same year. Those policies focused on facilitating steps towards a post-conflict national reconciliation.⁶⁴

However, those transitional mechanisms addressed specific moments of violence and therefore failed to recognize the larger temporality of injury experienced by displaced communities.

In the 1990s, displacement derived from a systematic appropriation of land and dispossession by an alliance between paramilitary, politicians, functionaries, leading businessmen, and drug dealers.⁶⁵ Yet, the temporal limitations of the Peace and Justice Law does not account for those historical dispossessions.⁶⁶ Article 5 of the Law defines the Victim in relation to the violations of rights inflicted by “armed groups on the margins of the law,” which embrace guerilla groups such as the FARC and paramilitary groups such as *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC). Article 8 states that victims can claim reparations that restore the victim’s situation before the crime occurred. Those legal mechanisms refer to a momentary violence inflicted by illegal armed groups. Thus, it is an understanding of injury that can be redeemed by punishing individual perpetrators – or hearing their testimonies. The

⁶⁴ Paula Martínez Cortés, “The Victims and Land Restitution Law in Colombia in Context: An analysis of the contradictions between the agrarian model and compensation for the victims,” 7.

⁶⁵ Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, “Estructuras Criminales Al Interior Del Estado Colombiano – Analisis y Propuestas de Paz,” 7.

⁶⁶ Castillejo-Cuellar, “On the Question of Historical Injuries,” 54.

Justice and Peace Law suggests that the paramilitary could submit to a criminal procedure in exchange for “truth” in order to reduce their sentence.⁶⁷ Yet, the collected information through those trials did not establish causality between historical and structural processes of land dispossession with the concrete crimes committed by members of the paramilitary.⁶⁸ The (failed) demobilization process of those groups addressed the violence inflicted by individual perpetrators without holding accountable the systemic beneficiaries of those lasting injuries.⁶⁹

Correspondingly, the Victim Law does not capture the enduring nature and experience of serial displacement. The Law cements differences in the nature of crime. The latter creates a hierarchy of victims in which the right to reparations depends on the date on which human rights violations were committed.⁷⁰ The Law stipulates that victims of human rights violations before 1985 do not receive any reparations.⁷¹ Victims of forced land seizures between 1985 and 1991 do not receive land restitutions, only financial or symbolic compensation.⁷² Thus, land restitution is timely limited to the displacements that occurred after the first of January 1991.⁷³ Moreover, in this legal framework, for victims of displacement to receive reparation, they have only a three months window within which they have to provide evidence of their

⁶⁷ “Ley 975 de 2005,” Fiscalía de la Nación, July 25, 2005, accessed on November 28, 2016 <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/jyp/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Ley-975-del-25-de-julio-de-2005-concordada-con-decretos-y-sentencias-de-constitucionalidad.pdf>. Art. 8, 9.

⁶⁸ Castillejo-Cuellar, “On the Question of Historical Injuries,” 51.

⁶⁹ Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, “Estructuras Criminales Al Interior Del Estado Colombiano – Análisis y Propuestas de Paz,” 9.

⁷⁰ Amnesty International, “Colombia: La Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras – Análisis de Amnistía Internacional,” *Amnesty International Publications* (2012): 6.

⁷¹ Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” *Imprenta Nacional de Colombia* (2012): 9, Art. 3.

⁷² Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art. 3 § 4.

⁷³ Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art 78.

forced displacement.⁷⁴ The Law obliges them to report their displacement within two years of occurrence.⁷⁵

Furthermore, particularly the immunity of paramilitary groups maintained serial displacement. The paramilitary historically enjoyed legalization between 1968 to 1989 as a part of the counterinsurgency strategies by the Colombian state.⁷⁶ Article 1 of the Justice and Peace Law only refers to the demobilization of “armed groups on the margins of the law” considering paramilitary or guerilla groups. It excludes state agents. This legal architecture solidifies the assumption of a *real* separation between the State and paramilitary, although their actions have been structurally interrelated.⁷⁷ The law hinders and even denies the possibility that, as an organization, the armed forces of the State be considered a perpetrator of violence. Furthermore, the Law addresses “political crimes” from which execution *hors de combat*, kidnapping and forced disappearances are excluded according to a ruling by the Colombian Constitutional Court.⁷⁸ Despite the intended demobilization process for paramilitary groups, in 2012, according to the Colombian Ministry of Justice, five paramilitary structures, the major ones *Clan Úsuga* and *Los Rastrojos*, still operated with around 4.170 men.⁷⁹ Thus, the stipulations of the Justice and Peace Law hide a structural relationship

⁷⁴ Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art 61.

⁷⁵ “La persona víctima de desplazamiento forzado deberá rendir declaración ante cualquiera de las instituciones que integran el Ministerio Público, dentro de los dos (2) años siguientes a la ocurrencia del hecho que dio origen al desplazamiento, siempre y cuando estos hechos hubiesen ocurrido a partir del 1o de enero de 1985, y no se encuentre registrada en el Registro Único de Población Desplazada.” Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art. 61.

⁷⁶ Jennifer S. Holmes and Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres, “Violence and the State: Lessons from Colombia,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 2 (March 4, 2014): 374, doi:10.1080/09592318.2013.857939.

⁷⁷ Castillejo-Cuellar, “On the Question of Historical Injuries,” 51.

⁷⁸ Catalina Díaz, “Colombia’s Bid for Justice and Peace,” in *Building a Future on Peace and Justice*, ed. Kai Ambos, Judith Large, and Marieke Wierda (Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2009), 13.

⁷⁹ Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, “Estructuras Criminales Al Interior Del Estado Colombiano – Analisis y Propuestas de Paz,” 20.

between paramilitary and state. The reform of 2012, Law 1592, did consider collective harm, but upheld the exclusion of the State as perpetrator. Yet, paramilitary groups *and* the State had mostly perpetrated displacement.⁸⁰ Therefore, the immunity of those actors, due to failed demobilization, sustained enduring violations of land dispossessions and forced expulsion.

The Victim Law posited for the first time internal displacement as a category of victimization.⁸¹ However, this law does not correct the aforementioned impunity of perpetrators introduced by the Justice and Peace Law.⁸² The granting of material, political and symbolic reparations to the victim does not imply the recognition of state responsibility in the crimes committed during conflict.⁸³ According to Article 3 § 2 and § 3 of the Victim Law, neither members of the armed forces, nor victims of ordinary crime are considered victims. The victim of displacement is also only recognized in the terms of the crimes generally addressed by the law, namely scratching out the victim of ordinary crime and of violations inflicted by state agents.⁸⁴ In Article 9 the State denies its legal responsibility in relation to the crimes committed during the Colombian internal conflict, stating “The measures of care, assistance and reparation inscribed in this law, (...) do not imply recognition or may not be presumed or interpreted as recognizing the responsibility of the State (...) as well as any other type of responsibility for the State or its agents.”⁸⁵ It follows that a clear asymmetrical image of the role and workings of the State and its agents is introduced, as they cannot be

⁸⁰ Movimiento Nacional de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado, “Estructuras Criminales Al Interior Del Estado Colombiano – Analisis y Propuestas de Paz,” 19.

⁸¹ See, Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Chapter III.

⁸² Nelson Rojas Molina, “Ley de víctimas y desaparición forzada en Colombia,” 2013, 47.

⁸³ Amnesty International, “Colombia: La Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras – Análisis de Amnsitá Internacional,” 7.

⁸⁴ Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art § 20.

⁸⁵ “No implican reconocimiento ni podrán presumirse o interpretarse como reconocimiento de la responsabilidad del Estado (...) como tampoco ningún otro tipo de responsabilidad para el Estado o sus agentes.(...)” Ministerio del Interior, República de Colombia, “Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras Y Decretos Reglamentarios,” Art. 9.

considered perpetrators. Thus, this legal framework impedes looking at the workings of structural or slow violence as dimensions of spatio-temporal crimes inflicted, not only, but in part by the State.

Furthermore, the inefficiency of those rights in relation to land restitution implemented through the Victim Law holds large populations in a condition of displacement, as they could not return to their original lands, if they would want to. Human Rights Watch declared that less than 1% of Colombia's six million victims of forced displacement have acquired titles to their land, three years after the Victim Law was enacted, in 2014.⁸⁶ Moreover, in the new peace accord resources for assistance of the displaced population are scarce. An integral long-term approach that possibly could address displacement in the rural realm is missing due to the focus on humanitarian assistance.⁸⁷ As a consequence, regionally displaced populations continue to be increasingly relegated to the city.⁸⁸ This is why the limited temporality of the transitional justice laws erected categories of crime, perpetrators and victims that engender and sustain intra-urban displacement in Medellin.

b. Continuities of Serial Intra-Urban Displacement in Medellin

Intra-urban displacement soared in the past two decades.⁸⁹ In 2012, 9,322 people in Colombia's second-largest city, Medellin, registered as victims of this phenomenon.⁹⁰ The regionally displaced population arrives in particularly fragile neighborhoods, where the levels

⁸⁶ Human Rights Watch, "El riesgo de volver a casa: Violencia y amenazas contra desplazados que reclaman restitución de sus tierras en Colombia," *Impreso USA*, September (2013): 29.

⁸⁷ Martin Gottwald, "Peace in Colombia and Solutions for Its Displaced People," *Forced Migration Review; Oxford*, no. 52 (May 2016): 16.

⁸⁸ Consejería para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento, *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas: una aproximación desde los casos de Buenaventura, Tumaco y Soacha* (CODHES, 2012), 16.

⁸⁹ Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado. "Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellin 2009-2010." *Universidad de Antioquia* (2011): 7.

⁹⁰ Bargent, "The Nomad Victims."

of violence are higher.⁹¹ Therefore, intra-urban displacement resulting from threat and violence disproportionately affects those previously displaced populations in the city of Medellin after arrival.⁹² In this context, the characterization of forced intra-urban displacement relates to two perspectives. First, it is perceived as part of the internal forced displacement in Colombia, showing some of its characteristics. Second, it is understood as a manifestation of forced migration within the same city.⁹³ In this regard, two constitutive criteria are necessary for the qualification of intra-urban displacement. First, the cause for migration has to be a violence that disrupts public order and second, migration has to occur in the urban realm.⁹⁴

In the beginning of the 1970s the department of Antioquia presents the highest polls of violence in the country, reaching its core in 1991.⁹⁵ In this year, Medellin counted 396 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants.⁹⁶ With the beginning of the 1990s, exclusion becomes the central constitutive element of urbanization.⁹⁷ In the following years, the urban conflict in Medellin has been analyzed as “Guerra Urbana” exposing a microcosm of the national Colombian armed conflict.⁹⁸ This period produced countless numbers of “urban victims,”

⁹¹ Instituto Popular de Capacitación, “Desplazamiento intraurbano en Medellín: Cíclico e Invisible,” October 2013, accessed on November 3, 2016, <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Desplazamiento%20intraurbano%20en%20Medellin.pdf>.

⁹² Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado, “Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellín 2009-2010,” 5.

⁹³ Arredondo, “Límites para el concepto de desplazamiento forzado intraurbano,” 242.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 255.

⁹⁵ “Violencia del derecho humanitario en Antioquia,” in *Balance de Los Estudios Sobre Violencia En Antioquia*, eds. Angarita Cañas and INER (Organization), 2.

⁹⁶ Michel Misse et al., *Ciudades en la encrucijada : violencia y poder criminal en Río de Janeiro, Medellín, Bogotá y ciudad Juárez* (Bogotá: Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2014), 27.

⁹⁷ Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 287.

⁹⁸ Elsa Blair, Marisol Grisales Hernández, and Ana María Muñoz Guzmán, “Conflictividades urbanas vs. «guerra» urbana: otra «clave» para leer el conflicto en Medellín,” *Universitas Humanística* 67, no. 67 (June 1, 2009): 32.

which in relation to displacement are frequently re-displaced.⁹⁹ Thus, serial displacements and re-settlements in the city hint at an ongoing process.¹⁰⁰

However, the causality between intra-urban displacements and regional displacements has been discursively and legally sidelined. The urban realm is one of the specific areas of focus in relation to IDP population on a global scale.¹⁰¹ Displacement to the cities has been said to be a more likely cause of intra-city displacement as well.¹⁰² According to the Colombian *Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento* (CODHES), the major characteristic of internal forced displacement consists in the uprooting of the rural populations and their (re-) settlement in intermediate cities and large capitals of the country.¹⁰³ Yet, most of the inhabitants and the municipality of Medellín believe that this displacement has little to do with the broader internal conflict.¹⁰⁴ This conflation of those two understandings of intra-urban displacement – as a dynamic of the internal conflict and as a result of ordinary urban violence – contributes to the omission of the recognition of urban victims of forced displacement as victims of the larger conflict.

The phenomenon of intra urban-displacement is particularly linked to the aforementioned transitional justice mechanisms. The ruling T-268 of 2003 by the Colombian

⁹⁹ Clara Inés Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004,” 19.

¹⁰⁰ Luz Amparo Sánchez M., “El desplazamiento forzado intraurbano: negación del derecho a la ciudad,” in *Poniendo tierra de por medio: migración forzada de colombianos en Colombia, Ecuador y Canadá* ed. Pilar Riaño Alcalá, Marta Inés Villa Martínez, and Ana María Jaramillo A, (Corporación Región, 2008), 169.

¹⁰¹ Human Rights Council, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani,” (A/HRC/19/54), December 26, 2011, 11 § 33.

¹⁰² Human Rights Council, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani,” 11, § 36.

¹⁰³ Consejería para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento, *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas*, 22.

¹⁰⁴ Clara Inés Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004,” 22.

Constitutional Court in relation to a massive forced displacement,¹⁰⁵ which occurred in the neighborhood *El Salado* in the *Comuna 13* in Medellín, recognized intra-urban displacement as part of the internal conflict for the first time.¹⁰⁶ Yet, as previously explained, the Victim Law introduced clear categories of violations, distinguishing between political crime committed as part of the Colombian internal conflict and ordinary crime.¹⁰⁷ Thus, victims of displacement could only claim reparations and recognition for their rights violations if those violations fell into the terms of crimes committed as a result of the internal conflict. According to Miriam Aukerman, ordinary crime, which has been undertaken for nonpolitical purposes, concerns individual criminals.¹⁰⁸ The relegation of victims of serial intra-urban displacement to the categories of ordinary crime hides that, in fact, they are affected by structural and historical injuries, – not by damages inflicted by one individual perpetrator.

Medellín kept attracting rural migrants while the emergence of “militias” that collaborated with police and military marked a new phase of the urban conflict.¹⁰⁹ Most of the armed groups that demobilized through the Justice and Peace Law arrived in the city as so-called BACRIM, “criminal groups,” belonging legally to the category of ordinary crime.¹¹⁰ Non-state armed groups that derived from the officially demobilized paramilitaries are estimated to have members in more than 400 municipalities, notably in urban areas such as Medellín.¹¹¹

Moreover, BACRIM is most responsible for intra-urban displacements according to the

¹⁰⁵ This sentence draws on two previous sentences, Sentencias T 227 de 1997 y T 327 de 2001, that acknowledged displacement but not intra-urban displacement. See Arredondo, “Límites para el concepto de desplazamiento forzado intraurbano.”

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁰⁷ Amnesty International, “Colombia: La Ley de Víctimas y de Restitución de Tierras – Análisis de Amnistía Internacional,” 7.

¹⁰⁸ Miriam J. Aukerman, “Extraordinary Evil, Ordinary Crime: A Framework for Understanding Transitional Justice,” *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 15 (2002): 41.

¹⁰⁹ Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra: Desplazamiento forzado en la Comuna 13* (Taurus, 2011), 62.

¹¹⁰ Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 283.

¹¹¹ Gottwald, “Peace in Colombia and Solutions for Its Displaced People,” 16.

Registro Unico de las Víctimas in Medellín.¹¹² Since the transitional justice framework does not cover the crimes by those groups, displaced persons within the city often could not register for intra-urban displacement; the crime committed against them was *just* ordinary crime. It follows that the government overlooked the continuity of paramilitarism in the city. More recently, in May 2013 a ruling in Medellín acknowledged intra-urban displacement of 18 families that has been perpetrated by specific groups of BACRIM.¹¹³ However, there exists still no recognition if the perpetrator of the crime or threat that provokes intra-urban displacement simply denies being a member of those illegal groups.

In addition, CODHES points to difficulties of including victims of forced displacement in the *Registro Único de Víctimas*, where they could access reparations for intra-urban displacement.¹¹⁴ This according to them results from the high numbers of victims who refuse to register crimes committed against them out of fear. Moreover, as this legal framework, according to Luz Patricia Correa, grants the possibilities for reparations for displacement only for 10 years, – from which 5 have passed, – the possibilities for integral reparations of victims of intra-urban displacement are limited.¹¹⁵ Thus, although there exists a legal recognition of intra-urban displacement, the artificial separation from ordinary and political crime makes it impossible for victims of intra-urban displacement to claim their rights and reparations. This, in turn, sustains intra-urban displacement.

Additionally, intra-urban displacement is explained as a result of two operations. It is seen as a consequence of an action of state agents, particularly in relation to massive

¹¹² Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado, “Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellín 2009-2010,” *Universidad de Antioquia* (2011): 22.

¹¹³ Two days later follows the recognition of BACRIM by the Constitutional Court. See, Instituto Popular de Capacitación. “Desplazamiento intraurbano en Medellín: Cíclico e Invisible.”

¹¹⁴ Consejería para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento, *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas*, 148.

¹¹⁵ Instituto Popular de Capacitación, “Desplazamiento intraurbano en Medellín: Cíclico e Invisible.”

operations such as *Operación Mariscal*, *Operación Orión* and *Operación Estrella* that caused massive displacements.¹¹⁶ Second, the absence or, rather, fragmentation of the authority of the State engenders intra-urban displacement through the emergence of coercive factual powers that seek to impose their sovereignty onto particular neighborhoods.¹¹⁷ The State does not offer the full guarantees of protection in those places.¹¹⁸ However, only the second dynamic of intra-urban displacement is legally recognized by the current configuration of transitional justice mechanisms in Medellín. Those processes, then, result particularly for victims of state violence in a pervasive sense of misrecognition. This lack of recognition hinders possibilities to establish *systemic* justice.

The missing recognition of victims of intra-urban displacement does not alter in relation to the more recent peace frameworks. It is widely acknowledged that displaced populations primarily fled to Colombian major cities.¹¹⁹ Following this, the most recent peace accord of November 2016 incorporated as one of its focuses an agrarian reform and reparations for rural displaced populations.¹²⁰ Yet, the peace accord excludes any observations or recommendations in relation to intra-urban displacement. It merely mentions aiming for rural-urban integration in relation to economic development policies.¹²¹ The victim

¹¹⁶ Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra*, 94.

¹¹⁷ Naranjo, "Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia," 281.

¹¹⁸ Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra*, 24.

¹¹⁹ 7.2 million registered internally displaced persons in Colombia. At least 60% of those displaced fled to slums of the 27 largest cities. See, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Colombia," accessed December 29, 2016, <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2542>.

¹²⁰ Mesas de Conversaciones, "Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera," November 12, 2016, accessed on December 29, 2016, <https://www.mesadeconversaciones.com.co/comunicados/acuerdo-final-para-la-terminación-del-conflicto-y-la-construcción-de-una-paz-estable-y-1>. See, chapter 1 "Reforma Rural Integral" and also Chapter 5 „Victimas.“

¹²¹ Mesas de Conversaciones, "Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera," 7 & 173.

is situated at the heart for processes of peace.¹²² Yet, the government only provides recognition for the victim displaced in the rural realm.¹²³ Hence, the rural-urban linkages of displacement as part of a more holistic approach towards peace have not been acknowledged by the Colombian government and are not integrated in the new peace framework.¹²⁴ Finding comprehensive durable solutions for the large IDP population in Colombia, which according to the UNHCR incorporates an emphasis on local integration in urban settings of IDP's,¹²⁵ is key to guarantees of non-repetition.¹²⁶ Yet, nor the earlier peace accords of Havana, nor the most recent peace accord of November 2016 entail an emphasis on urban re-integration of the IDP population arriving in the city, – long before speaking about possible measures of prevention from intra-urban displacement.¹²⁷

Moreover, most of IDP's do not necessarily want to return.¹²⁸ Yet, the remedies for forced displacement of the new peace accord focus on possibilities for return and re-establishment of the situation before displacement occurred.¹²⁹ Those understandings of displacement, again, show that it is conceived as a violence inflicted in specific moments that can be cured. Pre-conflict conditions could be restored. Thus, those visions neglect serial displacement, as a structural condition of continuity, for which policies of return of the displaced population to formally abandoned regions cannot account for. Those transitions – and the logic attached to them – permit a focus on meeting humanitarian needs at the expense

¹²² Mesas de Conversaciones, “Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera,” 8.

¹²³ Mesas de Conversaciones, “Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera,” 135.

¹²⁴ Gottwald, “Peace in Colombia and Solutions for Its Displaced People,” 17.

¹²⁵ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), “Colombia.”

¹²⁶ Gottwald, “Peace in Colombia and Solutions for Its Displaced People,” 18.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹²⁸ Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado, “Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellín 2009-2010,” *Universidad de Antioquia* (2011): 19.

¹²⁹ Mesas de Conversaciones, “Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera,” 182.

of long-term reintegration needs of IDPs as a comprehensive approach, particularly in the urban realm. In the face of intra-urban displacement in Medellin, it is alarming that none of the current national transitional justice plans in the peace accord of November 2016 proposes a strategic solutions framework for IDPs in the urban zone.¹³⁰ If those silences installed in the most recent peace agreements remain unaddressed, “it is likely to become a major strain on the peace-building process.”¹³¹

In order to counter increasing numbers of displaced persons within the city, the municipality in Medellin implemented politics of assistance to the displaced persons as *Registro Único de Población Desplazada* (RUPD), *Sistema Municipal para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres* (SIMPAD) and by creating the *Unidad de Atención a la Población Desplazada* (UAD). Yet, those politics faced three problems: the difficulty for victims of intra-urban displacement to register at the institutions in charge, the impossibility to receive effective humanitarian aid, and the absence for policies of adequate housing as reparation policy.¹³² This sustains displacement in the city because displaced people have no stable place to return to.¹³³

As a consequence, intra-urban displacement has been legally recognized as a victimizing cause in relation to the armed conflict. However, the crimes occurred in the Comunas were passed off as being ordinary crime. The latter only relates to specific harm, rather than enduring historical cycles of forced expulsion that increasingly reach the city where they continue. Moreover, the new peace frameworks do not address displacement in

¹³⁰ For instance, the Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera does not mention a strategy against intra-urban displacement.

¹³¹ Gottwald, “Peace in Colombia and Solutions for Its Displaced People,” 16.

¹³² Clara Inés Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004,” 96.

¹³³ Ibid., 101.

the urban realm. This sustains the common perception that detaches intra-urban displacement from the broader Colombian conflict. Consequently, those dynamics limit access to reparations of victims of intra-urban displacement and establish and sustain the continuity of serial displacement within the city of Medellin.

On a broader scale, one of the difficulties implied in the general transitional justice framework in Colombia points to the fact that the lived violence by the displaced population in the city refers to a larger temporality that exceeds the enduring injury of serial displacement. The analyses of the origins and causes of conflict that define those transitional justice mechanisms are similarly bound by linear time, restricting research on the effects of violence to singular events.¹³⁴ Those frameworks introduce a hegemonic relationship between violence and temporality that explains the present by an artificial detachment of crimes that nevertheless show historical and structural causality. Hence with those transitional justice mechanisms the spatio-temporal dimension of *slow violence* remains hidden and cannot be addressed. This, in return, is reflected in the serial experience and subjective sense of injustice of displaced people in the urban spaces of Medellin captured in their accounts in the following study.

¹³⁴ Alcalá and Baines, "Editorial Note," 386.

Chapter II – Lived Experience of Violence: Accounts from Displaced Persons in Medellin

“We remember other things than those people from rural areas would remember and for that reason, we have a different imagination of what justice and peace in Colombia mean.”¹³⁵
- Adriana

*““No one told me, go away!”
“But, really, nobody told me to leave.”¹³⁶*
- Carla

According to the research group, *Grupo de Investigación Conflictos y Violencias* (INER) of the *University of Antioquia* in Medellin, the exodus of the Colombians being internally displaced by the Colombian conflict does not expose a rupture of memories, but rather consists in a continuity of memories of violence that have been present in family histories over several decades. Judith Shklar argues, “no theory of justice or injustice can be complete if it does not take account the subjective sense of injustice.”¹³⁷ As such, in order to account for the experience of injustice of displaced persons it is necessary to consider the limited temporality of transitional justice mechanisms. Furthermore, those memories inform the practices of how displaced persons reconstruct their past in the present.¹³⁸ By considering “what happens to the subject and world when the memory of [violent events] is folded into ongoing relationships,” Veena Das thinks of those events “as always attached to the ordinary as if there were tentacles that reach out from the everyday and anchor the event to it in some

¹³⁵ “Nosotros recordamos otro tipo de cosas que una persona de la área rural recordaría y por eso, tenemos una imaginación diferente de lo que significa justicia o paz en Colombia,” Interview with Adriana Baigorria, Casa de la Memoria, July 11, 2016, Medellin.

¹³⁶ “Nadie me dijo, ¡vayase!” “Pero, realmente, nadie me dijo que me saliera.” Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

¹³⁷ Judith N. Shklar, *The Faces of Injustice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, c1990), 49.

¹³⁸ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 61.

specific ways.”¹³⁹ The intertwining of the experience of displacement in the everyday, positions the condition of displaced persons as continuous and attached to the workings of *slow violence*.

This section contrasts the experience of historical injuries in form of intergenerational transmission of memories and spatial stigmatization with the aforementioned time-limited transitional justice laws and mechanisms. Spatial characteristics inform identities of displaced persons in the city. Spatial imaginaries refer to collective and individual cognitive frameworks constructed through the displaced persons’ perceptions and lived experiences of space.¹⁴⁰ Those frameworks imply different forms of perceived violence through inherited memories.¹⁴¹ People assign stigma to spatial categories, which is articulated as *territorial stigmatization*.¹⁴² Ultimately, the latter informs who experiences marginalization within the same city.

a. Territorial Stigma and Advanced Marginality: The Production of Non-Places

Michel Foucault pointed to the fact that the 20th century consists in the epoch of space.¹⁴³ Researchers considered spatial governmentality to be a crucial aspect for understanding current conflicts.¹⁴⁴ According to Annika Bjoerndahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, “a spatial analysis can provide new and important insights into the dynamics of conflict and processes

¹³⁹ Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource]*, 7.

¹⁴⁰ Wolford, “This Land Is Ours Now,” 411.

¹⁴¹ Jokela-Pansini, “Spatial Imaginaries and Collective Identity in Women’s Human Rights Struggles in Honduras,” 1472.

¹⁴² Wacquant, “The Rise of Advanced Marginality.” 127.

¹⁴³ Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” *Diacritics; Ithaca, N.Y.* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 331.

¹⁴⁴ Annika Björkdahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, *Spatializing Peace and Conflict: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 18.

of peace as situated within and constitutive of different spaces.”¹⁴⁵ Their observations point to the organization of space as essential for the structure and function of peace and violence within the city. However, this has not been fully explored by current transitional justice frameworks.

In relation to the “colonial world” Frantz Fanon refers to the geographical configuration of a compartmentalized world as spaces in which violence materially exists and is imagined.¹⁴⁶ Talal Asad also points to the fact that certain places are prone to be specific spaces of violence.¹⁴⁷ In Medellin, different territories are spaces that hold not only various levels of material violence, but they are also attached to a different imaginary of past violence. To analyze those spaces offers an explanation for political and social organization of the city in which serial displacement occurs. Space is understood as something existing onto which the society projects and reflects itself.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, the city is a conglomeration of the dynamics of continuation and transformation of conflict.

Space is continuously socially produced; it configures social relations and memory that informs the individual’s ability to claim rights and institutional access to reparations.

Edward Soja’s introduces a shift from understanding space as material to the vision of space as socially constituted.¹⁴⁹ The idea of the social construction of space also relates to the work by Henri Lefebvre. He notes that space as a social relation is constantly (re-) created by human beings as social actors.¹⁵⁰ Lefebvre observes that there are certain social practices

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴⁶ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove, 2002), 3.

¹⁴⁷ Talal Asad, *On Suicide Bombing*, (New York: Columbia University Press, c2007), 15.

¹⁴⁸ Vilma Liliana Franco Restrepo, *Conflicto urbano: marco teórico-conceptual y herramientas metodológicas para su descripción analítica* (Medellín: Instituto Popular de Capacitación, 2004), 10.

¹⁴⁹ Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, c1989), 144–49.

¹⁵⁰ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 14.

bound to urban space. He refers to representational spaces, which consist of images and symbols. It is space, which “the imagination seeks to change and appropriate.”¹⁵¹ The imaginary of violence emerges in those representational spaces as an effect of the processes of internal and urban conflict in Medellin. In this context, David Harvey indicates, “What we do as well as what we understand is integrally dependent upon the primary spatio-temporal frame within which we situate ourselves.”¹⁵² Hence, the specific way one perceives conflict depends on those representational spaces from where imaginaries emerge and in which one situates one’s understanding.

In Medellin, places incorporate mnemonic marks “where layers of memories overlap.”¹⁵³ Violence can enter as an “underground marker of the memory” that is incorporated in those places.¹⁵⁴ Martha Villa explains that the concrete space in the city of Medellin has become “the most immediate regulator of the oscillations of war.”¹⁵⁵

Places are not only marked by memories of violence. Space and the collective and individual identities inform the social relations, of those that inhabit it.¹⁵⁶ Doreen Massey highlights space as a product of social interrelations, which informs the construction of identities in the city.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, the major Colombian truth commission report *¡Basta Ya!: Memorias de Guerra y de Dignidad* (in the following only *Basta ya*) states, “In relation to displacement, the inhabited space in the city not only functions as a place of social

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 39.

¹⁵² David Harvey, “Space as a Keyword,” (paper presented for Marx and Philosophy Conference, 29, Institute of Education, London, May 29, 2004) 7.

¹⁵³ Pilar Riaño-Alcalá, “Remembering Place: Memory and Violence in Medellin, Colombia,” *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2002): 280.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 284.

¹⁵⁵ Marta Inés Villa Martínez, “Ciudad y conflicto: Las huellas territoriales del conflicto urbano.” Working Paper, Bolivia, 2004, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Annika Björkdahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, *Spatializing Peace and Conflict: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, 3.

¹⁵⁷ David Newman, “Territory, Compartments and Borders: Avoiding the Trap of the Territorial Trap,” *Geopolitics* 15, no. 4 (November 19, 2010): 776.

development, but as a place of identity development.¹⁵⁸ Only through space that is composed of social norms, values and ascribed meanings can abstract social relations become concrete.¹⁵⁹ In relation to displacement in Medellin, the rupturing of social relations in those spaces is at the foreground of the feeling of “*des-ubicación*,” - being out of place. Julián explains in relation to displacement,

“It is a very serious frustration, and the worst of all is the rupture of the social fabric. Family relations, the loss of the social environment.... one is completely out of place, then today, those who where displaced in 2000, those who were children at this time, are no longer children, they are already teenagers or older, they do not want to return to the countryside, they do not know, and they are afraid because of our stories, of what their mother told them.”¹⁶⁰

This account shows that both aspects exist: a strong imaginary of the countryside that refers to violence, and in return marks the refusal to return. There is also a generational gap between the experience of displacement from the country to the city as well as within the city. On the one hand, of the adolescents interviewed, many often refuse to return to their parents’ place of origin because the imaginary of violence is transmitted through the narratives of their parents.¹⁶¹ On the other hand, for the older generation, the logic of the city is so different from what they had known before that they experience difficulties adapting to urban life. The accounts of binary roles between city and rural spheres expose antagonism between tradition

¹⁵⁸ “Este limbo que deja el desplazamiento entre quienes lo sufren se debe, principalmente, a que el espacio habitado no solo funciona como lugar de desarrollo social, sino como lugar de desarrollo identitario.” “¡Basta Ya! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra Y Dignidad,” *¡Basta Ya! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra Y Dignidad*, 261, accessed January 19, 2017, <http://www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/informeGeneral/>.

¹⁵⁹ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 26.

¹⁶⁰ “Es una frustración muy grave, y el peor de todo es la ruptura del tejido social. Tejido familiar, la perdida del entorno. Uno totalmente desubicado, entonces en la actualidad, los que nos desplazamos del 2000, los que eran niños en este tiempo, ya no son niños, ya son adolescentes o mayor de edad, ellos no quieren volver al campo, ya no saben, ya le da miedo, nuestras historias les dan miedo, lo que su mamá les contó.” Interview with Julián, July 21, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁶¹ There exists several additional factors, such as progress and modernity associated with the city, better possibilities of employment and education, which are not discussed in this study.

and modernity.¹⁶² Hence, displaced populations in the city are not only physically displaced, but, according to Carlos, an 82 year-old internally displaced peasant, they are also “emotionally and socially displaced.”¹⁶³ As one ages, they internalize the imaginary of the countryside and the city as oppositional poles. This denotes the social organization of life as structured and internalized in spatial categories in the urban setting.

Those imaginaries also derive from territorial control.¹⁶⁴ Urban social orders are increasingly based on the governance of space.¹⁶⁵ Those orders limit and define territories in the city, impose patterns of individual and collective behavior, institute identities, denote zones of exclusion and inclusion, provide security and impart justice.¹⁶⁶ For instance, Ariella describes that, “In Medellin, territorial control will continue as part of those mobile imaginaries [of the city]. These ways of thinking validate these forms of controls.”¹⁶⁷ Luz Elena affirms that a very strong imaginary and understanding of the division of the city as “us” and “them,” exists. This configures invisible borders between neighborhoods. The armed group creates a “we” in relation to another “other” outside of the territory of alternative sovereignty.¹⁶⁸

Violence operates through displacement and “segregation.”¹⁶⁹ Borders as spatial markings limit encounters and interactions that could (re-) build relationships and social solidarity. Through encounter individuals can develop an interest in (the interest of) their

¹⁶² Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 280.

¹⁶³ “*Estamos desplazados, emocionalmente y en nuestro entorno.*” Interview with Carlos, July 17, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁶⁴ Stathis N. Kalyvas, “Micro-Level Studies of Violence in Civil War: Refining and Extending the Control-Collaboration Model,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24, no. 4 (September 1, 2012): 660.

¹⁶⁵ Sally Engle Merry, “Spatial Governmentality and the New Urban Social Order: Controlling Gender Violence Through Law,” *American Anthropologist* 103, no. 1 (2001): 17.

¹⁶⁶ Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 283.

¹⁶⁷ “*En Medellin va a seguir el control como parte de esas mobiles imaginarios, formas de pensar que validan esas formas de controles.*” Interview with Ariella, July 9, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁶⁸ Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 284.

¹⁶⁹ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 123.

fellow citizens. This became difficult, since encountering requires crossing the numerous invisible borders that marked places in Medellín. Rosa explains,

„Well it is very complicated. In La Loma we are all family members. There are 8 neighborhood sectors, but even though the sectors are connected, it is not handled the same way for everything, no, for example, I do not go to the 43 sector, but others, yes, they go. But from the sector 43 they do not go to other sectors.“¹⁷⁰

These dynamics of spaces of exclusion and inclusion inform intra-urban displacement because it determines whether one can return or not.

Places can produce memories, while simultaneously being produced by memories.¹⁷¹ Those imaginaries, as previously mentioned, have the effect of marking places as points of non-return – places, which the previous temporal inhabitants refuse to revisit since they associate memories of violence with them. As Martha Villa points out, there is a generalized fear in the cities related to particular places.¹⁷² For instance, Elisa explains that because of the association of certain parts of her neighborhood with the violence that happened there, she constantly avoids those places out of fear.¹⁷³ Carla explains that she never again wants to return to Uraba, - a region in Antioquia, where she was born, - because it is a place that equates with violence in her memories. As consequence, she criticizes the politics of

¹⁷⁰ *“Pues es muy complicado, en La Loma todos somos familiares de un lado a otro igual, noy unieron, son 8 sectores, pero es muy complicado porque igual aunque los sectores son muy pecados, igual, no se maneja igual para todo, no, por ejemplo yo no voy a la 43 que es un sector pero otros sí van, pero de la 43 no van otros sectores, pero es muy difícil uno no puede ir a un sector a otro o no puede hablar a ciertas personas porque iban a decir que estoy con ellos .. es muy difícil.. hace un año y medio surgieron demasiado problemas con los jóvenes porque estaban martandolos porque así numeran .. por ser familiar de uno de les mataban a uno.“* Interview with Rosa, July 23, 2016.

¹⁷¹ Julia Creet and Andreas Kitzmann, *Memory and Migration: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Memory Studies* (University of Toronto Press, 2011), 11.

¹⁷² Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016, Medellín.

¹⁷³ Interview with Elisa, July 28, 2016, Medellín.

reparations for the displaced as they focus on return but not on adequate housing within the city.¹⁷⁴ Similarly, Ana explains in relation to the marks that her memory left on places,

*"I did not want to go back to the streets, ... because it was traumatic, my uncle was killed in those streets. My grandmother and my family decided to leave that place because the neighborhood, ... because my brother was killed there and he played the father role because his father was also a displaced peasant. There was no tranquility, they converted the place in an unlivable place."*¹⁷⁵

Ana asserts that the place is "unlivable" for return. She refers to the neighborhood, where she grew up, explaining, "Nobody from my family goes to this neighborhood."¹⁷⁶ The memory of violence attached to this place seems to be a collective family record, or maybe scar. Martha, having been displaced from a rural zone in Antioquia to Medellin, explains that for 20 years, she was not at the *Vereda*, where her house is situated because if she would return, she would recall all the violence that happened there.¹⁷⁷

Thus, memories of forced displacements transmitted the image of the violence that previously occurred.¹⁷⁸ Displacement inscribed fear in a common place, as a reality or chronic state.¹⁷⁹ The families that have been displaced in La Loma refused to go back, according to Rosa, since "La Loma brings a lot of horror."¹⁸⁰ Similarly, Ana explains the following in relation to Cali, where she is from and where she lived before moving to Medellin,

"In the Orriente of Calí, where there were paramilitaries and guerillas, it means living in the midst of violence ... I remember once being in a town where we had to be because my mother was

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁷⁵ "No quería volver a las calles, tan así fue ...porque era traumatico, a mi tio lo mataron en la calle. mi abuela y mi familia decidió salir de ahí porque el barrio porque a mi hermano Lo asesinaron y el cumplió el papel de papá porque el papá también era un campesino desplazado. No había tranquilidad, convitieron el lugar en un lugar invivible." Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁷⁶ "A este barrio, de mi familia nadie va y es un barrio muy grande." Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁷⁷ "Sí, paso mucho tiempo en la vereda, me reuno con la comunidad, es como no, nosotros de toda esa situacion de violencia que sucedió, (...) tenia 20 anos que no veia la casa." Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Rosa, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁷⁹ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 208.

¹⁸⁰ "La Loma trae mucho horror." Interview with Rosa, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

looking for where we could stay. When we came back, the church was painted with the letters ELN¹⁸¹ and had bullets. (...) In one night we were playing in the street, there were many children, and we ran to hide when the guerilla came because they took the boys from the other bandas [groups]. Everyone hid for fear".¹⁸²

Again, fear seems to be endemic to those places. Later in the interview she adds that she does not like to return because of her many memories of fear.

The inability to return perpetuates the enduring nature of serial intra-urban displacements. According to Pablo, intra-urban displacement generates a continuous dynamic of arrival and departure. Families arrive and leave forcibly or voluntarily through an alteration in the sovereign group that governs the specific territory.¹⁸³ Pablo adds that serial displacement is a common experience for displaced populations in Medellín.¹⁸⁴ Military operations and state intervention such as *Operación Orión*, *Operación Estrella*, and *Operación Mariscal* in those places that remain outside of the sovereignty of the State, generated massive intra-urban displacements.¹⁸⁵ Michael Rothenberg points to the importance of the interplay between memory, violence and migration. He called for taking "migrants seriously as subjects of (...) memory."¹⁸⁶ The displaced families, explains Oscar, often became "permanent migrants." This account offers an understanding of displacement as a continuity in the experience of permanent migration and the inherited memory attached to it. "Families never

¹⁸¹ This name designates the Colombian guerrilla group *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*.

¹⁸² "En el Oriente de Cali, donde habia paramilitares y guerilleros, significa vivir en el medio de la violencia.(...) Recuerdo una vez estar en un pueblo donde tuvimos que estar porque mi mama era buscando donde podriamos quedarnos, quando volvimos, la iglesia era pintada y decia ELN y tenia balas. (...) En una noche etsmos jugando en la calle, habia muchos ninos, y corrimos para esconderse cuando la guerilla venia porque sacaron los chicos de las otras bandas. Todo el mundo se escondio por miedo." Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

¹⁸³ Interview with Pablo, July 9, 2016, Medellín.

¹⁸⁴ This is also confirmed by an interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellín.

¹⁸⁵ Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra*, 74.

¹⁸⁶ Michael Rothberg and Yasemin Yildiz, "Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany," *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (November 1, 2011): 33.

ceased to arrive due to displacement in the city of Medellin,” according to Ariella.¹⁸⁷ As such, there exists no re-emergence of violence per se as the violence is, according to Clara Artehortua Arrendondo, a “violence that is permanent.”¹⁸⁸

Furthermore, one’s spatial imaginary of violence, deriving from those mnemonic marks and representational spaces, also informed one’s vision of peace. This in return confines the understanding and implementation of possible forms of justice in those places. According to an investigation by *Grupo de Investigación Conflictos y Violencias* (INER) of the *University of Antioquia* in Medellin, the population living in urban spaces frequently understands the violations that occurred in the city as ordinary crime and does not perceive the precarious situation of the rural population.¹⁸⁹ Distinct visions of violence and therefore differential understandings of adequate forms of redress emerge along an urban-rural divide. Pablo explains that voting in favor or against the peace agreement derives from an urban vision. He notes the peasants have always been in favor of the “si” because of the type of violence they experienced, – armed confrontation in the countryside. According to him, the urban realm rejected the peace agreement because they have not been exposed to the same type of violence. A more nuanced analysis of this phenomenon is necessary. Yet, the statistics surrounding the rejection of the peace agreements reflect the same dynamic.¹⁹⁰

Spatial imaginaries of otherness problematize the distinctions between self and other. Therefore, *territorial* markers are critical for “identity-related inclusion and exclusion (...) for

¹⁸⁷ “Nunca han dejado llegar familias por el desplazamiento a la ciudad de Medellin.” Interview with Ariella, July 9, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁸⁸ “La violencia es confundamente permanente.” Interview with Clara Artehortua Arrendondo, July 12, 2016, Medellin.

¹⁸⁹ González, *Violencia Política En Colombia*, 18.

¹⁹⁰ See, “Colombia just voted no on its plebiscite for peace. Here’s why and what it means” Washington Post, October 3, 2016, accessed December 23, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/10/03/colombia-just-voted-no-on-its-referendum-for-peace-heres-why-and-what-it-means/?utm_term=.ddf223ae998b.

the construction of the ‘self’ and the ‘other’,” which play a central role in the patterns of violence and conflict.¹⁹¹

In conflict studies it is widely known that marginalization is central to the dynamics of violence.¹⁹² For displaced persons, discrimination on the basis of permanent migration may create an additional barrier to accessing State services.¹⁹³ Theories on the militarization of urban space outline space as core category for the production and distribution of patterns of marginalization.¹⁹⁴ In relation to Tel Aviv, Andreas Hackl argues that “the city performs an ‘identity’ within which Palestinians do not exist.”¹⁹⁵ Palestinians in this context are marked by “the stigma as being stranger.” According to Hackl, they experience the “dissolution of place,” which triggers a double marginalization “as material within urban space and as cultural as strangers.” Therefore, “stigmatized others” in relation to urban marginalization is often characterized through territorial markers.

For instance, Pedro refers to the *Comuna 13* in Medellin, as a place in the city, where paramilitary violence has been very pervasive. He affirms, “people from there are said to be violent, they are seen as being guerrilleros.” As such the place from where a person comes

¹⁹¹ Sven Chojnacki and Bettina Engels, “Overcoming the Material/Social Divide: Conflict Studies from the Perspective of Spatial Theory,” in *Spatializing Peace and Conflict*, ed. Annika Björkdahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 33.

¹⁹² Kristine Höglund et al., “Armed Conflict and Space: Exploring Urban-Rural Patterns of Violence,” in *Spatializing Peace and Conflict*, ed. Annika Björkdahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 60, doi:10.1057/9781137550484_4.

¹⁹³ Human Rights Council, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani,” 10.

¹⁹⁴ See, Rogério Haesbaert, *Viver No Limite : Transterritorialidade Em Tempos de in-Segurança E Contenção* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand, 2014); Stephen Graham, *Cities under Siege : The New Military Urbanism* (New York: Verso, 2010).

¹⁹⁵ Andreas Hackl, “Urban Space as an Agent of Conflict and ‘Peace’: Marginalized Im/Mobilities and the Predicament of Exclusive Inclusion among Palestinians in Tel Aviv,” in *Spatializing Peace and Conflict*, ed. Annika Björkdahl and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 180.

from or lives in constitutes an imposed part of identity. It relates and attaches this person to the imaginary that is contained by the place.

Erving Goffman theorized the workings of stigma. Persons confronted with a stigmatized person, according to him construct a “stigma-theory,” which consists in an “ideology to explain [the stigmatized person’s] inferiority and account for the danger [the stigmatized person] represents.”¹⁹⁶ According to Goffman,

*“The tendency for a stigma to spread from the stigmatized individual to his close connections provides a reason why such relations tend either to be avoided or to be terminated, where existing.”*¹⁹⁷

Without explicitly naming it, Goffman implies that stigma causes social exclusion because it can spread to others whom are in contact with the stigmatized. Thus, it is also attached to places, where those encounters with others can take place. In other words, stigma is related to territorial markings. Loïc Wacquant coined the notion of *advanced marginality*, analyzing the interrelatedness of outbreaks of collective violence, in relation to poverty and postcolonial immigration in Paris.¹⁹⁸ *Advanced marginality* refers to “the new forms of exclusionary closure translating into expulsion to the margins and crevices of social and physical space.”¹⁹⁹

In Medellin, intra-urban displacement causes spatial, legal and political marginality that is related to territorial stigma according to research by the *University of Antioquia*.²⁰⁰ The precarious situation resulting from expulsion of their territories induces a history lived collectively. Moral wounds derive from feelings of exclusion and absence of social

¹⁹⁶ Erving Goffman, *Stigma : Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, c1986), 28.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁹⁸ Wacquant, “The Rise of Advanced Marginality,” 129.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 232.

²⁰⁰ Interview with Clara Artehortua Arrendondo, July 12, 2016, Medellin.

recognition.²⁰¹ Natalia tells how through displacement she has lost her home and had to pay rent in a different neighborhood that she could not afford. She has been displaced again through the lack of economic resources.²⁰² As such, intra-urban displacement draws on a continuity of various displacements that cause a cycle of re-victimization and precariousness.²⁰³ The multiple displacements make socio-economic establishment almost impossible in the face of the total loss of goods and services.²⁰⁴ According to Katja, most of the displaced persons arrive in the city in vulnerable places. She notes, “They do informal work, there is no answer by the State, most of us have no housing (...) they should give you the assistance within three months, but they simply don’t do it.”²⁰⁵ According to Carlos,

“The displacement for one is a very difficult thing because one loses everything, all the work of his life, and until then there was no solution to anything, no repair, no restitution of the land either, because displacement causes one to beg in a city.”²⁰⁶

Displacement for him means being a beggar in the city. This image corresponds to the common image related to the displaced that arrived from the countryside in the city.²⁰⁷

Discourse and social representations put the inhabitants from the region of Antioquia arriving in the city between pathology, immorality and social delinquency.²⁰⁸ According to Martha

²⁰¹ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 24.

²⁰² Interview with Natalia, July 18, 2016, Medellín.

²⁰³ Bello, *Desplazamiento Forzado*, 28.

²⁰⁴ Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004,” 97.

²⁰⁵ “Ellos hacen trabajo informal, no hay respuesta por parte del estado, la mayoría de nosotros no tenemos vivienda (...) ellos deben darle la ayuda dentro de tres meses, pero simplemente no lo hacen.” Interview with Katja, July 11, 2016, Medellín.

²⁰⁶ “El desplazamiento para uno es una cosa muy muy, como digamos ...pues uno pierde todo, toda su trabajo de toda la vida, y hasta el momento despues no habia una solución para nada, ni reparación, ni restitucion de la tierras tampoco, pues para uno el desplazamiento es una forma de ponerlo a uno a mendigar en una ciudad.” Interview with Carlos, July 17, 2016, Medellín.

²⁰⁷ See, Consejería para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento, *Desplazamiento forzado intraurbano y soluciones duraderas*.

²⁰⁸ Suzanne Lacy and Pilar Riaño-Alcalá, “Medellin, Colombia: Reinhabiting Memory,” *Art Journal* 65, no. 4 (December 1, 2006): 99.

Villa, already in the 1990s the figure of the displaced was conceived as people that brought the war to the cities.²⁰⁹ Thus the image of the displaced is passed on over time. It is also projected onto persons close to the displaced.²¹⁰ Because group identity is shaped by historical perspectives, historical narratives have an explicit and direct impact on identities.²¹¹ The memory of those narratives assigns the displaced the role as beggar. Thus, the conflict is in the context of forced displacement, a situation, which significantly marks identity.²¹² For instance, by insisting that her disappeared son was no *guerrillero*, Amparo refers to a territorial marker, explaining, “He cannot be a guerrillero because he was not really from *there*, we are not from the Comuna 13.” Wacquant noted that “territorial stigmatization” belongs to public policies labeling those spaces of advanced marginality as “lawless zones.”²¹³ This shows how a particular place in the city, which is denoted as violent and lawless,²¹⁴ is assigned a certain imaginary of violence by policies and politics of the municipality or of the State. This, in return, informs the image one holds of the inhabitants in those places.

A study by the *University of Antioquia* found that there are two distinct images of the displaced in Medellín that are superposed. The first image of the “deplazado bandido” denotes the displaced as a “public enemy,” who arrives in the city in order to disturb the urban life.

²¹⁵This is a vision that has been constructed over several decades. Her/his displacement has

²⁰⁹ Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

²¹⁰ “En los relatos de las víctimas es claro que la culpa no solo se instala en ellas, sino también en personas cercanas, a veces de su mismo núcleo familiar o miembros de la comunidad de referencia.” “¡Basta Ya! Colombia,” 263.

²¹¹ Elazar Barkan, “Historical Reconciliation: Redress, Rights and Politics,” *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 1 (2006): 3.

²¹² Flor Edilma Osorio Perez, *Territorialidades en suspenso desplazamiento forzado, identidades y resistencias* (Bogotá: Ed. Antropos, 2006), 36.

²¹³ Wacquant, “The Rise of Advanced Marginality,” 135.

²¹⁴ Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra*, 62.

²¹⁵ See, Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 26; Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado, “Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellín 2009-2010,” 18.

come to be conceived as the result of her/his own actions.²¹⁶ The second image of the “desplazado damnificado” as “condemned displaced” is exposed as a victim of naturalized violence. This perception does not situate violence in its sociopolitical context. Therefore, the displaced do not conceive them as right holders in relation to forced expulsion and removal to or within the city.²¹⁷

Those two images circulate as decoupled from the conditions of their production, almost conceived as ahistorical. Space is a constitutive factor of the knowledge that is produced in relation to the other.²¹⁸ Edward Said ascertains that it is possible “for many objects or places or times to be assigned roles and given meanings that acquire objective validity only *after* the assignments [have been] made.”²¹⁹ This implies that the displaced social position, either as “desplazado bandito” or as “desplazado damnificado,” is perceived as natural. Any relation to the root causes that forced people to be displaced are hidden in those perceptions. The decoupling of the historical conditions in which the displaced are situated corresponds to Pierre Bourdieu’s famous analysis of symbolic violence. The latter designates the imposition of those principles of division to those who have little choice about whether to accept or to reject them. By “induced misunderstanding”, Bourdieu describes a process by which power relations come to be perceived not for what they objectively are, but in a form which renders them legitimate in the eyes of those subject to power.²²⁰ Thus, the assignment of the territorial stigma to a person does not reflect the socio-political context or the reasons for which this person came to carry the stigma. This also

²¹⁶ See, Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 28; Luz Amparo Sánchez M., “El desplazamiento forzado intraurbano: negación del derecho a la ciudad,” 171.

²¹⁷ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 298.

²¹⁸ According to Edward Said, there is a close relationship between geography, imagination and knowledge. Said speaks of „Orientalism as a field of learned study.” See, Said, *Orientalism*, 49.

²¹⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 54.

²²⁰ Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 841.

explains why the displaced population within the city becomes so often sidelined regarding the violence inflicted as part of the internal Colombian conflict.

Moreover, the internally displaced population often arrives in very fragile urban places compared with other regions of the city. The places where the displaced people arrive are characterized by missing provisions of public services and lack of access to the land, where the violation and exclusion of rights becomes constant.²²¹ Martha asserts that, “I arrived here in 2001, and it was the poorest neighborhood that existed here, it was the cheapest neighborhood, the only cheap lease I found here.”²²² She moved away from this place nine years later because her children grew up and she was afraid “of the friendships they would make” in those places. This account shows that those being displaced experience a continuous feeling of vulnerability.²²³ Katja reflects on the extremely vulnerable position that intra-urban displaced persons, who often do not get social or legal recognition for their displacement, hold. She affirms that her intra-urban displacement in the Comuna 13 caused family disintegration as she separated from her husband. Her son today is homeless.

The image of the displaced determines one’s possibilities to engage in work and education, and as such improve one’s living condition. Displaced persons often encounter difficulties finding work, because they are immediately marked with the imaginary of violence or, at least, precariousness that has existed throughout several decades. Carmen explains, *“Because people who are displaced are re-victimized. They ask, ‘Ah you arrived as a displaced person?’ They never call the one who was displaced [for a job] because they believe that he was part of the conflict, part of the guerilla, or part of some armed group. People believe this. They*

²²¹ Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004.” 7.

²²² “Llegué aquí en el 2001, y era el barrio más pobres que tiene aquí, era el barrio más barato, el unico arrienda más barato que encontré aquí.” Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.

²²³ Diana Fuentes Becerra and Clara Atehortúa Arredondo, “Sobre El Sujeto-Víctima: Configuraciones de Una Ciudadanía Limitada,” *Opinión Jurídica Universidad de Medellín* 15, no. 29 (2016): 71.

believe that because if one is displaced, one comes with so much need that he becomes suddenly a thief."²²⁴

The account shows that the perceived condition of the displaced individual by her/his social environment informs possibilities to improve one's living conditions by finding work.

Moreover, it also conditions the displaced population's ability to claim rights and reparations.

This marginality and felt vulnerability of one's position in the urban realm causes mistrust in both social relationships, including with family, friends and neighbors, and the State. As

previously mentioned, the situation of displacement is mostly caused by state crime.²²⁵ This

puts the internal displaced persons, - and, even more so, the displaced person within the city, -

in a precarious situation since the state takes the role of savior and perpetrator at the same

time. Victims of state crime, mostly affected by displacement but not exclusively, refuse to put

any trust in the State or its institutions. Frequently they refuse to trust their fellow citizens

out of the experiences of various re-victimizations. Those dynamics hinder developing civic

trust as "a sense in which they are fellow members of the same political community" in Pablo

de Greiff's terms.²²⁶ This dynamic advances their marginality even more, since they refuse to

claim their rights at an institution that has been responsible for the violations of those very

rights. Those dynamics equate to the workings of structural violence since the deprivation of

one's ability to claim rights is perceived as natural and therefore hidden. Nadia explains that

she thinks that it is not convenient for the State if one claims one's rights. By referring to a

²²⁴ "Porque somos muy re-victimizados, las personas que llegan desplazadas, somos re-victimizados, „ Ah usted vine desplazada.. ah entonces espere que yo la llamo" pero nunca llaman a uno. Porque nunca llaman a el que fue desplazado porque creen que era parte del conflicto, parte de la guerilla, o algun grupo armado, la gente cree así o porque uno viene desplazado viene con tanta necesidad que era de pronto un ladron. Bueno, miles de cosas, lo re-victimizan a uno ellos. Para los muchachos era muy dificil a entrar en la escuela tambien a estudiar." Interview with Carmen, July 13, 2016, Medellin.

²²⁵ Grupo de Investigación Estudios Políticos – Línea Movilidad, Migración, y Desplazamiento Forzado, "Informe Diagnóstico del Desplazamiento Intraurbano en Medellín 2009-2010," 14.

²²⁶ De Greiff, "Justice and Reparations," 464.

registration at the *Registro Unico de Víctimas*, she adds, “A lot of times, you really need to fight in order to be registered.”²²⁷

The territorial stigma also *causes* intra-urban displacement in the city in relation to a particular image of the youth. This is particularly relevant for young men. Luz Elena explains that boys in those neighborhoods that have been known as marginalized are often conceived as “guerrilleros” or criminal. This is a specific stigma attached to the youth since the “sicarios” that assassinated in the era of Pablo Escobar were young men from marginalized and poor neighborhoods.²²⁸ The stigma of the youth, or more precisely, young men and boys, indirectly causes intra-urban displacement, since their mothers sought to impede forced recruitment of their sons by leaving the neighborhood. This dynamic also explains how the stigma became somehow common sense in the imaginary of violence in the city through the memories of older generations that have transmitted those visions to the next generations.

Furthermore, internal and especially intra-urban displacement remains hidden, since the stigma attached to the figure of the displaced, leads to practices of auto-censorship. Danilo Suarez Morales refers to habitus that entails a certain conditioning of individual and collective practices due to displacement.²²⁹ According to a researcher at the *University of Antioquia*, “Displacement is the category for the person that was able to register for it, but not only those that registered are victims.”²³⁰ Stigma and ongoing discrimination relating to the rural regions from which people arrived from carries the underlying assumption that they were involved

²²⁷ “Pues unas veces penso que este Estado no le conviene que uno reclame porque muchas veces uno tiene que luchar mucho para ser registrada,” Interview with Nadia, July 16, 2016, Medellín.

²²⁸ Hector Gallo y Gerardo Cespedes, “Estado del arte de los estudios sobre violencia y subjetividad,” in *Balance de Los Estudios Sobre Violencia En Antioquia*, ed. Angarita Cañas and INER (Municipio de Medellín: Editorial Universidad de Antioquia, 2001), 159.

²²⁹ Harvey Danilo Suarez Morales “Algunas Reflexiones para comprender la formación del desplazamiento forzado como un campo de saber, poder y subjetividad,” Bello, *Desplazamiento Forzado*, 165.

²³⁰ “El desplazamiento es la categoría de la persona que pudo registrarse, pero no sólo los registrados son víctimas.” Interview with Clara Artehortua Arrendondo, July 12, 2016, Medellín.

with paramilitary or guerilla groups. This plays an important role for the auto-censorship of displaced peoples.²³¹ Carla, 74 years old originally from Uraba, explains,

“I came from Urabá, I left displaced, but nobody told me that I have to leave. But the Vereda [entity of a district in Colombia], where I was living, all the people from there were coming down the mountains in order to leave the place. So, I said that I cannot do that anymore, that I cannot support the situation in the Vereda. I said before they [paramilitary groups] come to our farm, let's go, let's leave, just leave everything behind to go to Medellin.”²³²

The important aspect in relation to autocensorship refers to her explanation of the reasons for this displacement. Being asked if she has been displaced Carla says, “no, I have never belonged to the displaced population,” – an unexpected reaction given that according to her story, she has been displaced by the threat of paramilitary groups three times. She insists, “When I came from Uraba, I came for fear, but nobody told me to leave.”²³³ This is an example of auto-censorship, for one's displacement is actually not perceived and also not articulated as a violation or a crime of one's right to stay. It is these workings of symbolic, structural and slow violence together that seem to hide the reasons for displacement. Those displacements expose naturalized or normalized causes for moving away that represent no more crime for which one might need to claim reparations or redress.

Forced displacement is so frequently marginalized because it refers to a *second evil*. It is perceived as something that occurs in relation to and as continuation of another crime when the first injury is experienced as being much more powerful and disruptive.

²³¹ See, Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 35; Instituto Popular de Capacitación. “Desplazamiento intraurbano en Medellín: Cíclico e Invisible.”

²³² “Yo vengo del Urabá, salía más bien desplazada, nadié me dijo vayase, pero la vereda dónde estuve viviendo toda la gente se iba bajando, bajaba desde arriba, bajaba desde arriba, entinces yo me dije no más estoy aguandando. Antes que vengan a esa finca mejor vamenos, Entonces, deje todo para arrancar para Medellin.” Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

²³³ “Cuando me viene de Uraba, me vino por miedo, pero nadie me dijo que me fuera.” Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellin.

Displacement slips into the everyday, where it becomes naturalized. Yet, the nature of the everyday seems even more elusive as violence.²³⁴ The very nature of displacement as permanent and enduring, not as a unique shocking traumatic experience, entails its invisibilization. This, in return, creates the continuous marginalization of the displaced. Being asked about the injuries experienced through displacement, Carla answered, “with displacement, nothing to do. Nothing, nothing, ... when they disappeared my son I really didn’t know what to do.”²³⁵ Since she almost forgets about the displacement by being reminded of the forced disappearance of her son, it is possible to conclude that displacement as such often passes as unheard, – not “unspeakable” but “unspoken.” There is no notice, no accusation, no register for it, because it is simply forgotten since it is so *ordinary* -- *since it slips into the ordinary*. It evokes Das’ observation that the feeling of everyday life as a site of the ordinary buried in itself the violence that provided a certain force within which relationships alter.²³⁶ Das explains how suffering is continuous through time; it belongs to the ordinariness of everyday life and the dynamics that are transmitted over decades.²³⁷ Displacement seems to belong to the continuity across space and time of an ordinary life experience. This continuity is only disrupted with the violent disappearance of a loved person, which ultimately, in comparison, minimalizes the pain felt through displacement. Hence, Carla’s account evidences the invisibility of displacement as it is conceived, perceived and lived as an experience of continuity. Intra-urban displacement as a violation that received even lesser attention, seems not only be rendered invisible through the fear of being stigmatized. It is neglected simply

²³⁴ Alcalá and Baines, “Editorial Note,” 368.

²³⁵ “*Es que por el desplazamiento, nada que ver. Nada, nada, cuando me desaparecieron mi hijo no tuve con qué, pero ahora ya tengo conocimiento Si eso pasa de nuevo Ya sé dónde puedo ir que esas condiciones no eran natural pero que si me lo mataron.*” Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellín.

²³⁶ Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource]*, 11.

²³⁷ Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource]*, 69.

because it has become naturalized as part of the experience of violence and “ordinary crime” in the cities. This holds true for those whose bodies and minds are, – and have been – most vulnerable.

Ultimately, Martha Villa affirms, “the displaced population is permanently external to the city.”²³⁸ “What is happening here is never ending,” according to her.²³⁹ She explains that the displaced have a very strong sense of not having a place in the city.²⁴⁰ Therefore, she concludes, there is a construction of a “non-place,” of a place that does not belong to them.²⁴¹ In this regard, places, sites of violence, constitute *non-places*. Non-Places, according to Marc Augé are places that are “listed, classified, promoted to the status of ‘places of memory.’”²⁴² According to Augé, “certain places exist only through the words that evoke them, and in this sense they are non-places, or rather, imaginary places.” They are what we perceive, but only in a partial and incoherent manner. In those non-places, “people are always and never at home.”²⁴³ It seems to be a place in which identity is confined and not confined at the same time. In relation to Medellín, those identities of the displaced are confined by a *territorial stigma* that marks places and people living in those places. Yet, it is not confined, as the identity of the place and the individuals that inhabit it is detached from their story. Their image is disconnected from the reason why they came to be displaced due to the ordinariness of the continuity of displacement in time.

²³⁸ “*La población desplazada como permanentemente externa a la ciudad.*” Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

²³⁹ “*Aquí acontece lo que nunca termina.*” Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

²⁴⁰ “*Sensación muy fuerte que no tienen un lugar.*” Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

²⁴¹ “*Es como de una ciudad que no les pertenece.*” Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

²⁴² Augé, *Non-Places*, 78.

²⁴³ Augé, *Non-Places*, 109.

To conclude, space as socially produced registers different imaginaries and memories of violence, conflict and peace. This, in return, re-configures the social relationships, identities and the broader dynamics of displacement within the city. The impossibility of returning to places through the imaginary of violence sustains serial displacement in the city. Territorial stigma is assigned to the displaced population in the city, which leads to discrimination, both, external and internalized. Finally, those images are transmitted through memories over several decades.

b. Transmission of Memories of Violence: The Imaginary of Non-Peace.

Martha Nubia Bello argues that the character of the Colombian internal conflict can be explained as a situation that forges extreme traumatization, which informs processes of memory.²⁴⁴ Memories of violence are usually perceived as traumatic because they cause a violent disintegration of everyday life. The memory of traumatic events is said to be abrupt, disruptive of the normality of life and of peaceful coexistence. Yet, in relation to the particular trajectory of displaced persons in Medellín those memories describe *continuity*, rather than rupture.²⁴⁵ As Kimberly Theidon points out, the body is a site of memory.²⁴⁶ Bodies as containers carry an imaginary of violence, peace and justice. Moreover, the transmission of memories of violence is a *transgenerational* phenomenon. Transgenerational corresponds to the transmission over several generations through public spaces or spaces such as the family. It describes the way in Marianne Hirsch's words, how memories recall a "sense of living

²⁴⁴ Martha Nubia Bello, "Las Dimensiones Psicosociales de la Memoria," Working Paper, Centro Nacional de la Memoria Historica, May 2016, 1.

²⁴⁵ As shown in the interviews that I have conducted but also in academic literature. See: Adriana González Gil, *Lugares, procesos y migrantes: aspectos de la migración colombiana* (Peter Lang, 2009), 13.

²⁴⁶ Kimberly Theidon, "The Milk of Sorrow: A Theory on the Violence of Memory," *Canadian Woman Studies* 27, no. 1 (May 1, 2009): 8, <http://cws.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/cws/article/view/23135>.

connection” with the experiences of former generations.²⁴⁷ This phenomenon corresponds to a collective tendency emanating from within Colombian society. As such, they have to be explained not as an individual psychological aberration, but as a product of specific structural social conditions. Therefore, those inherited memories refer to historical injuries that extend beyond the limited temporality of the transitional justice laws in Colombia. Those memories are articulated as and associated with fear, indifference, depoliticization and alterations in the perceived identity constitution.²⁴⁸ Hence, transgenerational memories of violence refer to the underlying dynamics of slow violence, a term coined by Rob Nixon denoting violence that is incremental and accretive, “playing out across a range of temporal scales.”²⁴⁹ Accordingly, a common pattern that arose in the stories of the interviewees in Medellin speaks to the difficulty of imagining peace.

In “Nothing Ever Dies” the American-Vietnamese writer Viet Than Nguyen contemplates on his own experience of the aftermath of war that he himself has not experienced but which has left its scars on his memory.²⁵⁰ He links memory to migration by claiming, “second-memory [is] part of refugee baggage.”²⁵¹ Those memories continue their existence in the narratives, representations and imaginary of everyday life.²⁵²

As previously shown, the patterns of marginalization and the stigmatized image of the displaced populations within the city are not only imagined in the present. But, rather, those images derive from the inherited memories of violence. Those memories relate to the places

²⁴⁷ Marianne Hirsch, “The Generation of Postmemory,” 104.

²⁴⁸ “*Yo nacie en un pais equivocado.*” Interview with Maria, July 15, 2016, Medellin.

²⁴⁹ Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 2.

²⁵⁰ Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016), 1.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁵² Astrid Erll, “Travelling Memory,” *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (November 1, 2011): 13.

that came to constitute the image of those who lived there. Pilar Riaño argues in the context of Medellín, that the imagination of spaces is closely bound to memory and the (transmission of) memories of violence and resistance in a particular territory.²⁵³ Similarly, Seetha Low notes that the social construction of space reveals the creation of space through memories.²⁵⁴ Those memories of places and the displaced persons' narratives are carried on from the past: they are transmitted across several generations that experienced the continuity of displacement.

Research by scholars in the human rights and peace building fields has shown that *historical* trauma is passed on through successive generations. They argue that the intergenerational transmission of memory and trauma holds a significant explanation for the re-emergence of violence.²⁵⁵ Cathy Caruth claims that trauma is marked by its “inescapability of its belated impact.” Similarly, Marianne Hirsch coined the notion of *postmemory*, which “describes the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.”²⁵⁶

Also referring to the intergenerational transmission of historical trauma and memory through stories and imaginary, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela argues that the unspoken memory of the past can be re-enacted in the present.²⁵⁷ She accounts for an event in Mlungisi Township in Eastern Cape in South Africa, where 7 to 9-year old girls played the “necklace-game.” The author notes the fact that those girls were “re-enacting” an act that somehow mimicked necklace killings – murders committed against those who were suspected of

²⁵³ Riaño-Alcalá, “Remembering Place,” 283.

²⁵⁴ Setha M. Low, “Spatializing Culture: The Social Production and Social Construction of Public Space in Costa Rica,” *American Ethnologist* 23, no. 4 (1996): 869.

²⁵⁵ Gobodo-Madikizela Pumla, *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory* (Barbara Budrich, 2016), 1.

²⁵⁶ Hirsch, “The Generation of Postmemory,” 103.

²⁵⁷ Pumla, *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition*, 2.

collaborating with the apartheid government security²⁵⁸ – that occurred before the time that the girls were born.²⁵⁹ According to Gobodo-Madikizela, those acts evidenced a “trauma of communal life” that has been transmitted intergenerationally by “stories or silences, through unarticulated fears and the psychological scars that are often left unacknowledged.”²⁶⁰ Nicolas Peddle argues that in the Palestinian context, trauma consists in an ongoing event since the possibility for mourning is limited.²⁶¹ The “re-enactment” of trauma across generations gives rise to a range of collective behaviors, including violence.²⁶² This re-enactment of traumatic scenes is explained by Judith Lewis Herman as, “traumatized people relive the moment of trauma not only in their thoughts and dreams but also in their actions.”²⁶³

In the Colombian context, Martha explains how a research group found that children in a community close to her home, in Gobodo-Madikizela’s words, “re-enacted” the crimes that constitute the types of violence suffered during conflict. Martha explains’

“They [the research team] found that the symptoms of violence from this war had become imprinted on the children’s’ minds. For instance, the pencil is the weapon used on another child for intimidating and playing shooting and killing games, or to mimic that they are persecuted. How is that in the minds of children? There are also many problems in families that were unified before and now the family members are separated. They do not have much confidence in each other.”²⁶⁴

This illustrates the significance of transgenerationally inherited memories for identity constitution and action.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 1.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 2.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 3.

²⁶¹ Nicolas Peddle, “Trauma and Palestinian Nakba,” (Master diss., University of Exeter, 2015) 9.

²⁶² Pumla, *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition*, 3.

²⁶³ Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York, N.Y.: BasicBooks, c1992), 35.

²⁶⁴ „Se encuentran que los niños siguieron con más síntomas de violencia de muchas cosas que vienen comunes de esa guerra atrás (Anmerkung: interesante que piensa que sera atrás) o sea que hasta su lapiz es su arma para darle a otro para intimidarle jagan a disparar, a martar, vamos pensar a que estamos perseguidos, o sea como es eso en las mentes de los niños? Tambien tiene muchas problemas en las familias que eran reunidas antes. No tienen mucho confianza en el otro.“ Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.

Veena Das explains, "Grief is articulated through the body," and the "representation of shared pain exists in imagination."²⁶⁵ Similarly Kimberly Theidon cites the expression of a Peruvian woman victim of sexual violence saying "everything passed through milk, my blood, my worries to my daughter." She explains that her daughter suffered from a lack of concentration and unrest because of the mother's experience of the violence inflicted by the Peruvian guerilla group Senderos and paramilitary in the Peruvian conflict. Theidon comes to the conclusion that those accounts of violence indicate a "suffering from history."²⁶⁶ Those accounts illustrate how intergenerational transmissions of those memories denote historical injury through the experiences of decade-long conflict.

Vamik Volkan and Jeffrey Alexander also point to the transgenerational dimension of trauma as a *collective* phenomenon since processes on the group level parallel the individual level. Transgenerational "wounds" can for instance, be passed on through the intimate relationship between a child and its mother.²⁶⁷ This process is coupled on a collective level. The transmission of a shared traumatic event relates to the impossibility of mourning "losses of people or land" for previous generations.²⁶⁸ Moreover, Alexander argues, "Imagined events, however, can be as traumatizing as events that have actually occurred."²⁶⁹ The behavior of an individual refers to what is experienced in one's social environment that is not explained by the actual events taking place, but by the manner in which they are perceived.²⁷⁰ Their account refers to two aspects that are relevant for this study. First, it emphasizes the effect

²⁶⁵ Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource]*, 69.

²⁶⁶ Theidon, "The Milk of Sorrow," 10.

²⁶⁷ Vamik D. Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity," *Group Analysis* 34, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 85.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁶⁹ Jeffrey C Alexander et al., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. (CA: University of California Press, 2004), 8.

²⁷⁰ Camilo Nieto Matiz, "Racionalidad Y Frustración: Dos Explicaciones de La Violencia Política," *Papel Político Estudiantil* 3, no. 2 (2007): 360.

that territorial losses can hold dimensions of the transmission(s) of memories. Second, it refers to a transmission of a “chosen or imagined trauma” which evokes the collective images that are passed on, altering and defining the vision of the future.

The workings of those memories collectively play out in the Colombian context. The *Basta Ya* report lists intense fear, alterations of dreams, apathy, rebellion, rage and feelings of revenge as effects of traumatic experiences of displacement.²⁷¹ Ariella, who has been displaced within the city of Medellin, explains that,

*“Colombia is strongly marked by fear. Fear, because we saw that many of our friends died in the War in the years of our childhood. And our parents told us that their friends were also killed. I believe that, here, many fears were created, many images of violence, that young people hold.”*²⁷²

This account reveals that through narrative and one’s personal experience, the traumatic memory, such as the death of her parents’ friends, whose image is passed on through storytelling, generates a collective feeling of fear. Fear is based on collective imagination and historical memory.²⁷³ It is configured by the long-standing historical narrative propagated during conflict and the experiences of the close social environment. According to Maria,

*“I constantly feel fear. If I ride in a car I’m afraid. I do not want to travel on the roads in Colombia at night. I do not feel well. It think, it is literally fear of the memories of your childhood, because it’s like you grew up with something that was dangerous. I always have memories. My dad, too. Those are things that remain and that change your behavior for fear.”*²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ “¡Basta Ya! Colombia,” 264.

²⁷² “Colombia, a parte del asunto de la culpa, está muy marcada por el miedo. El miedo, eso nos hace muy complicado porque lo vimos muchos de nuestros amiguitos murieron en la Guerra, en los añitos de nuestra infancia. Y nuestros papas nos contaron que sus amigos también fueron asesinados. Yo creo que aquí se crean muchos miedos, muchas imágenes de la violencia, de los jóvenes.” Interview with Ariella, July 9, 2016, Medellin.

²⁷³ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 388.

²⁷⁴ “Yo tengo sensación de miedo, si me voy en un carro tengo miedo, no quiero viajar en las carreteras en Colombia en la noche, no me siento bien es literalmente miedo de los recuerdos de tu infancia, porque es como creciste con algo que era peligroso, (...) siempre tengo recuerdos. Mi papa, también, (...) son cosas que te quedan y que cambian tu conducta por miedo,” Interview with Maria, July 15, 2016, Medellin.

Hence, those memories seem to be inter-generational accounts of real and inherited memories of violence.

According to Lewis-Herman, the traumatic moment embodies an “abnormal form of memory.”²⁷⁵ Brandon Hamber argues that trauma embodies a “rupture, discontinuity, disconnection of the very possibilities of communicating subjective experience of mass violence.”²⁷⁶ Similarly, Arthur Neal states an event traumatizes a collective because it is “an extraordinary event,” an event that has such “an explosive quality” that it creates “disruption” and “radical change within a short period of time.”²⁷⁷ This is different in the Colombian context. The causality between structural violence and a permanent situation of uprooting without official recognition situates memories of violence beyond its merely psychological framework.

Moreover, the focus of the displaced persons’ trauma has contributed to a biased image of the displaced as defeated, handicapped, sick and incapable of making decisions for which she/he needs assistance and protection.²⁷⁸ Human rights and transitional justice discourses, according to Didier Fassin, reduce the cause of marginalization to a simple understanding of compassion.²⁷⁹ This perspective based on individual trauma generates a decoupling of the victim’s experience from its sociopolitical context and structural violations over time.²⁸⁰ By making victims recite the trauma of suffering, psychologists and psychiatrists

²⁷⁵ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 37.

²⁷⁶ Brandon Hamber, *Transforming Societies after Political Violence: Truth, Reconciliation, and Mental Health*, (New York: Springer, 2009), 75.

²⁷⁷ Arthur G. Neal, *National Trauma and Collective Memory: Major Events in the American Century* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 9–10.

²⁷⁸ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 48. See also, Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004.”

²⁷⁹ Didier Fassin, *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, c2009), 211.

²⁸⁰ Robert Meister, *After Evil: A Politics of Human Rights* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 1.

ask their clients to make their story heard in a particular way²⁸¹ that might foreclose other (more political) ways of understanding the dynamics of inflicted violence and the role of the victim itself.

According to two psychologists of the *Registro Unico de las Victimas*, it is very difficult to speak about trauma in the Colombian context. They say, “We are speaking about a normal reaction to a decade-long very abnormal situation, which is the armed conflict.”²⁸² They add, “Trauma often is related to an accident, a rupture in normal life, but the ongoing conflict is concretely intentional and systemic.” In this context, of sociopolitical violence, the psychic damage consists in the materialization of a conscious and planned violence.²⁸³ According to Carla and Maria, we must speak of damage that is almost irreparable because it consists in historical injuries deriving from various decades of displacements. They add, “That is why we are talking about structural injuries across several generations.”²⁸⁴

Particularly, the role and management of trauma in post-conflict societies received increased popularity as part of the transitional justice toolkit.²⁸⁵ According to Kimberly Theidon, “The concept of traumatic memory has become the primary framework for dealing with the suffering of war.”²⁸⁶ However, as articulated by Carla and Maria, there exists a “disjunction between redressive political aims and the realities of suffering.”²⁸⁷ This *trauma turn* holds complicated assumptions in relation to the crime of displacement. It frequently

²⁸¹ Fassin, *The Empire of Trauma*, 211.

²⁸² Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellín.

²⁸³ Susana Delgado, “A Proposito de lo psicosocial y el desplazamiento,” 196, accessed January 19, 2017, http://www.academia.edu/9045659/A_PROPOSITO_DE_LO_PSICOSOCIAL_Y_EL_DESPLAZAMIENTO.

²⁸⁴ Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez (encoded names) at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellín.

²⁸⁵ See, Priscilla B. Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Confronting State Terror and Atrocity* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Gabriele Schwab, *Haunting Legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma* (New York: Columbia University Press, c2010).

²⁸⁶ Theidon, “The Milk of Sorrow,” 8.

²⁸⁷ Magdalena Zolkos, “Redressive politics and the nexus of trauma, transitional justice and reconciliation,” in *Transitional Justice Theories* ed. Susanne Buckley-Zistel et al., (Routledge, 2013),.

suggests that there could be an end and a beginning posed to the (collective) damage experienced.²⁸⁸ The assumption of those accounts often state “how future generations will see the future to be linked to whether they have been freed from the ‘stranglehold’ of the past,”²⁸⁹ all while working for political redemption.²⁹⁰ Those assumptions overlook that violence does not emerge and disappear in a serial order of time. Foregrounding one set of harms minimizes experiences of suffering from longstanding inequality, marginalization and deprivation.²⁹¹ It denotes a “colonization of modes of thinking” about “the acute and ongoing experiences of violence,” since it addresses the particular injuries of individuals as opposed to its systemic underpinnings.²⁹²

As stated for by displaced persons in Medellín, displacement is not a transitioning condition.²⁹³ It is a continuity revealed “in the ways in which difference and inequality are still woven together into a *longue durée* that lie beyond the theoretical contours and the technical mandates” of transitional justice laws in Colombia.²⁹⁴ For instance, Daniel Pécaut explains that displacement is a representation installed in long-duration in which violence exposes the constitutive characteristic of this collective representation.²⁹⁵ Narratives of fear and violence in the experiences of expulsion, transit, re-displacement and arrival as previously mentioned demonstrate that there exists a continuity that marks the experience of migration to and

²⁸⁸ Magdalena Zolkos, “Redressive politics and the nexus of trauma, transitional justice and reconciliation,” 164.

²⁸⁹ Hamper, “Dealing with Painful Memories and Violent Pasts: Towards a Framework for Contextual Understanding,” 7.

²⁹⁰ Alcalá and Baines, “Editorial Note,” 388.

²⁹¹ Miller, “(Re)Distributing Transition,” 372.

²⁹² Zoë Hamilton Wool, *After War: The Weight of Life at Walter Reed* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 134.

²⁹³ Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellín.

²⁹⁴ Castillejo-Cuellar, “On the Question of Historical Injuries,” 49.

²⁹⁵ Daniel Pécaut, “La pérdida de los derechos del significado de la experiencia y de la inserción social.” *Estudios Políticos* 12, Medellín (1999): 15.

within cities.²⁹⁶ Similarly, the Basta Ya report mentions “displacement is not an event that begins or ends with forced departure or flight, it is a long process that registers a constant exposure to forms of violence such as threats, intimidation, armed confrontations, massacres and other forms of violence.”²⁹⁷ In short, displaced persons are normal persons in conditions of abnormality.²⁹⁸

As a member of MOVICE points out, “One conceptual problem is that the State is already focused on the closure of the conflict, on the post-conflict scenario, so that the official narrative of the conflict obscures the persistence of internal and intra-urban displacement.”²⁹⁹ It also overlooks the intergenerational memories that normally would illustrate this historical continuity. When asked about displacement, Eva, responds, “why do you ask? It has always been like this. My mom told me that it has always been like this.”³⁰⁰ This permanent experience reveals the lack of place. Memories of traumatic events evoke a situation in limbo.³⁰¹ The question “where to live,” connotes a central concern of displaced populations. According to Ana, “We always felt that we are wanderers.”³⁰² Being asked what the displacement provoked in her, Martha argues,

“ We have lived through very tough situations in the area. Little confidence [in others] has been achieved. In the communities a lot of fear still exists. It exists for the disappearances of their loved ones and the 20 years of struggle. In those families that have experienced many threats and assassinations, there is a lot of pain, – pain that has never been alleviated. It is a pain that

²⁹⁶ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 384.

²⁹⁷ “¡Basta Ya! Colombia,” 296.

²⁹⁸ Osorio Perez, *Territorialidades en suspenso desplazamiento forzado, identidades y resistencias*, 29.

²⁹⁹ Interview with Marina, MOVICE, July 17, 2016, Medellín.

³⁰⁰ Interview with Eva, July 10, 2016, Medellín.

³⁰¹ Bello, *Desplazamiento Forzado*, 189.

³⁰² Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

*makes them not want to know [about the development of the Colombian conflict]. They do not want to fight because it hurts them.*³⁰³

Martha's account evokes depoliticization because the people Martha refers to refuse to seek information in order to claim their rights before the State. Memories are constructions that furnish realities.³⁰⁴ They construct the future.³⁰⁵ The memories of violence change over time from fear to indifference according to Ana. She explains that the memories of violence in the first generations of the conflict developed into a deep feeling of indifference³⁰⁶ and trauma, – “the trauma of having seen what happened to others when they claimed their rights.”³⁰⁷ Carla and Maria from the *Registro Unico de Victimas* similarly noted these paradoxes. They exclaim, “We as Colombians, we survived because we were able to ignore. Our mental health has been protected because we refused to recognize the internal conflict.”³⁰⁸ According to them, “The effect of three generations not living in peace results in difficulty to trust, - to trust your neighbors, the State, the institutions– sometimes even your family members.” Thus, the trans-generational transmission of memories of ongoing collective historical injuries points to the difficulties of imagining peacetime and of building civic trust.

³⁰³ *“Son situaciones muy duras que hemos vivido en la zona, entonces se ha logrado poco la confianza (..) miedo todavia, en las comunidades tiene mucho miedo todavia, todavia existe, unas por la desapariciones de sus seres queridos, y a los 20 anos de lucha, lo que pasa tambien con otros familiares que han tenido muchas amenazas y asesinatos, en esas familias hay muchos dolores consitutivos, dolores que nunca se han sacado, un dolor que no quiere saber, que no quiere estar alli, es un dolor que hace que no quieren saber, que no quieren luchar porque los duele.”* Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.

³⁰⁴ Barkan, “Historical Reconciliation,” 8.

³⁰⁵ Elizabeth Jelin, “Memoria y democracia. Una relación incierta,” *Política. Revista de Ciencia Política* 51, no. 2 (December 31, 2013): 228.

³⁰⁶ Ana actually really says “indiferencia” which means indifference. Yet, in terms of actual claims of rights this (political) behaviour might translate as political passivity or inertia of some sort, or even a loss of resilience.

³⁰⁷ *“El trauma de haber visto lo que pasó a los otros cuando reclaman.” el miedo marca la educación de la generación qué sigue indiferente por ese primer proceso.* Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellin.

³⁰⁸ *“Nosotros, como colombianos, sobrevivimos porque pudimos ignorar. Nuestra salud mental ha sido protegida porque nos negamos a reconocer el conflicto interno.”* Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellin.

Narratives inform identities. According to Yasemin Yildiz and Michael Rothberg, those narratives function as a projection of a future trajectory.³⁰⁹ As such they can construct the vision of peace based on the stories of the present and past. Carla notes, “I was born in the midst of internal conflict. I never have known a country in peacetime. It means that we are all affected [by this vision].”³¹⁰ Similarly, Ariella notes, “Most of the young people, that have seen their friends being murdered or disappeared, forgot how to believe in peace.” She adds, “It has been too long.” Rodrigo articulates a similar feeling, “having experienced more than half of a century of violence a lot of us Colombians have not known what peace looks like.”³¹¹ Concretely, the difficulty of imagining any condition beyond displacement and conflict ushers in the tendency to depoliticize for some of the interviewees. Eva affirms, “Through those displacements many people have already changed their way of being. For example, many do not want to talk about politics, or trade unionism, or anything. They are depoliticized.”³¹² Consequently, the inherited memories of fear and violence expose no rupture but continuity. They inform how victims of displacement in Medellin can and want to claim their rights and to what extent they will have access to reparations.

In Rob Nixon’s account on *slow violence* she refers to Faulkner’s dictum “the past is never dead. It is not even past,”³¹³ resonating the permeability of time and the ongoing life of historical injuries that complicate any assumptions of linear transitions from conflict to peace.

³⁰⁹ Rothberg and Yildiz, “Memory Citizenship,” 202.

³¹⁰ “Nací en medio de un conflicto interno. Nunca he conocido un país en paz. Significa que todos estamos afectados.” Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellin.

³¹¹ “Habiendo vivido más de la mitad de un siglo de violencia muchos de nosotros los colombianos no hemos sabido lo que parece la paz.” Interview with Rodrigo, Colectivo de Abogados Carlos Restrepo (Cajar), July 5, 2016, Bogotá.

³¹² “Esos desplazamientos, sí pienso que sí. Mucha gente ya cambió su forma de ser. Por ejemplo muchos no desean, no quieren hablar de la política, ni del sindicalismo, ni de nada. Se despolitizaron.” Interview with Eva, July 10, 2016, Medellin.

³¹³ Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, 8.

Hirsch describes *postmemory* as a *perceived* memory of past traumatic experiences. The belatedness of memory in Hirsch's terms refers to "an uneasy oscillation between continuity and rupture."³¹⁴ This might be a more fitting analysis of the transgenerational workings in relation to displacement in Medellin. Rather than disruptive past events, those inherited narratives and imaginaries of violence live on simultaneously through both, conflict and peacetime. The inscription of those memories cannot be undone, simply by signing peace accords. Teresa Koloma Beck speaks to the fact that inherited memories are integrated in everyday practices that constantly re-negotiate peace and justice.³¹⁵ According to her, "Dealing with the past as an incorporated reality means to facilitate the transformation of these body memories."³¹⁶ Then, to deal with the past that is never really past is to carve a niche for imagining peace as a possibility that exists simultaneously with diverse and continuous imaginaries of violence.

In conclusion, collective intergenerational transmission of memories of violence, constituting identities in relation to displacement, exists in Medellin. Yet, rather than being disruptive, those inherited memories constitute and explain the continuity of the experience of violence. The effects of this memory transmission that connotes places of violence and territorial stigma point to the limits of citizenship for displaced persons within the city.

³¹⁴ Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," 106.

³¹⁵ Teresa Koloma Beck, "Forgetting the Embodied Past. Body Memory in Transitional Justice," October 4, 2013, 197.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*

c. *Limited Citizenship: Dynamics of Non-Belonging.*

According to a member of the Colectivo de Abogados “José Alvear Restrepo” – CAJAR, difficulties of imagining peace and developing civic trust are inherently related to the absence of effective rights and the condition of citizenship in Colombia.³¹⁷ The difficulty of claiming those rights particularly holds true for persons affected by intra-urban displacement.³¹⁸

Transmitted memories are central organizing principles of national identity and citizenship.³¹⁹ According to Gloria Naranjo, the Colombian cities incorporate various forms of violence and particularly heavy problems with the construction of citizenship.³²⁰

In her work “the Origins of Totalitarianism,” Hannah Arendt describes the conditions of modern citizenship. She refers to the condition of the displaced persons and stateless as “absolute lawlessness.” They are outside of the law.³²¹ The invention of the term “displaced persons” according to Arendt was “liquidating statelessness once and for all by ignoring its existence.”³²² The increased codification of international law in the 20th century would not change the situation of rightlessness of the stateless population. Arendt refers to their condition as being without territory and without State. Denationalization exposed the very origin of the disenfranchisement of the “scum of the earth.”³²³ With the rise of the nation-state in West-Europe, the Rights of Man, human rights, became irrevocably bound to citizenship.³²⁴ They were declared to be inalienable, irreducible and undeducible.³²⁵ However, the striking

³¹⁷ Interview with Rodrigo, Colectivo de Abogados Carlos Restrepo (Cajar), July 5, 2016, Bogota.

³¹⁸ See, Atehortúa Arredondo, “Caracterización del Desplazamiento Forzado Intraurbano, Medellín 2000-2004;” Instituto Popular de Capacitación, “Desplazamiento intraurbano en Medellín: Cíclico e Invisible.”

³¹⁹ Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel, *Spatializing Peace and Conflict: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, 18.

³²⁰ Naranjo, “Ciudades Y Desplazamiento Forzado En Colombia,” 284.

³²¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 269.

³²² *Ibid.*, 279.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 269.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 372.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 291.

paradox of this development meant that rights would refer to an abstract human being that did exist nowhere. Consequently, rights were not concrete enough in order to protect the most vulnerable beings of society. As in liberal thought, the sovereignty of the human being was incorporated in the sovereignty of the Nation and in its multiple implications for the codification of rights.³²⁶

These conditions led to three consequences. First, it engendered the loss of the stateless' homes. The loss of the living space implies the domestic environment, the geography, habits, places and memories linked to their homes.³²⁷ The situation of the stateless consists in "the deprivation of a place in the world"³²⁸ since they lost their place on earth where they could begin a new life. Second, they lost the protection of their nation-states, through their loss of legal citizenship. This led to the impossibility of obtaining protection through other states and the absence of official recognition (as human beings). Third, the stateless were *beyond law*, in an exclusionary realm without any rights. Concluding, the stateless are not only deprived of their membership in Arendt's political community, having withdrawn their right to rights. The loss of their rights leads to the expulsion of their humanity.³²⁹ For Arendt, the essential foundation of the human condition is dignity.³³⁰ As such statelessness means three fundamental losses: the loss of home, the loss of protection by the State, and the being beyond or outside of the law. With the uprooting, memories and the feelings of social existence in a particular local context disappear.

³²⁶ Gil, *Lugares, procesos y migrantes*, 18.

³²⁷ Ayten Gündođdu, *Rightlessness in an Age of Rights : Hannah Arendt and the Contemporary Struggles of Migrants* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 127.

³²⁸ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 297.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 298.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 299.

According to Adriana Gil, statelessness is a liminal case of forced displacement.³³¹ Considering displacement in those terms, it generates the expulsion from the human community through the practical impossibility to find “another place on earth,” – through the continuous feeling of non-belonging.

First, returning to Wacquant, the spaces of marginality are containers and markers of non-belonging and distancing.”³³² Referring to the fragile places of arrival and constant displacement within the city, Eva and Carlos designate as the most arduous consequence of intra-urban and internal displacement the experience of always arriving as unknown and remaining unknown.³³³ Ariella affirms that, the permanent loss of a place is very difficult. She adds, “I never felt a sense of belonging anywhere.”

According to Melissa Parker, attached to emotional aspects of displacement are often a sense of estrangement, alienation, depersonalization and sometimes a feeling of non-belonging.³³⁴ As previously mentioned, intra-urban displacement often causes family disintegration that stresses the feeling of having no-place in the city.³³⁵ Nadia pointed out that she lost her friendships through intra-urban displacement. She also explained that she ended up alone because “we did not fit in any place.” The inhabitants of her new neighborhood rejected her as a new arrival. In this context, belonging can be an act of self-identification or identification by others.³³⁶ Nadia, who experienced several intra-urban displacements, explains, “It is very difficult to identify with a region where nobody knows oneself. One arrives as a stranger.” She adds, “Often, months after the arrival, one remains a stranger. Until

³³¹ Gil, *Lugares, procesos y migrantes*, 20.

³³² Wacquant, “The Rise of Advanced Marginality,” 134.

³³³ Interview with Eva, July 10, 2016, Medellin; Interview with Carlos, July 17, 2016, Medellin.

³³⁴ Melissa Parker. David Parkin, “Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement,” *Journal of Material Culture* 4, no. 3 (November 1, 1999): 303.

³³⁵ Osorio Perez, *Territorialidades en suspenso desplazamiento forzado, identidades y resistencias*, 29.

³³⁶ Nira Yuval-Davis, “Belonging and the Politics of Belonging,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 40, no. 3 (July 2006): 199.

today I have no friendships there [in her new neighborhood].” This account illustrates how one perceives oneself as external to the city. Yet, Nadia’s observation also shows how one is perceived by others as stranger, which may impede the process of building lasting social relationships.

Moreover, the expulsion from a place in the city that has been called home for several years results in a strong feeling of insecurity. Belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling “at home” and about feeling “safe.”³³⁷ Nadia explains, “No one is safe in any place (...) After victimization such as forced disappearance or forced displacement, one is not secure anywhere.”³³⁸ She concludes, “There is no place.”

Elizabeth Colson argues that forcibly displaced persons frequently fear new cycles of displacement even several years after their first displacement.³³⁹ She coins this as emotional state of “permanent readiness,” which relates to a constant feeling of non-belonging. Carla and Maria point out that displaced persons often note, “If my mom has been displaced, I know that I always can be displaced as well.”³⁴⁰ Hence, displacement often conveys the feeling of constant risk.³⁴¹ Katja, who has been displaced from the neighborhood of Buenos Aires to La Loma, explains that she already expects being displaced again. She feels being in a constant state of movement.³⁴² Hence, the permanent sensation that displacement can always return is experienced as a continuous family story.

³³⁷ Yuval-Davis, “Belonging and the Politics of Belonging,” 197.

³³⁸ “*Ninguno esta seguro por ningun lado*” (...) *uno despues de un hecho victimizante como la desaparicion forzada o la desaparicion forzada no se encuentra seguro en ningun lugar*,” Interview with Nadia, July 16, 2016, Medellin.

³³⁹ Elizabeth Colson. David Parkin, “Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement,” 303.

³⁴⁰ “*Si mi mama fue desplazada, yo sé que siempre podia ser desplazada.*” Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellin.

³⁴¹ David Parkin, “Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement,” 303.

³⁴² Interview with Katja, July 11, 2016, Medellin.

The conflict in Colombia is a war for the national construction of the State.³⁴³ However, contrary to the observations by Arendt, Colombia is characterized by an absence or, rather, fragmentation of state sovereignty. It is a “sovereignty in permanent dispute” for which the rights of vulnerable segments of society are relegated to the margins, to virtuality.³⁴⁴ On one hand, the State might have to give up its authority to informal hegemonic groups in particular territories in the city. On the other hand, the State is complicit in the maintenance of the authority of those alternative groups in certain areas by acting in collaboration with paramilitary or militias.³⁴⁵ In Colombia, the displaced are not stateless *de jure* in the manner that might apply to those that had to flee their nation and cross borders, resulting in a realm of rightlessness through their status as non-citizens. However, they can be considered as *de facto* stateless. The uprooting of their homes is perpetrated by alternative sovereignties to which the displaced need to obey in order to save their lives. As a result, there is no effective protection by the State for the displaced.

According to Margareth Somers, citizenship is more profound than just holding a legal status in a nation. It goes back to the very right to have rights.³⁴⁶ In Medellin, particularly the displaced population in the urban realm can hardly claim substantial rights without formally *being beyond the law*. They hold formal rights. This relates, first, to the absence of effective rights and adequate institutional structures to claim them. And second, this originates from

³⁴³ Angarita Cañas and INER (Organization), *Balance de Los Estudios Sobre Violencia En Antioquia*, 58.

³⁴⁴ María Teresa Uribe de Hincapié, “Las soberanías en vilo en un contexto de guerra y paz,” *Estudios Políticos* 0, no. 13 (December 15, 1998): 23.

³⁴⁵ A cooperation between paramilitary and the State occurred through interventions in the Comuna 13 In Medellin, called Operación Orión, Operación Mariscal and Operación Estrella. See, Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación (Colombia) Área de Memoria Histórica, *La huella invisible de la guerra*, 89.

³⁴⁶ Margaret R. Somers, *Genealogies of Citizenship : Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 10.

the feeling of fear, as previously explained, contained in trans-generational memories of violence,³⁴⁷ that lead to self-censorship.

Most of the victims of forced displacement that were interviewed did not know about their rights. They recalled that only a significant time later, they realized that their displacement could be a crime and could be repaired as well. Moreover, legal structures of the aforementioned transitional justice framework also hindered the recognition of those rights. Katja only denounced the forced disappearances of her son five years later, since his disappearance had been understood as ordinary crime. She adds, “But we lived in this Comuna for a long time and we know that they were the same paramilitaries as always.” Katja had to move away from this zone as she feared that the same would happen to her other children. Yet, the institutions in charge denied the registration as a victim for intra-urban displacement since the original reason for it was not considered a crime in relation to the internal Colombian conflict. Furthermore, the institutional structure for registering as a victim is complicated for those in a marginalized situation, particularly due to the crime experienced. In relation to the right to hold rights, Katja explains, “You have to fight a lot, you have to get up early at 3 in the morning, lose all day, many times until 3 or 4 in the afternoon, travel for the papers so that they include them. The compensation they give makes a mockery of our situation (...) much has not been done for the victims.”³⁴⁸ Martha tried to register her internal displacement from the rural zone in Antioquia to Medellin but has been rejected because she was registered as a citizen in Medellin. This meant that she was not recognized as being

³⁴⁷ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 384.

³⁴⁸ “Hay que luchar mucho, hay que madrugar a las 3 de la mañana, perder todo el día, muchas veces hasta las 3 o 4 de la tarde, viajaba para los papeles para que ellos los incluyan y la indemnización que l dan a uno, es como una burla (...) no se hace mucho par alas víctimas,” Interview with Katja, July 11, 2016, Medellin.

displaced from the rural area to the town. Martha affirms, “These are intimidating strategies that mostly affect the peasants.”

In relation to the fragmentation of the State’s authority in certain regions in the city, Artehortua recounts that the Colombian state is always present via bureaucratic institutions.³⁴⁹ From these bureaucratic institutions derives the image of the displaced as first class citizen.³⁵⁰ Formally, s/he is eligible to enjoy a wide range of rights that should serve his/her protection. Yet, although the victim formally holds more rights than any other citizen, s/he substantially holds less than any other citizen. S/he has rights formally, yet does not experience those rights in reality. A member of the Registro Unico de Victimas reveals that there is no follow-up for the conditions for the displaced populations. Sometimes they are waiting over 8 years for compensation. As in Arendt’s account, despite the codification of the rights of the displaced and the workings of bureaucratic institutions that should assure one’s rights, the latter is too abstract to protect in concrete states of vulnerability.

Rights are not only neglected due to the lack of effectiveness, but also through the aforementioned temporal limitedness of their application. This derives precisely from the fact that the State, through the implemented legal framework, conceives intra-urban displacement as a transition, which contradicts the aforementioned effects of territorial stigma and the lasting transmission of memories of violence. For instance, Carla, 74 years old, narrates that her displacement from Uraba to Medellin has not been recognized because it happened in 1982, which was before the period of time in the scope of the Victim Law.

³⁴⁹ “*Es una burocracia politica y juridical.*” Interview with Clara Artehortua Arrendondo, July 12, 2016, Medellin.

³⁵⁰ Interview with Hernando Muñoz, Departamentode Humanidades, Universidad de Antioquia, July 28, 2016, Medellin.

Ultimately, the spatial imaginary of violence attached to certain categories of citizens, such as the displaced, result in auto-censorship. This does not only mark identities but the very possibility to exert citizenship. As previously mentioned, the spatial imaginary of violence designated the displaced as “beggar that brings violence to the city”. This imaginary derives from the memories transmitted over several generations. In this discourse, fear as an emotional regime controls a body of social responses about “who is part of the nation”, the “we”, and who is excluded.³⁵¹ Regarding the dynamics of displacement, Ana explains that, “There was no direct threat, but the circumstances forced us.”³⁵² However, she immediately admits, “When you go ask my mom or grandmother if they were displaced, they will say ‘we are not displaced’ but yes, we are displaced. But my grandmother would never accept recognition as displaced because in terms of status it is less, because for the people, the image of the displaced is the person who is begging there, in the streets.”³⁵³ The fear of being designated as displaced results from the social exclusion associated with this status. The result is a behavior that could be explained with W.E.B. Du Bois notion of double-consciousness, as “always looking at [oneself] through the eyes of others.”³⁵⁴ The imaginary of the displaced as “beggar”, that is conveyed by others, becomes internalized by those who are affected by serial displacement. Therefore, they refuse the self-identification with the status of a displaced person. Thus, they frequently do not register as victims of displacement in state institutions. According to Ana,

³⁵¹ Alcalá and Martínez, *Poniendo tierra de por medio*, 387.

³⁵² “No hubo una amenaza directa, pero las circunstancias nos obligaron.” Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

³⁵³ “Cuando vas preguntar a mi mamá o mi abuela si eran desplazadas, van a decir ‘no somos desplazadas’ pero si somos desplazados. pero mi abuela nunca aceptaría de reconocerse como desplazada porque en términos de estatuto es menos, porque para la gente el imaginario del desplazado es la persona que está por allí mendigando,” Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

³⁵⁴ W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt) Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk [Electronic Resource] : Essays and Sketches* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Academic Affairs Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2001), 10–11.

“The figure of the displaced was formalized in terms of that person that needs help and assistance, that person who is begging. This is the reason why they will never ask for help. For them, the fact that no one has gone to their house to tell them directly that they have to leave does not make them displaced because finally ‘You decided to leave.’ So, many people did perceive their displacement as a crime and I’m talking about the majority of the population.”³⁵⁵

The displaced population within the city does not see themselves as “rights holder” in relation to a crime –intra-urban displacement – that they themselves do not consider to be a crime. Or it is simply secondary to the other forms of victimizations that they experienced (second evil). They become almost “complicit” in a system that conveys values that have become internalized over decades. Ana’s account illustrates the difficulty of registering and claiming rights for displacement in relation to the internalized status of dignity associated with the displaced. She notes,

“My family does not assume themselves as displaced people. They do not see that category as being for them. They have never sought the support of the State because it is [formally] assumed that the status as displaced refers to something dignified, but people do not see it as dignified. My grandmother does not see it as dignified at all.”³⁵⁶

According to Arendt, the three previously mentioned conditions deny the stateless one’s basic human dignity. It seems striking that, through the workings of *slow violence*, the displaced persons frequently see themselves obliged to reject their right to have rights in order to sustain one’s human dignity.

³⁵⁵ *“La figura del desplazado se se formalizó en términos de aquella persona a que se da asistencia, aquella persona que está mendigando, es la razon porque nunca van a preguntar ayuda. para ellos el hecho que nadie haya ido a la casa para decirles directamente que se fueron, no les hace desplazados porque finalmente ‘Tú decidiste irte.’ entonces mucha gente no lo vi así y estoy hablando de la mayoría de la población.”* Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

³⁵⁶ *“Mi familia no se asume como desplazados no ven esa categoría entre ellos y nunca han buscado el apoyo del estado porque se supone que el estatus como desplazado da algo digno, pero la gente no lo ve como digno en la casa de mi abuela es básicamente porque no lo ve digno,”* Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.

One of the core goals of transitional justice “is to return the status of citizens to individuals.”³⁵⁷ Yet, in the face of the three losses, – the loss of home, the loss of protection by the State, and the being beyond or outside of the law, – the State lacks adequate possibilities to make rights accessible for the displaced population in Medellin. This results in limited modes of citizenship. The loss of holding the right to rights and access to reparations refers to the absence of possibilities to partake in the political community. Thus, it is difficult to rebuild “civic trust” as a condition of *systemic justice* since the former is contingent on an understanding of citizens as fellow members of the same political community.³⁵⁸ In return, the inclusion in the demos and the recognition of the displaced individual as “right holder”, not only by the State, but in one’s everyday practices – as “everyday peace” in David Roberts terms, – becomes critical for transformative and systemic justice.

³⁵⁷ De Greiff, “Justice and Reparations,” 460.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 462.

Part III. *Non-Places, Non-Peace, Non-Belonging?* On Transitions to Systemic Justice.

“Transitional Justice is a ruse that promises that someday over the rainbow we will find justice. The justice they promise is illusory.”³⁵⁹
- Blogger from Bogotá

So far, this thesis has shown two of the central aspects of the dynamics of forced intra-urban displacement articulated in the research interviews. First, there exists intergenerational transmission(s) of memories of violence that refer to spatial categories of places and persons. Second, visions of linear transitions and a focus on a specific set of time-limited harm do not account for the enduring nature of serial displacement and violence in space and time. The gap between the actual legal framework for the *transition* to (regular) justice and the lived experiences of intra-urban displacement points to a larger tendency in theorizing transitional justice. Current transitional justice debates often overlook the continuous navigation of violence, peace and justice by local actors in the everyday.

a. Situating Violence as Spatio-Temporal: Towards an Understanding of Slow Violence.

Transitional justice as a term can be traced back to World War I and then was further developed in the wake of the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials in 1945, which instilled it as the lasting paradigm for transitional justice debates.³⁶⁰ It gained traction in legal and political theory because of the various transitions of the East European countries, the unraveling of a larger number of Latin American dictatorships and, in the early nineties, South Africa’s

³⁵⁹ “The Language of Peace,” *Colombia Peace*, May 5, 2016, <https://colombiapeace.wordpress.com/2016/05/05/the-language-of-peace/>.

³⁶⁰ Ruti G. Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” 76.

transition from Apartheid to democracy.³⁶¹ By the post-Cold War era, transitional justice advocacy became associated with an international agenda to promote goals that were less explicitly political: conflict resolution and the strengthening of the rule of law.³⁶² Transitional justice, according to Ruti Teitel, can be defined as “the conception of justice associated with periods of political change, characterized by legal responses to confront the wrongdoings of repressive predecessor regimes.”³⁶³ The United Nations understand Transitional Justice as being linked to “the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale abuses.”³⁶⁴ As “those sets of tools can be employed mutually,”³⁶⁵ the founding discussions surrounding transition(s) to justice have vividly addressed the interdependence of justice, truth, reconciliation and peace in terms of its mechanisms.³⁶⁶ David Crocker proposes, “To decide among the diverse tools [of transitional justice], as well as to fashion, combine and sequence them” by setting clear “objectives for its measures.”³⁶⁷ The development of a “tool-box-thinking” strategy led to a linear conception of transition defining categories of conflict, particular forms of violence and exclusion of others; it generated a moral consensus on evil as specific harm.³⁶⁸

Nevertheless, in the recent decades a shift of transitional justice theorizing centered on a more long-term and nuanced analysis dealing with underlying root causes and their specific causalities and possibilities for redress. Justice, peace and democracy have become

³⁶¹ See, Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” 70.

³⁶² Bronwyn Anne Leebaw, “The Irreconcilable Goals of Transitional Justice,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2008): 106.

³⁶³ Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” 69.

³⁶⁴ Security Council, “The rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and in conflict societies,” (S/2004/616), August 3, 2004, (1-21) § 8, 4.

³⁶⁵ Neil J. Kritz, “Progress and Humility: The Ongoing Search for Postconflict Justice,” Emeritus Distinguished Research Professor of Law M. Cherif Bassiouni, ed., *Post Conflict Justice* (Ardsley, N.Y: Brill - Nijhoff, 2002), 57.

³⁶⁶ Miller, “(Re)Distributing Transition,” 371.

³⁶⁷ Crocker, “Reckoning with Past Wrongs,” 45.

³⁶⁸ See, Meister, *After Evil*, 14; Khanyisela Moyo, “Feminism, Postcolonial Legal Theory and Transitional Justice: A Critique of Current Trends,” *International Human Rights Law Review* 1 (2012): 239.

understood as not mutually exclusive objectives, but rather mutually reinforcing imperatives.³⁶⁹ Gradually, it has been acknowledged that public addressing of structural inequalities and the implementation of socioeconomic reforms are indispensable factors for a successful process of reconciliation in order to inhibit “the risk (...) that the same factors that caused the initial war are usually still present.”³⁷⁰ Hence, to tackle structural violence is understood as paramount for achieving the goals of non-repetition. More critical views on the artificiality of transitional justice mechanisms – due to its focus on civil and political rights and the narrow framework on understanding violence and peace - emerged.³⁷¹ For instance, Fionnuala Ni Aolain points to the fact that “the transitional justice tool-kit“ does little to address the structural discrimination, inequality and violence.³⁷² Khanyisela Moyo and David Chandler criticize the liberal and postcolonial implications of liberal peace frameworks in transitional justice and humanitarian policies.³⁷³ Similarly, Rosemary Nagy argued that transitional justice is frequently reduced to certain sets of mechanisms that apply only to a specific set of actors and crimes.³⁷⁴ Kieran McEvoy, Rami Mani, Graeme Simpson and Wendy Lambourne advocated in favor of a more holistic perspective on justice “that takes into

³⁶⁹ Security Council, “The rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and in conflict societies,” 1.

³⁷⁰ Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Walk with Us and Listen : Political Reconciliation in Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, c2009), 110.

³⁷¹ See Krista Thomason, “Transitional Justice as Structural Justice,” *Forthcoming in Theorizing Transitional Justice with Ashgate*, accessed January 19, 2017; Louise Arbour, ‘Economic and Social Justice for Societies in Transition,’ *NYU Journal of International Law and Politics* 40 (2007): 1–27; Rama Mani, ‘Balancing Peace with Justice in the Aftermath of Violent Conflict,’ *Development* 48(3) (2005): 25–34.

³⁷² Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, “Justice in Times of Transition: A Reflection on Transitional Justice,” 2013, 57, <http://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/163486>.

³⁷³ See, Moyo, “Feminism, Postcolonial Legal Theory and Transitional Justice: A Critique of Current Trends,” David Chandler, “Resilience and the ‘Everyday’: beyond the Paradox of ‘Liberal Peace,’” *Review of International Studies; London* 41, no. 1 (January 2015): 27–48.

³⁷⁴ Rosemary Nagy, “Transitional Justice as Global Project: Critical Reflections,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (2008): 257.

account the expectations of affected communities.³⁷⁵ In 2011, the United Nations outline an approach that addresses underlying root causes of conflict by advancing the realization of economic and social rights.³⁷⁶ Those understandings of crime and violence imply a consideration of both past and future factors to justice, seeking accountability of institutions to restore civic trust, and investing in re-distributive justice to redress socio-political inequalities.

Following those observations, studies concerning the re-emergence of violence and structural marginalization acknowledge that there exists a persistent undirected violence that works through the global as well as the local system(s) of power. This view gave rise to a broader recognition of *systemic* violent experiences and of traumatized populations over time.³⁷⁷ Thus, it adds the dimension of time to the understanding of violence. A shift in acknowledging the workings of painful memories as object of a more holistic approach to justice and to the impact of political violence emerged. This approach deals with “how societies and individuals in the aftermath of war and repression reconstruct meaning in social, political and psychological terms.”³⁷⁸ As a consequence, more research has emerged on the workings of violence over time to address historical injustices and processes of healing.

However, as we have seen in relation to intra-urban displacement a focus on trauma as rupture of the everyday and individually redressable violence has to be critically examined. As

³⁷⁵ See, Kieran McEvoy and Lorna McGregor, eds., *Transitional Justice from Below: Grassroots Activism and the Struggle for Change* (Oxford ; Portland, Or: Hart Publishing, 2008); Gready and Robins, “From Transitional to Transformative Justice;” Graeme Simpson, “From the Normative to the Transformative: Defining and Promoting Justice and Human Rights as Part of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding,” *Working Paper*, (2015): 1-45; Wendy Lambourne “Transformative justice, reconciliation and peacebuilding” in *Transitional Justice Theories*, Routledge, 2013.

³⁷⁶ Security Council, “The rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and in conflict societies,” § 52.

³⁷⁷ See, Pupavac, “Therapeutic Governance”; Fassin, *The Empire of Trauma*.

³⁷⁸ Hamper, Brendon. “Dealing with Painful Memories and Violent Pasts: Towards a Framework for Contextual Understanding,” 5.

a critique of state-managed trauma processes, Vanessa Pupavac has argued that the nexus between individual trauma-healing processes "proposes emotional adjustment for societies, rather than material advancement of their circumstances."³⁷⁹ Thus not only structural violence remains hidden. Transitional justice frameworks in relation to displacement frequently sideline systemic decade-long *slow violence*. When individual healing is used as a metaphor for national healing, this implies a pre-existing body politic or a "single collective psyche" with shared wounds, shared vulnerabilities and shared experience.³⁸⁰ Yet, the deference of effective rights of urbanely displaced populations precisely contradicts the assumption of an inclusive membership in a "collective body politic." As shown, these communities experience a feeling of non-belonging as well as limits of citizenship. The experiences of violence can result from the same event. However, those experiences are not necessarily shared and especially regarding historical vulnerability and marginalization in relation to internal displacement and its often-unacknowledged continuation as intra-urban displacement,³⁸¹ they are not individually redressable. Thus, urbanely displaced populations in Medellin that mostly suffered from state violence³⁸² carry a very different memory inscribed in body and minds. This form of memory leads to a *continuity of slow violence* within the city. The role of time is critical to discussions of transitional justice as it defines the type of violence that can be addressed through those frameworks. The approach to temporality reorganizes the terrain on which we think of injury. A shift from discreet or episodic understandings of violence to *slow violence* is necessary to more adequately capture the

³⁷⁹ Pupavac, "Therapeutic Governance," 7.

³⁸⁰ Pupavac, "Therapeutic Governance," 10.

³⁸¹ Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez, Registro Unico de Victimas, July 23, 2016. She depicts clearly how intra-urban displacement consists in the continuation of internal displacement and derives from very similar reasons.

³⁸² Lucelly Villegas Villegas, "Estado del Arte de los Estudios sobre Localidades y Violencia," in *Balance de Los Estudios Sobre Violencia En Antioquia*, ed. Angarita Cañas and INER (Municipio de Medellín: Editorial Universidad de Antioquia, 2001), 147.

displaced persons' experience in Medellin. This hints at a wider tendency in current transitional justice debates.

b. From Linear Transitions to Transformation: Beyond a Serial Order of Time.

Transitions evoke the problem of time and its relationship to history. Narrower human rights legalism often associated with transitional justice³⁸³ amounts to an ideological erasure by which we are no longer able to see "alternative schemes of justice"³⁸⁴ as emancipatory movements and historically transformative struggles (such as the decolonization movements) as legible forms of (transitional) justice politics beyond *specific* transitional justice claims.

In 2004, the UN Secretary General issued a report outlining a framework for strengthening United Nations support for transitional justice. There, transitional justice has been defined as "the conception of justice in periods of political transition."³⁸⁵ However, Naomi Roht-Arriaza outlines that the term "transition" has always been slippery in transitional justice debates, which have never clearly articulated, "What the State is 'transitioning' to."³⁸⁶ Frequently the notion of transition implies that there is a shift from conflict to a transitional democracy that will be accountable, working towards peaceful coexistence.³⁸⁷ The classical political science definition of transition explains that transition occurs within a circumscribed duration linking two regimes – "an authoritarian regime and a

³⁸³ Dustin N. Sharp, "Emancipating Transitional Justice from the Bonds of the Paradigmatic Transition," *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 9, no. 1 (March 1, 2015): 159.

³⁸⁴ Samuel Moyn, "A Powerless Companion: Human Rights in the Age of Neoliberalism," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 77, no. 4 (2014): 150.

³⁸⁵ Teitel, "Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition," 69.

³⁸⁶ Naomi Roht-Arriaza and Javier Mariezcurrena, eds., *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth versus Justice* (Cambridge, UK ; Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.

³⁸⁷ Barkan, "Historical Reconciliation," 911.

liberal democratic dispensation.”³⁸⁸ Thus, according to Dustin Sharp, transitional justice emerged for advancing timely limited liberal political transitions.³⁸⁹ The conceptualization of these transitional periods artificially interrupts enduring repercussions of the past crime (by relegating it to the past) rather than comprehending its continuity in the present. Therefore, linear transitions as passages of “before-and-after” render the understanding of spatio-temporal violence and historical injuries difficult to identify and to address.

The Colombian government envisioned the peace process and transition(s) to justice as exceptional measures that require the suspension of ordinary criminal justice.³⁹⁰ Ruti Teitel argues that in the current juncture of a “steady-state phase” of transitional justice the application of transitional justice mechanisms went from being the exception to being the norm.³⁹¹ In this context, she notes that the category of transition has become “a persistent trope,” in which justice is transitional.³⁹² For Meister, it is characteristic for periods of “transitions” to carve out a time “in which our sins are no longer a continuation of the past.”³⁹³ Through redemptive law that responds to specific physical harm, transitional justice frameworks reject to acknowledge the continuity of past evil and the enduring experience of structural rights violations in the present. By referring to the decline –“post-ness”– of “more future-orientated projects”, John Torpey demonstrates the workings of transitional justice as a transitional substitute that diminishes political expectations.³⁹⁴ Linear transitions embody an absence of systemic change because they are in a continuous interim period. Thus, linear

³⁸⁸ Guillermo A. O’Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 6.

³⁸⁹ Sharp, “Emancipating Transitional Justice from the Bonds of the Paradigmatic Transition,” 151.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 13.

³⁹¹ Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” 71; Sharp, “Emancipating Transitional Justice from the Bonds of the Paradigmatic Transition,” 154.

³⁹² Teitel, “Transitional Justice Genealogy Human Rights in Transition,” 85.

³⁹³ Meister, *After Evil*, 13

³⁹⁴ Torpey, *Making Whole What Has Been Smashed : On Reparations Politics*, 8.

and normative transitional justice frameworks as such merely make the continuing absence of justice today “more acceptable than it would have been when evil prevailed.”³⁹⁵ Therefore, the project of time-limited and linear transition(s) to justice marks the enduring nature of serial displacement as being “off” time. It depreciates the present period as a time for *systemic justice*.

However, displaced persons articulated an enduring experience of serial displacement that calls for *systemic justice*. The accounts of intra-urban displaced persons did not only point to marginalization and collective and individual vulnerability in relation to the lack of effective rights. They also indicated the arrival in the city as an empowering event that allowed for a restructuring of traditional gender roles, access to education, and possibilities for increased political activism.³⁹⁶ Despite the urgency to render visible the displaced person’s position of vulnerability and marginalization discussed in this study, it is important to conceive of the displaced as first and foremost a political actor. Julián explains,

“The displacement was an experience that I had never imagined, an experience of knowing who manages this country and how it is managed and the origin of violence, and what I appreciate is that I learned to be in community, to meet many lovely people.”³⁹⁷

Forms of resistance derive from the multiple forms of interaction between the habitants of those marginalized neighborhoods³⁹⁸ that stress autonomy, self-determination and independence.³⁹⁹ Carlos notes, “I think peace should begin from here, from our territories,”⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁵ Ibid., 84.

³⁹⁶ Osorio Perez, *Territorialidades en suspenso desplazamiento forzado, identidades y resistencias*, 26.

³⁹⁷ “El desplazamiento me sirvió como zona experiencia que nunca había imaginado, una experiencia de conocer quien maneja ese país y como maneja y del origen de la violencia, y lo que agradezco es que aprendí a estar en comunidad a conocer mucha gente hermosa.” Interview with Julián, July 21, 2016, Medellín.

³⁹⁸ Maria Teresa Uribe Handicapé, “Notas preliminares sobre resistencias de la sociedad civil en un contexto de guerras y transacciones,” *Estudios Políticos* No. 29, Medellín, Julio-diciembre (2006): 64.

³⁹⁹ Maria Teresa Uribe Handicapé, “Notas preliminares sobre resistencias de la sociedad civil en un contexto de guerras y transacciones,” 75.

⁴⁰⁰ “Creo que la paz empieza de aquí – de nuestros territorios.” Interview with Pedro, Medellín.

referring to his own peripheral neighborhood and community in the city. Martha affirms that peace has to begin from the personal but in relation to a radical transformation of the system,⁴⁰¹ and Eva claims a peace not only for one but for all.⁴⁰² These accounts refer to systemic projects of justice rather than to simple politics of individual reparation in relation to specific suffering. They speak to the relationship between the victim and structural beneficiaries of past crime. The needs resulting from the enduring nature of serial displacement go beyond the art of governance of punctual and time-limited benefits of reparations. Justice is renegotiated in the moments of daily life and contingent on it.⁴⁰³ There is no beginning and no end, but change and continuity. In Medellin, the difficulties deriving from a range of dynamics – including the limited timeframe in which residents can register for intra-urban displacement, the slipping of violence into the everyday as a second evil, the territorial stigma that informs self-censorship and the difficulties of developing civic trust as the displaced is limited in her/his partaking in the broader political community – illustrate a pervasive neglect of this systemic justice longed for by affected persons. The absence of systemic justice in the everyday evokes a biased and hegemonic stance⁴⁰⁴ of current transitional justice politics on how to redress past wrongs.

Moreover, “institutional fetishism” and depoliticized “technocratic assistance policy” distract from any broader political project of justice.⁴⁰⁵ The most recent developments of the Colombian peace process offer humanitarian assistance and short-term economic reparations

⁴⁰¹ “*La paz tiene que empezar desde lo personal pero en relación con el sistema ... con la transformación radical del sistema.*” Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.

⁴⁰² Interview with Eva, July 10, 2016, Medellin.

⁴⁰³ Alcalá and Baines, “Editorial Note,” 386.

⁴⁰⁴ See, Balakrishnan Rajagopal, “Counter-Hegemonic International Law: Rethinking Human Rights and Development as a Third World Strategy,” *Third World Quarterly* 27, no. 5 (2006): 768; Gready and Robins, “From Transitional to Transformative Justice,” 341.

⁴⁰⁵ Vasuki Nesiah, “Transitional Justice Practice: Looking Back, Moving Forward,” Scoping Study, May 2016, *Impunity Watch* 2016, 22.

without proposing adequate possibilities of long-term housing in the city. This impedes a more equal distribution of resources and space in the city as broader political transformation. Therefore, it limits transformative justice as “transformative change” that challenges existing structures of exclusion.

Ultimately, suffering is real and it happens on an unequal global scale. We just need to recall Susan Sontag’s words, addressing a predominantly Western audience “To speak of reality [in relation to suffering of others] becoming a spectacle is breath-taking provincialism.”⁴⁰⁶ This present study is an account of how memories live on across several generations, which demonstrates ongoing vulnerability (and related suffering) over space and time. However, one must call for caution in theorizing about specific harm, as it risks a decoupling of historical possibilities for change and systemic transformation from human rights and transitional justice in an era “after evil.”⁴⁰⁷

Wendy Brown argued, “No effective project produces only the consequences it aims to produce. Whatever their avowed purpose, then, do human rights only reduce suffering? Do they (promise to) reduce it in a particular way that precludes or negates other possible ways?”⁴⁰⁸ Focusing on the continuous consequences caused by historical injuries such as displacement, programmatic transitional justice becomes palliative of past suffering. Robert Meister points to the “illusion of historical closure,” which he defines as “the idea that the opportunity for justice has been missed, and that compassion for past suffering is a moral state that justifies one’s continuing to benefit from past conditions that one now would have

⁴⁰⁶ Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 110.

⁴⁰⁷ Meister, *After Evil*, 1.

⁴⁰⁸ Wendy Brown, “‘The Most We Can Hope For. . .’: Human Rights and the Politics of Fatalism,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103, no. 2 (June 10, 2004): 453.

opposed.⁴⁰⁹ My criticism, as I argue here, does not speak to the fact that we cannot think of redressing historical injustices because by way of redressing them, we would forget about why and how they existed. I rather argue that redress through linear transitions to justice upholds illusions of closures of lasting injuries. Those closures contradict the very experience of displaced persons in the everyday – where they construct their sense of justice. They also displace claims for *systemic* transformation that addresses slow violence in Nixon’s terms. In contrast, it is from the demands of social inclusion, structural socio-economic stability, political recognition and transformative reparation that a discourse can be articulated in which the displaced persons understand themselves as political actors.⁴¹⁰

In this context, transitional justice exposes an engagement with processes and practices that are meaningful to individuals’ everyday lives. It alludes to the question how to describe the presentness of the past in ways that make the past indebted to the present. It is critical to reverse the discussed current tendency of contemporary human rights discourse and transitional justice politics and related understandings of violence. This reversal offers a new angle of the continuity of enduring violence over time and space, its everyday experience of serial victimization and the displaced person’s role as political actor capable of action and thought that is truly *transformative*.

⁴⁰⁹ Meister, *After Evil*, 7.

⁴¹⁰ Conferencia Episcopal Colombiana et al., *Desplazamiento forzado en Antioquia, 1985-1998*, 50.

“Rage rises only when there is a reason to suspect that conditions could be changed and are not.”⁴¹¹

- Hannah Arendt.

IV. Conclusion.

This study has shown that the experience of violence by the displaced in the city of Medellin is informed by continuity. First, by the continuity of time, since intergenerational memories of violence mark places as places of no-return and configure the territorial stigma of the displaced. Second, by the continuity of the experience of displacement in space, because internal displacement translates in the city and constitutes an enduring phenomenon of advanced marginalization and re-victimization within the urban realm. Those spatio-temporal dynamics cause a permanent vulnerability that can be understood as *slow violence* in Nixon’s terms. The Colombian transitional justice mechanisms lack a specifically urban focus in Medellin based on the prevention of intra-urban displacement, which could possibly account for the very experience of continuity articulated by the displaced persons in the urban realm. The subjective feeling of injustice and lack of civic trust remains as the continuity of this experience persists – rendered invisible through limited effective rights and citizenship. Hence, those dynamics relegate the displaced population in the cities to non-places, to the sense of non-belonging and to the imaginary of non-peace.

Fragments allude to a particular way of inhabiting the world.⁴¹² Analyzing fragmented personal (hi-) stories of displacement sheds light on the ordinariness of violence experienced

⁴¹¹ Hannah Arendt, “Reflections on Violence,” in *Selected Essays From the First Thirty Years of New York Review of Books*, eds. B. Epstein and R.B. Silvers, New York: New York review of Books (1993): 65-66.

in the everyday. Those accounts from enduring life experiences, therefore, unsettle narrow assumptions about the possibilities of redress for specific moments of past rights violations. Hence, a focus on how justice is experienced and constructed in a continuous mode in the everyday reveals reasons why conventional justice practices within the transitional justice “toolkit” cannot respond to ongoing spatio-temporal injury. The lens of the everyday reveals justice to be dynamic, systemic and continuously in the process of renegotiation.

The current focus of the transitional justice framework in Colombia on specific harm, which is redressable through particular policies that aim for clear-cut endings of past wrongdoings, does not look at the systemic underpinnings that made that violence possible over time. If post-conflict justice should be maximally effective for the local population,⁴¹³ transitional justice debates need to take the experiences of people displaced within the city seriously.

Yet, transitional justice as interim time between the discredited past but “before justice begins,” with its mechanisms and toolboxes of policies of redress, limits thinking about our past wrongdoings as a part of the present, – as *continuity*. Politics of redress of specific harm put the evil in the past. Yet, as Meister has argued, “that the past was evil does not require one to believe that the evil is past.”⁴¹⁴ The fragmented stories of the displaced persons and the unwieldy workings of slow violence may then allude to two aspects. First, past violence is lasting, anchored in the everyday. Second, a turn to *systemic justice* has once more to be made urgent in present times. In this critical political juncture in the Colombian peace process today, the municipality of Medellin stressed in relation to the local transitional justice process

⁴¹² Das, *Life and Words [Electronic Resource]*, 7.

⁴¹³ Neil J. Kritz, “Progress and Humility: The Ongoing Search for Postconflict Justice,” Emeritus Distinguished Research Professor of Law M. Cherif Bassiouni, ed., *Post Conflict Justice* (Ardsley, N.Y: Brill - Nijhoff, 2002), 59.

⁴¹⁴ Meister, *After Evil*, 14.

the importance of “encouraging respect for life and the socio-cultural transformation through a culture of peace that facilitates the peaceful resolution of conflicts.”⁴¹⁵ In order to strengthen a culture of peace and systemic justice in Medellín, however, it is paramount to address intra-urban displacement in terms of both, its political and policy implications and the related subjective sense of injustice articulated by the persons that animated and contributed to this study.

Then the question remains: Can those negative spaces – of non-belonging, non-place and non-peace – spark empowerment and resistance that renders visible the continuity of slow violence in relation to the urban space?

The theories of social space, its emergence, (re-) production, displacement, decline and (re-) appropriation, allude to the question that Marianne Hirsch asks in relation to postmemory: “Can our (post-) memories of violence, loss and the fading away of homes be transformed into action and resistance?”⁴¹⁶ Memory consists according to Walter Benjamin, in a potentiality that can at times “flash up” uncontrollably to reveal new possibilities.⁴¹⁷ How memory and space is lived and re-appropriated then becomes unpredictable and uncertain. This concept gains relevance by considering how the displacement within the city and especially from rural to urban spaces generates empowerment among those that are displaced.⁴¹⁸ The constant postponing of the long expected and overdue systemic transformation does not merely result in resignation. It sparks *rage*, *solidarity* and *critical*

⁴¹⁵ “Fomentar el respeto por la vida y la transformación sociocultural a través de una cultura de paz que facilite la resolución pacífica de conflictos.” Ursula Baigorria Köppel, “Garantías de no repetición para Medellín.” October 2015, accessed on December 23, 2016, https://www.medellin.gov.co/irj/go/km/docs/pccdesign/SubportaldelCiudadano_2/PlandeDesarrollo_0_0_0_0/Publicaciones/Shared%20Content/Documentos/2015/PresentacionGNR.pdf.

⁴¹⁶ Hirsch, “The Generation of Postmemory,” 104.

⁴¹⁷ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 256.

⁴¹⁸ Maria Teresa Uribe Handicapé, “Notas preliminares sobre resistencias de la sociedad civil en un context de guerras y transacciones,” 67.

thinking about how to radically change lasting injustice. What seems to be important to highlight is the capacity of the displaced communities to confront their collective experiences of violence inscribed in inherited memory. This makes it possible for them to fight their conditions as political actors.

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Interviews.

All interviews were conducted through MOVICE Medellín in July 2016. All names of the persons affected by displacement (non-scholars) are anonymous in this study.

a. Conducted Interviews with Displaced Persons (anonymous).

- Interview with Ariella, July 9, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Pablo, July 9, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Eva, July 10, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Katja, July 11, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Carmen, July 13, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Ana, July 14, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Maria, July 15, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Nadia, July 16, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Carlos, July 17, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Natalia, July 18, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Julián, July 21, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Martha, July 22, 2016, Carmen de Viboral, Antioquia.
- Interview with Carla, July 23, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Rosa, July 23, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Elisa, July 28, 2016, Medellín.

b. Conducted Interviews with Experts.

- Interview with Rodrigo (encoded name), Colectivo de Abogados Carlos Restrepo (Cajar), July 5, 2016, Bogotá.
- Interview with Adriana Baigorria, Casa de la Memoria, July 11, 2016, Medellín.
- Interview with Clara Arتهortua Arrendondo, July 12, 2016, Medellín.

Interview with Marina, (encoded name) MOVICE, July 17, 2016, Medellin.

Interview with Martha Sánchez Villa, Corporación Región, July 24, 2016.

Interview with Carla Calle Sanchez and Maria Lopez (encoded names) at the Registro Único de las Víctimas, July, 25, Medellin.

Interview with Hernando Muñoz, Departamento de Humanidades, Universidad de Antioquia, July 28, 2016, Medellin.

Questions for Semi-Structured Interviews.

Those questions guided the interviews. There were not the only questions asked but rather served as a roadmap.

a. Conducted Interviews with Displaced Persons (anonymous).

- 1) Where have you lived before coming to Medellin?
- 2) How did you arrive in Medellin? Could you tell me more about the reasons for coming to Medellin?
- 3) How do you remember your displacement? Is there any memory that was particularly important for you?
- 4) What were the consequences of your displacement? Did you register your displacement at RUV?
- 5) Have you moved to different parts of the city in Medellin? Was it your choice to move?
- 6) Would you say that your neighborhood is marginalized regarding the whole of the city?
- 7) How did you perceive the State during your displacement?
- 8) How is your memory linked to physical spaces?
- 9) Since Colombia is in a process of transitional justice and a lot of mechanisms have been applied to end the conflict, what – out of your opinion – is the most important measure to be taken to improve the life of the victims of the conflict? Do you imagine peace? If yes, how?

b. Conducted Interviews with Experts.

- 1) What are the major factors for the re-emergence of violence in Medellin?
- 2) What are the causes for internal displacement?
- 3) How does internal displacement in the context of Colombia translate into intra-urban displacement?
- 4) Does there exist a nexus between political violence, re-criminalization/ re-marginalization of victims of state crime and intra-urban displacement?
- 5) Which are the segments of Medellin's population most effected by those crimes?
- 6) What is specific about intra-urban displacement in the context of Medellin in relation to other Colombian cities?
- 7) What, in your opinion, could be viable transitional justice remedies for the damages caused by internal/ intra-urban displacement and state violence in the context of Medellin?
- 8) How does that play out in terms of (intergenerational) inherited memory?

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