

The Colombian Transitional Process: Comparative Perspectives on Violence against Indigenous Women

Mónica Acosta,* Angela Castañeda,[†] Daniela García,**
Fallon Hernández,^{††} Dunen Muelas*** and Angela Santamaria^{†††}

ABSTRACT[∞]

Colombia has a comprehensive system of truth, justice and reparation stemming from its history with the justice and peace process and its most recent peace agreement. Although indigenous women are the most affected before, during and after conflict, their participation is marginalized within this political context. This article discusses how Colombian transitional justice can be reconfigured when indigenous women's practices and knowledge travel 'from the margins' to the center. We seek to demonstrate how these practices legitimize gender and other types of violence in the name of tradition and also how indigenous women's experiences go beyond the gendered perspective of violence as a 'weapon of war.' Working within the context of the peace process, we gathered data through learning and teaching techniques with indigenous women in three indigenous contexts (Sierra, Pan-Amazon region and Chocó). Our focus is on the interaction between local transitional justice practices and the violence against indigenous women, their resistance practices and the peacebuilding agendas used to implement transitional justice in Colombia.

KEYWORDS: indigenous women, intersectionality, transitional justice 'from below,' Colombia

* PhD Candidate in Sociology of Law, Basque Country University, Spain; Member, Intercultural School of Indigenous Diplomacy (EIDI). Email: acostagarcia.monica@gmail.com

† A. Edward Myers Dolan Professor of Anthropology, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Chair of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN, USA. Email: acastaneda@depauw.edu

** Internationalist and Junior Researcher, Interdisciplinary Studies Group on Peace, Conflict and Postconflict, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia. Email: daniela.garciav@urosario.edu.co

†† Internationalist and Junior Researcher, Interdisciplinary Studies Group on Peace, Conflict and Postconflict, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia. Email: fallonhernandez.palacio@gmail.com

*** Member of Arhuaco People; Lawyer and Junior Researcher, Interdisciplinary Studies Group on Peace, Conflict and Postconflict, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia. Email: dunen.muelas@urosario.edu.co

††† Member, Interdisciplinary Studies Group on Peace, Conflict and Postconflict, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia; Director, Intercultural School of Indigenous Diplomacy (EIDI); Professor, Peace, Gender and Ethnicity Course, Faculty of Political Science and Government, Universidad del Rosario, Bogota, Colombia. Email: angela.santamaria@urosario.edu.co

∞ This article pays homage to all the indigenous women participants in our project over 10 years. It was an honor to work with all of them in their territories, and to witness their resistance and resilience.

INTRODUCTION

The armed conflict in Colombia is characterized by a history of failed political negotiations and seven initiatives for peace talks. The transitional justice process in Colombia began with the Justice and Peace Law (Law 975) of 2005. It established, for the first time, legal and political measures on truth, justice and reparation through importing and exporting transitional justice practices, as well as retributive and/or restorative justice. These measures initially emphasized the establishment of a special prosecution model that included the reduction of penalties for ex-combatants and later the addition of some victims' rights measures, such as the 'truth agreements' and the 2011 Victims' Law. Although more than 31,000 combatants of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*) demobilized between 2003 and 2006 under international supervision, many paramilitary structures reemerged as new armed groups. These groups, along with the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, or ELN) and the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (*Autodefensas Gaitanistas*), are currently present in 27 of the 32 Colombian departments, exacerbating forced displacement and violence in indigenous territories, particularly sexual violence against indigenous women.¹

Some institutions and social actors² have recognized the disproportionate impact of the armed conflict on indigenous women and have worked to make their voices public,³ both nationally and internationally. Thus, in alliance with victims, feminist organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), indigenous peoples have pressed for Constitutional Court Decision 004, Decision 092 and the Indigenous Victims' Decree (4633/2011) to be expedited.⁴ These legal decisions are important tools to protect and reinforce their rights. Decision 092 opened important political opportunities because it allowed state institutions to include indigenous women in the political scene for the first time by collecting information on their situation from the women themselves. Moreover, by creating women's and family councils within organizations to influence public policies, it constituted the starting point of indigenous women's institutional and organizational processes. Unfortunately, the living conditions of displaced women are currently still of concern despite recognition that

1 Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH), *Desmovilización y Reintegración paramilitar. Panorama posacuerdos con las AUC* (2015).

2 For example, Victoria Neuta, a leader of the Muisca people, denounced violations against indigenous women before the Organization of American States. Personal interview, Victoria Neuta, Bogota, Colombia, 24 September 2017.

3 For example, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Constitutional Court and the National Center for Historical Memory and its reports: 'Women, War and Coca in the Bajo Putumayo' (2012), 'Women and War: Victims and Resistance in the Colombian Caribbean' (2011) and 'The Bahía Portete Massacre' (2010).

4 Following Decision T-025 of 2004, a declaration of an unconstitutional state of affairs due to forced displacement, the Constitutional Court ordered the protection of displaced indigenous peoples through the Constitutional Court Decision 004, and particularly ordered the creation of special programs for displaced women (Constitutional Court Decision 092). Later, the victims pressured for the Victims' Law to be expedited. Thus, it came into force in June 2011 and the government, based on the transitory article, issued the decree on measures of justice, truth and repair for indigenous victims (Indigenous Victims' Decree 4633/2011).

sexual violence is a gendered risk and a contributing factor to forced displacement. Indigenous women in Colombia continue to face challenges within the current context.

Despite the creation of a gender subcommittee at the 2014 peace talks between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, or FARC), indigenous women were not included in the dialogues or in the fast-track implementation of the agreement. Although ‘indigenous peoples have women counselors to incorporate their gendered perspectives on the agenda, these spaces have no decision-making power,’ according to Carol Gonzalez of the Amazonian Colombian Indigenous Organization (*Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonia Colombiana*, or OPIAC).⁵ This demonstrates how the negotiation process of the peace agreement⁶ reproduced a hegemonic sexual and racial hierarchy. In addition to not being included as a collective, only indigenous male leaders participated in important decisions related to the end of the conflict, despite indigenous women and children being the most affected by violence. In fact, in these institutional discussions, the intersection between gender and ethnicity within transitional justice was barely considered. While recognizing the need for a differential approach, the peace agreement does not assume an intersectional perspective. Rather, on the one hand it refers to gender equity, the promotion of women’s active participation in transitional justice and prioritization of their practical and strategic needs, and, on the other, to ethnicity in its ethnic chapter.⁷ However, indigenous women have long been involved in constructing a transitional justice ‘from the margins,’ continuously building local political strategies to highlight their demands.

In fact, based on a ‘gendered transversal approach,’ indigenous women have recently worked to become part of the truth commission⁸ and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP),⁹ and have asked for the creation of a national indigenous women’s tribunal. Unfortunately, the implementation processes of these mechanisms have excluded indigenous peoples. In particular, the right to prior

5 Focus group, Bogota, Colombia, 20 February 2017.

6 After four years of peace negotiations, on 24 August 2016 the Colombian government and FARC announced ‘they had reached a final and definitive agreement’ to end the armed conflict. Peace was achieved when Colombian citizens ratified it in a plebiscite in October 2016. However, 50.21% of the votes were against the agreement while 49.78% were in favor. There was a 60% abstention rate. After including some changes, the Congress endorsed the agreements by the end of 2016.

7 Due to an alliance with the *Congreso de los Pueblos* and because of indigenous people’s participation in the *Cumbre Agraria* and the Ethnic Commission for Peace and Territorial Rights Defense, a Political Committee on Peace and a National Agenda for Indigenous Peace were created. The ethnic chapter included in the peace agreement recognizes indigenous people’s contribution to peacebuilding, their historical conditions and the dispossession they have endured.

8 The truth commission, in addition to contemplating the broad and pluralistic participation of individual and collective victims, will give special attention to ‘the victimization suffered by women,’ particularly indigenous women, and to the different forms in which the conflict has affected them.

9 The SJP is a judicial system negotiated with the FARC that includes a peace tribunal and the establishment of a truth commission. The SJP will include an investigation and prosecution unit, which, in addition to conducting the investigations before the peace tribunal with the support of the attorney general’s office, will have a unit of special investigation for sexual violence cases. See, Due Process of Law Foundation, *The Special Jurisdiction for Peace in Colombia: Recommendations for the Selection of Judges of the Chambers and Divisions of the Tribunal for Peace* (2016).

consultation has been overlooked. For example, indigenous organizations were not consulted on the truth commission decree. And while the SJP and the Indigenous Victims' Decree, which expires in 2021, include male indigenous leaders, indigenous women are not included in either mechanism, resulting in their continued exclusion from current debates.

However, it is an achievement that currently each national indigenous organization has delegated a representative to the National Commission of Indigenous Women: Carol Gonzales Aguilar; Cubeo people from Vaupés (OPIAC); Lejandrina Pastor; Wiwa people from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (SNSM) (Indigenous National Organization/*Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia*, or ONIC); Alcira Izquierdo; Arhuaco people from SNSM (Tayrona Indigenous Confederation/*Confederación Indígena Tayrona*, or CIT); Carmen Popayan; Pasto people from Nariño (Indigenous Authorities of Colombia/*Autoridades Indígenas de Colombia*); Miriam Chamorro; and Emberá people from Chocó (Gobierno Mayor). All of these women, except for Miriam Chamorro,¹⁰ form the women's and family counselors. The Commission obtained the participation of Victoria Neuta,¹¹ a leader of the Muisca people, in a follow-up to implement women's rights as part of the peace agreement. Taking into account the complexity of the context described, our main purpose in this article is to identify and discuss how Colombian transitional justice might be reconfigured if indigenous women's practices and their knowledge 'from the margins' were to travel to the center.

We begin with a focus on the methods used for data collection. Next, we briefly address our theoretical perspective based on the foundations of recent decolonial studies as well as gendered transformative approaches to transitional justice. Finally, to highlight the way in which indigenous women's practices and their knowledge travel 'from the margins' to the center, we present an analysis of case studies in three regions, focusing on the diverse forms of violence indigenous women endure, their justice initiatives and their resistance practices.

METHODS

During the last 10 years, our team has engaged in co-construction processes using participatory, intercultural and intersectional research methods. Based on Fals Borda's participatory action research and Paulo Freire's critical pedagogies and the dialogue of knowings,¹² we create in-territory spaces for a collective and intercultural production of knowledge. These spaces are part of the Intercultural School of Indigenous Diplomacy (*Escuela Intercultural de Diplomacia Indígena*, or EIDI), a popular education initiative founded in 2007. Currently, our team, intercultural in nature and privileging the participation of women, has worked with more than 4,000

10 She has a different role in regard to the other indigenous women. She is the legal representative of the indigenous organization working on all the indigenous struggles, but also the person who included the challenges of indigenous women into the 'general' political agenda of indigenous peoples.

11 Victoria Neuta's appointment was the result of a strategic alliance with the Rural Women's Platform.

12 Orlando Fals Borda and Brandao C. Rodríguez, *Investigación Participativa* (Montevideo: La Banda Oriental, 1987). See also, Orlando Fals Borda and M.D. Anisur, *Acción y conocimiento: Rompiendo el monopolio con la IAP* (Bogotá: Rahman, 1991); Paulo Freire, *Pedagogía del Oprimido* (Madrid: SIGLO XXI, 1975).

indigenous peoples from three of the five indigenous national organizations – CIT, ONIC and OPIAC – and more than 10 local organizations.

This research reflects communities in different regional contexts: the SNSM, the Amazon and the Chocó. In each case, we worked with communities that have been profoundly affected by the long-term dynamics of conflict, including dispossession, exploitation and violence, and that are facing similar challenges in the so-called post-conflict era.

Our role consisted of creating the space for dialogue between indigenous knowledge and the legal and political tools required by the national and international institutions in a postconflict scenario. We accomplished this by generating spaces for indigenous women to feel safe, to trace their history, to play music and dance. In particular, during our in-territory encounters we designed ‘intercultural diploma courses’ in which both men and women from local communities participated, and which received the support of the elders, spiritual leaders and political authorities. These courses, mainly conducted in indigenous languages, included 120 hours of instruction. Two indigenous women, Fanny Kuro (Uitoto member) and Dunen Muelas (Arhuaco member), taught the courses.¹³ In addition, four indigenous Arhuaco men – Saul Mindiola, Norey Quigua, Noel Torres and Isaías Torres – also served as teachers. Nonindigenous teachers and students from the Rosario University completed the team, with the responsibility of collecting and analyzing the data during the diploma courses. In addition to interviews, we implemented pedagogical and artistic methodological tools, such as the theater of the oppressed, personal and collective narratives (oral and written), testimonies, self-portraits, family trees, life histories, social cartography, participatory social mapping of places and women’s body maps.¹⁴ By working with community members to safeguard their traditional messages, we kept restoration and resistance practices at the center of our work.

We chose the emblematic life trajectories of women leaders who have experienced the consequences of the armed conflict, but who lead various processes at the local level and also participate in the EIDI. As Howard Becker notes, life histories allow one to emphasize the point of view of the actor and the subjective, but also to account for a social reality and a collective experience¹⁵ – in this case, indigenous women’s experiences in the Colombian context.

The life stories presented here not only represent examples of violence practiced against individual indigenous women in their daily, organizational and community life, but also symbolize the structural violence that is not fully recognized or studied in Colombia. The qualitative work with more than 300 indigenous women in these three regions allowed us to choose particular life stories as emblematic cases. The life stories presented also illustrate the culturally and geographically diverse areas

13 Muelas is a co-author of this article.

14 For instance, whole-body mapping involves tracing around a person’s body to create a life-sized outline, which is filled in during a creative and reflective process, producing an image representing multiple aspects of participants’ embodied experience. See, Adèle de Jager, Anna Tewson, Bryn Ludlow and Katherine Boydell, ‘Embodied Ways of Storying the Self: A Systematic Review of Body-Mapping,’ *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 17(2) (2016): art. 22, <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/2526> (accessed 6 November 2017).

15 Howard S. Becker, *Historias de vida en Sociología* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1992).

included in our study. Our training spaces in indigenous territories have been active for a year and a half. This includes our presentation of a research seminar on peace, ethnicity and gender construction, with the participation of our team and a group of 20 students from different disciplines. In this space, we generate a reflexive exercise on our strengths, weaknesses and challenges as an intercultural school. Doctoral theses and specialized publications such as this one allow us to constantly assess our work as researchers.

During the research, we tried to produce a decolonial and antipatriarchal body of knowledge that decentralizes sexual and cultural hierarchies. However, we are aware of the tensions and difficulties that arise from our class and race privileges as researchers. In recognition of our privileges as white, urban, middle-class and academic women, we worked directly with indigenous communities to actively involve them in all processes of the research. In particular, our collaboration with Muelas as co-author and principal investigator in producing our academic products and curricular proposals is central to the collaborative model at the heart of the project. In addition, we adopted an 'action without harm' perspective and a people-to-people approach, both of which were very useful, especially for issues of gender mainstreaming.

We continue to move forward with great care and patience, adopting a series of strategies to mitigate these tensions and difficulties. In this respect, it is important to highlight that our entrance into the SNSM and the Colombian Amazon occurred via the direct invitation of indigenous female leaders and their local organizations. Muelas, Kuro and Nazareth Cabrera called us directly to co-lead the processes of intercultural educational training in their territories. Their support and advice was critical in terms of mitigating and controlling the risk of imposing external knowledge and methodologies. We also privileged their participation in national and international events financed by us, thus generating opportunities for women to access the spaces of higher education (universities). In contrast, our work in Chocó required a different approach. We were invited to work in this area within the framework of an interinstitutional alliance between Rosario University and Oxfam. In this sense, we had less autonomy in terms of content management, convening, evaluating and collecting data. However, we introduced our participatory and cross-cultural methodologies to mitigate the external practices generated by the field of international NGOs and donors. This article presents some of the reflections that have arisen from our work with indigenous women over the last three years. The Sierra and Amazon cases were chosen because they have both been prioritized by the National Center for Historical Memory. The Chocó case is a counterexample of a forgotten region, where the conflict is still alive in the so-called postconflict context.

GENDER, ETHNICITY AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Transitional justice, the conception of justice associated with periods of political change,¹⁶ has become the dominant international framework for redressing mass

16 Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). See also, Ruti G. Teitel, 'Transitional Justice Genealogy,' *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16 (2003): 69–94.

harm.¹⁷ Within this framework, when addressing gender and/or ethnicity, many refer to the transformative potential of political transitions. It is argued that, as transitional justice offers an opportunity to rethink and revise a society's historical processes in relation to mass harm, it can also address past colonial and gender wounds and their ongoing effects in patriarchal contexts. Transitional justice can then be used as a platform for people to make their agendas more visible, subvert key structural conditions that have perpetuated continuums of violence, and address the otherwise invisible wounds from the past and present. This reading sees transitional justice not only as restoration but as rectification, thereby making it critical for the reconfiguration of power from the local level outward.

In this scenario, many advocate employing restorative justice within transitional justice. Restorative justice is depicted as a 'feminine/care response' opposed to the colonial legacy of retributive justice, thought of as a 'masculine/punitive response.' However, after observing the local implementation of justice systems in our three study regions, we can affirm that indigenous restorative justice systems are mostly implemented by male spiritual and political authorities. They therefore do not guarantee a deconstruction of sexual hierarchies; nor do they guarantee the visibility of a female interpretation of restorative justice. While introducing restorative measures purportedly reinforces customary law, this does not necessarily imply indigenous women's guaranteed rights against intracommunity violence or organizational exclusion and violence.¹⁸ Yet, we recognize the risk of legitimizing gendered (and other types of) violence in the name of customary law.¹⁹ For example, exclusively portraying indigenous populations as a collective subject fails to acknowledge the diversity and dissent among and within communities, as well as indigenous women's particularities. This highlights the need to recognize and avoid essentializing indigenous women's suffering.

There is thus still a need to acknowledge the diverse, historically specific, multifaceted understandings and experiences surrounding violence and justice within transitional justice, as well as the ways in which intersecting identities are influenced in these cases.²⁰ Although some advocate for a decolonizing feminism²¹ that exposes

17 Jennifer Balint, Julie Evans and Nesam McMillan, 'Rethinking Transitional Justice, Redressing Indigenous Harm: A New Conceptual Approach,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 8(2) (2014): 194.

18 Some authors have proposed intellectual and critical tools against the accusations of 'indigenous feminism occidentalization,' care ethics and the dynamic to research egalitarian relations inside the customary law systems. Joanne Barker, *Native Acts: Law, Recognition, and Cultural Authenticity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); Alison Renteln, 'The Use and Abuse of the Cultural Defense,' *Canadian Journal of Law and Society/Revue Canadienne Droit et Société* 20(1) (2005): 47–67; Christine Salomon, 'Quand les filles ne se taisent plus: Un aspect du changement postcolonial en Nouvelle-Calédonie,' *Terrain: Revue d'ethnologie de l'Europe* 40 (2003): 133–150; Benoît Trépiéd, 'Décoloniser le discours de l'authenticité culturelle,' *Genèses* 2015/2(99) (2015): 149–154.

19 Manuela Lavinas Picq, 'Between the Dock and a Hard Place: Hazards and Opportunities of Legal Pluralism for Indigenous Women in Ecuador,' *Latin American Politics and Society* 54(2) (2012): 1–33; Kristin Doughty, 'Law and the Architecture of Social Repair: Gacaca Days in Post-Genocide Rwanda,' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21(2) (2015): 419–437.

20 Paul Gready and Simon Robins, 'From Transitional to Transformative Justice: A New Agenda for Practice,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 8(3) (2014): 339–361.

21 Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck and Angie Morrill, 'Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy,' *Feminist Formations* 25(1) (2013): 8–34; Yuderky Espinosa Miñoso, Diana Gómez Correal and Karina Ochoa Muñoz, eds., *Tejiendo de otro modo: Feminismo, epistemología y apuestas descoloniales en Abya Yala*, 1st ed. (Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, 2014).

the connections between colonialism and heteropatriarchy, the power dynamics at the intersections of gender and ethnicity produce complex tensions between an ethnic/gendered discourse and indigenous women's struggles. This is due in part to the strong emphasis on indigenous people's claims as a collective struggle, which tends to homogenize them into 'one political and emotional community,'²² often neglecting dissent and underlying structures of gendered inequality within. Together with limited visions of restorative justice, this works to both subordinate indigenous customary law and to erase how customary norms and practices silence some gendered identities in the name of tradition. Furthermore, indigenous women's voices are missing due to the tendency to emphasize certain types of victimization and images of suffering when addressing gender, alongside the hypervisibilization of rape as a weapon of war. The case studies unpack the interactions between local transitional justice practices in three indigenous contexts in Colombia.

The Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta

During our fieldwork in the SNSM, the historical epicenter of armed conflict in Colombia, we observed many practices of sexual violence and domestic abuse cases against Arhuaco women by indigenous men. We chose the stories of three women to highlight an understanding of sexual violence not only as a 'weapon of war,' but as violence that is further complicated when the women involved are indigenous female ex-combatants and when the perpetrators are from the community. It is critical to understand and uncover the invisibility and delegitimation of different forms of violence against women during and after the conflict, which are naturalized and minimized. In this respect, sexual violence as a 'weapon of war' is regularly epitomized as the only manifestation. However, other practices, such as sexual violence perpetrated by civil actors in the domestic sphere of indigenous communities, have appeared in these local contexts. Many of these practices are invisible to national transitional justice models. Further impacting this is the Arhuaco justice system, which neglects the importance of sexual violence cases perpetrated against indigenous women. Additionally, there is not a clear legal route for women to denounce these acts of violence, and the participation of women in the administration of justice is minimal. Moreover, powerful male offenders are often protected by political and spiritual leaders because of familial or political loyalty. Thus, these cases are forgotten, and the victims left alone, silenced and vulnerable. The particular situation of indigenous women ex-combatants is indeed more complex and in need of further study precisely due to the triple stigma they carry as victims of sexual violence, as women and as ex-combatants. Nevertheless, a historically female local process of women's assemblies has emerged, representing crucial female political knowledge about the restorative, punitive and retributive dimensions of sexual violence in armed conflict and postconflict.

The first case involves the experience of Alba Izquierdo. Alba actively participated in the local electoral process and was a candidate for the local council of Pueblo Bello. She has lived experience of various forms of structural violence, including a

22 Pilar Riaño and María Victoria Uribe, 'Constructing Memory amidst War: The Historical Memory Group of Colombia,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 10(1) (2016): 20.

lack of access to education, justice and healthcare. At the same time, she is a communitarian female actor, denouncing sexual violence by appropriating the national peacebuilding discourse into the local indigenous perspective. However, as opposed to the idea of sexual violence as a 'weapon of war,' the continuum of violence leads to its normalization. This is evidenced by the case of one of Alba's sisters, who demobilized from guerrilla forces. She met a man and lived with him in the community after the demobilization process. One morning he beat her so badly that her face was left unrecognizable. As many studies show, when demobilized women return to their community, they often experience physical abuse from their partners.²³ This highlights the fact that the disarmament process does not imply a life without violence for women in the private or the public sphere.²⁴ This case is not an exception. Alba reported the case to the local justice committee from Jewra, but these kinds of cases are usually considered 'gossip' and there were thus no consequences for the perpetrator. Indeed, as in Israel, South Africa and Liberia, domestic violence is excluded from the transitional justice system – sexual violence is the only form included and essentialized as a 'weapon of war.'²⁵ In Colombia, reintegration policies are commonly grounded in an individual perspective and do not consider the unique experiences of indigenous women ex-combatants.²⁶ These women are often shunned or stigmatized by their families, communities and society as a whole.

The second case focuses on an Arhuaco girl who was abused over seven years by her father, a communitarian leader. After her stepmother made a criminal complaint to the national judicial system, the girl was relocated with her stepmother to receive psychological support and care. Her stepmother happened to be a social leader who had received instruction in the context of the national program of rights and safeguards for indigenous women. Some weeks later, the girl was kidnapped by her paternal aunt; her father was meanwhile sent to a national jail. The offender's family contested his incarceration but the National Council of Judicature rejected their request. As the offender was an indigenous leader, the Arhuaco justice could not judge him. He was eventually set free. This case highlights how Arhuaco women are perceived as a symbol of territory, culture and family. In this context, husbands, parents and communities have reported feeling shame and guilt when sexual violence cases are brought to the public sphere. Virginity is regarded as a major value in indigenous cultures, and is also an essential requirement for marriage. As in Guatemala, Peru and South Africa, there is an important symbiosis between gender identity and sexual/cultural reproduction. It is a sacred issue and a secret matter; once broken,

23 Jelke Boesten, 'Analyzing Rape Regimes at the Interface of War and Peace in Peru,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 4(1) (2010): 110–129.

24 Maria Holt, 'Violence against Women in the Context of War: Experiences of Shi'i Women and Palestinian Refugee Women in Lebanon,' *Violence against Women* 19(3) (2013): 316–337.

25 Kirsten Campbell, 'The Gender of Transitional Justice: Law, Sexual Violence and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 1(3) (2007): 411–432.

26 In November 2016, the Colombian Agency of Reintegration reported 920 indigenous ex-combatants in Colombia, of whom 208 were indigenous women and 45 were Arhuaco people. Zambrano, focus group, Bogota, Colombia, 20 February 2017.

the linkage can be difficult to reestablish within the community.²⁷ The only way to repair such violence is through spiritual restoration, as described in the last example of Arhuaco women's assemblies, led by Alcira Izquierdo.

Alcira, a rape survivor, suffered violence at the hands of her stepfather, yet was never supported by her mother. Despite a violent past, Alcira went on to lead other Arhuaco women in solidarity. Arhuaco female leader Luz Elena Izquierdo shared Alcira's journey:

When Alcira grew up, she left her home and moved in with her father. Her stepmother, a white woman, insulted her for being an indigenous girl. Alcira worked as a street vendor for many years. One day, I saw her and I invited her to become a health promoter in the indigenous medical service. A few years later, she came back to her community as a leader in health issues.²⁸

Alcira's story illustrates how traumatic events, while threatening both individual and communal identity, can also strengthen women's solidarity, reconfiguring some instances of violence as a creative and dynamic act of resistance. Alcira is an example of 'the power of women,' even in the most difficult circumstances.²⁹ Currently, Alcira and the women's assemblies are working to help women in a process of self-recognition as protectors of Mother Earth and bearers of its energy. This form of self-recognition seeks to promote the revitalization of the identity of Arhuaco women, related to their daily restoration practices and female worldview of Arhuaco justice and government. These local and cultural practices represent the roots of valuable peacebuilding knowledge growing from the margins to the center.

A woman's body as a representation of the feminine principle of everything that exists in the universe imposes obligations, limitations and possibilities for women. Thus, the political and spiritual bonding of the female body with the interpreters of the Law of Origin³⁰ transforms it into a place of domination. Despite these processes, the women's assemblies have constituted a safe space to talk about the role of women in government. For example, more than 500 women from all regions of the Sierra gathered for several weeks in the region of Nabusimake. During the previous four women's assemblies, women fasted, participated in traditional work led by *Mamo*³¹ Kingumu and reflected on the important role of women in the history of Arhuaco government. The assemblies have become a collective body that embodies the new role of women in self-government and offers revitalized spaces for political reflection, participation, restoration and memorialization 'from below' in the post-conflict period. In these spaces, women have affirmed that sexual and domestic violence are not part of the Law of Origin. This historical reflection is just the beginning of a long-term attempt to break the silence surrounding this difficult issue. In the Arhuaco culture, the only way to reestablish this spiritual link is through

27 Alison Crosby and M. Brinton Lykes, 'Mayan Women Survivors Speak: The Gendered Relations of Truth Telling in Postwar Guatemala,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 5(3) (2011): 456–476.

28 Personal interview, Luz Elena Izquierdo, Bogota, Colombia, 1 March 2016.

29 Holt, supra n 24.

30 The balance of all that exists in the universe, without the application of codes or laws of human origin.

31 Spiritual leader or authority.

spiritual restoration, rituals and energetic practices coordinated by the *Mamos* with the support of their wives. This process of spiritual and political female resistance has largely hung on the support of the *Mamos* of Seinkuinkuita temple, in accordance with mother earth law. A woman's right to participate in self-government is founded in this cultural principle, explained by Muelas:

The *Mamos'* wives have received the same spiritual power of prediction and consulting the Mother Earth (*Marunzamas*) to be used for justice administration, restoration and to clarify the truth. In this sense, Arhuaco history confirms a woman's right to participate in self-government, to study at university and to defend the rights of Arhuaco women and the mother earth.³²

The Arhuaco case is a national example of local-level peacebuilding and a restorative justice model. For many years, the *Mamos* and traditional authorities have defended the territory and the ancestral political and cultural processes with the support of the Arhuaco women. This is a lived example of female knowledge incorporated into restoration and peacebuilding. Women's participation in the local administration of Arhuaco justice is crucial. Belkis Izquierdo, the first female Arhuaco judge of the Colombian SJP, remarked, 'the solution is within the indigenous territories, through local women empowerment and the enforcement of the restorative dimension of Arhuaco justice, which includes harmonization and spiritual practices.'³³ Furthermore, the recentring of female indigenous knowledge is necessary and urgent, not only in the national system, but also in the Arhuaco justice system. This is an important way to insert an ethnic and gender perspective into both the Special Sexual Violence Crimes Unit of the Peace Tribunal and the Colombian truth commission. Moreover, it contributes to the reconfiguration of Colombian transitional justice by considering the substantial contribution of indigenous women, enacted through their resistance as guardians of territory and life. Beyond a limited vision of restorative justice, the Arhuaco indigenous women are bearers of customary law who, in the words of Alcira, keep alive the *Zaku* mother earth law, being the 'ones who weave and teach how to live in harmony with nature.'³⁴ Thus, it is important to recognize their role as peacebuilders.

The Amazon Region

As in the Sierra, in the Amazon region we observed a naturalization of sexual and domestic violence against indigenous women. The historical amnesia regarding the horrors committed against women during the rubber boom contributed to the continued reproduction of violence during the armed conflict. Despite the silencing around this violence and the resistance associated with it, Amazonian women are channeling their very powerful traditional knowledge to heal the wounds generated by sexual violence and resistance practices. The current transition process, through the sexual violence unit of the SJP and the gender group of the truth commission,

32 Personal interview, Dunen Muelas, Bogota, Colombia, 1 September 2017.

33 Personal interview, Belkis Izquierdo, Bogota, Colombia, 20 February 2017.

34 Personal interview, Alcira Izquierdo, Bogota, Colombia, 20 February 2017.

serves as a historic opportunity for intercultural dialogue and for moving indigenous women's knowledge towards the center. In this region, the female leaders affirm that their voices and experiences of violence have not been included. According to the female vice-president of *Asociación Zonal indígena de Cabildos y Autoridades de La Chorrera*, a local organization in Chorrera, 'during the work with this institution, our role was to cook and serve the food in the workshops. . . our voice was not heard.'³⁵ The National Center for Historical Memory's director of ethnic issues told me, 'in your culture, the women could not tell the history. It is a man's affair.'³⁶ Despite these obstacles, indigenous women of this region continue to resist, as highlighted in the following three examples.

The first example focuses on our colleague Fanny Kuro, a researcher from the region and the leader of the memory process working to revitalize the role of indigenous women in resistance and traditional knowledge. After the recovery of Arana House³⁷ in 1993, Kuro, the first indigenous female lawyer, started an indigenous school project, the House of Knowledge, in 1994. The areas of rubber plantations were first replaced by the Capuchin orphanage in 1935, but years later they became the classrooms for the House of Knowledge. Thus, Kuro turned the extreme violence of the 'rubber regime' into a transgressive cultural and political strategy. By recycling the space and turning it into an indigenous school, Kuro transformed a space of death and exploitation into one of memory, celebrating life and fostering knowledge as a form of empowerment and counterpower. Furthermore, research conducted by Kuro shows how violence from rubber's colonization was associated with the physical and cultural extermination of female bodies:

The grandmothers have talked in my interviews about different kinds of sexual violence practices. For example, one of these practices is the case of 'taking captives,' forced sexual intercourse, sexual exploitation and abuse, physical torture and the murder of children.³⁸

During the period of the rubber boom, foremen put in place a forced concubine/prostitution regime, which included women providing a range of services such as preparing food, participating in agricultural activities as well as sexual labor. The House of Knowledge example illustrates how women in the region have crafted internal initiatives for memory reconstruction, redress and restoration. Furthermore, they wish to create a dialogue for its articulation with the national transitional justice model. This appears as a collective dream and hope for women regarding restoration of the past through reflection and highlighting female voices. A Uitoto grandmother, Candelaria, daughter of a Peruvian foreman, was a victim of rape during the rubber exploitation in Chorrera. However, she survived being motherless, was adopted by another community and gave birth to Uitoto children, as a symbol of the revitalization of culture and her very strong resilience. Currently, her granddaughter Isabel

35 EIDI course, Chorrera, Colombia, 28 November 2016.

36 Personal interview, Elizabeth, Bogota, Colombia, 16 January 2017.

37 This house was the epicenter of the rubber regime in Chorrera.

38 Personal interview, Fanny Kuro, Bogota, Colombia, 20 February 2017.

Fajardo Ñeñetofe is the coordinator of the women's organizational process in the region, working for their empowerment. Women have thus been the mainstay of cultural resistance, both during and after the rubber exploitation. A hundred years later, impunity for these cases continues. Besides the lack of truth clarification and reparation processes, many of these practices have survived and have been reenacted during the prolonged armed conflict.

The second example concerns Sandra Fernández, an Amazonian leader. Her community experienced forced displacement due to both contemporary violence and the rubber regime. As a consequence, their social and economic situation is complicated and includes racial discrimination, poverty, poor education completion rates, teenage pregnancy, alcoholism, addiction and cultural assimilation. Fernández described the situation in her community:

rape, enforced prostitution and nonconsensual sexual and human trafficking are normalized and current practices, even within traditional authorities. The forced sexual services for tourists by young indigenous women and girls constitute a prolongation of that rape regime as services of consumption in Amazonia.³⁹

In addition, Fernández denounced the existence of a 'cartel of sexual commerce' in the community of *Los Kilómetros* near Leticia. She shared how some indigenous leaders are involved in the cartel and have a personal stake in it, further complicating the situation. Despite the existence of a legal indigenous instrument to deal with sexual violence (Resolution 001), indigenous authorities' personal interests are still entangled in sexual trafficking. According to Fernández, after the implementation of Resolution 001, the number of cases actually increased. Examples of two cases include sexual violence against the daughter of a female chief and participant in our diploma course (the aggressor was her stepfather), and the rape of a girl by a FARC ex-combatant. Fernández works on cases like these to break the silence. We suggest that these complex cases of sex trafficking could be moved towards the center through the production of intersectional human rights reports that support the participation of grassroots organizations.

The third example is about the different forms of violence against indigenous women in Araracuara which have been historically naturalized many times over. However, these women have created multiple forms of resistance. Moreover, the responses against violence and conflict, best illustrated by Nazareth Cabrera and Isolina Guerrero, two Uitoto women from Araracuara, go beyond most conceptualizations of what it means to 'do' transitional justice. With no affiliation to any indigenous or nonindigenous organization, Nazareth and her mother Isolina have denounced violence against them and their territory as a form of violence against indigenous women, vindicating their traditional knowledge regarding the meanings of 'women' and the 'territory.' Furthermore, they state that their work is sustained precisely by this traditional knowledge. Nazareth explains that the protection given by the elders is the only force on their side. Healing practices, which emerge through

39 Personal interview, Sandra Fernández, Leticia, Colombia, 1 May 2016.

chants, dance and medicinal plants grown in the *chagra* (orchard), support their efforts in visualizing new conceptualizations regarding violence against women and territory as framed by transitional justice mechanisms. As part of our associated process, Nazareth took their traditional and local knowledge and put it at the center of the discussions in the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples at the UN in 2017. This led to encounters with the UN Colombian Embassy, the Colombian Ombudsman and the Colombian Family Welfare Institute. As an immediate result, Nazareth was able to transfer three minors to nearby communities to mitigate their risk of forced recruitment due to violence.

In Araracuara, the few male-dominated attempts at historical reconstruction⁴⁰ have hidden alternative feminine visions of harm and protection strategies during conflict. Isolina, along with other indigenous men and women, established Araracuara as an escape from the rubber regime. She remembers how her family and other Uitotos cleared and founded the territory when she was still a child: ‘The ones that managed to escape to the side of Caquetá settled in Araracuara. . .my uncle was the first to arrive.’⁴¹ There, women began ‘healing themselves’ with the first menstruation, sacred diets and traditional plants to avoid having children as a strategy to stop the rubber exploitation. She explains that they started having children again when they were adults; she had her own when she was around 40 years old. This anecdote highlights the absence of a gendered and indigenous perspective on conflict. Of the few studies about the history of conflict in Araracuara,⁴² none refers to this kind of knowledge and the practices that allowed women to protect themselves and their families from the multiple forms of violence they were subjected to during the rubber regime. It also shows that introducing restorative measures in the transitional justice framework does not necessarily reconfigure indigenous women’s knowledge, as it remains subordinated.

Today, Isolina and her daughter struggle against some of the Andoque leaders, who are allowing mining explorations in Araracuara. Local indigenous communities explain that gold extraction is forbidden in their culture because they believe gold maintains the earth’s heat. Gold extraction causes sickness in traditional authorities and wise elders, thus weakening the collective political action. Indigenous women have denounced this gold extraction process and described it as ‘having another Arana House,’ since it has brought domination, militarization, alcoholism, drug abuse and prostitution services back into their community. These activities present as a continuation, prolongation and reactualization of colonialist practices. Local women also emphasized that the mining company’s presence was a main cause of intrafamilial physical and psychological abuse.⁴³ As Astrid Ulloa has found, territorial control,

40 Mariano Useche Losada, *La colonia penal de Araracuara: Socioeconomía y recursos naturales 1938–1971* (Santafé de Bogotá: Tropenbos Colombia, 1994).

41 Personal interview, Isolina Guerrero, Bogota, Colombia, 1 May 2016.

42 Marco Alejandro Tobón, *‘La mejor arma es la palabra’*. *La Gente de centro–kigipe urúki y el vivir y narrar el conflicto político armado. Medio Río Caquetá–Araracuara 1998–2004* (Amazonas: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2008).

43 Henry Guerrero et al., ‘Diagnóstico y Líneas de Acción: Plan Salvaguarda Pueblo Uitoto Capítulo Araracuara – Informe Preliminar de Diagnóstico,’ Araracuara, Caquetá, 2012, [http://observatorioetnicocecoin.org.co/cecoin/files/P_S%20Uitoto%20\(Araracuara\).pdf](http://observatorioetnicocecoin.org.co/cecoin/files/P_S%20Uitoto%20(Araracuara).pdf) (accessed 6 November 2017).

consumption and resource exploitation exacerbate socioenvironmental inequity and augment violent processes against women.⁴⁴

Indigenous women's knowledge concerning territorial organization – its history, meanings, management and protection – has been widely overlooked. However, it is crucial to understand the implications of acknowledging the territory as a subject of harm and reparation, as well as the gendered harms of resource exploitation on female bodies and companies' responsibilities in respect of participation in war. When sowing the *chagra*, Uitoto women sow seeds in both a material and a spiritual dimension, enforcing cultural reproduction and fertility. However, mining has brought ruptures in each of these structures. Thus, territorial protection becomes an aim to protect the bodies – seeds – in an individual and a collective sense. The latter is particularly relevant when considering that extractive activities have increased since the signing of the peace agreement, with the reemergence of neoparamilitary groups, increased activity of guerrilla factions that did not demobilize and a reorganization of the power structures, including the entrance of new companies into the region. As Nazareth explains,

while the Ministry of Mines is giving permissions for the operations of extractive companies in Araracuara, my cousin was almost killed, her life was threatened, and new illegal groups are beginning to recruit children.⁴⁵

Thus, companies become part of an intricate web that imposes new forms of sovereignty and governance. In a postagreement context that exacerbates violence, Nazareth states that 'the only thing they [women] can rely on is traditional protection and knowledge.'⁴⁶ Thus, when placing the knowledge of these women in the center of the Colombian transitional justice framework, there is a need to rethink reparation in terms that expand the concept of territory, unpacking this particular connection with women. This has an impact not only on the policies regarding land restitution and reparation, but also on the role extractive companies play in the post-agreement context.

The Chocó Region

Riosucio is a municipality of the Chocó department, also historically affected by the armed conflict. Although a FARC reintegration zone operates in this municipality, currently the armed conflict is still alive, as there is a strong territorial dispute between the *Autodefensas Gaitanistas* and the ELN⁴⁷ for control of drug and arms trafficking on the Atrato River. In Riosucio's rural areas, the Emberá Katio, Emberá Dobida, Emberá Chamí, Wounáan and Zenú peoples are affected by homicides,

44 Astrid Ulloa, 'Feminismos Territoriales en América Latina: Defensas de La Vida Frente a Los Extractivismos,' *Nómadas* 45 (2016): 123–139.

45 Personal interview, Nazareth Cabrera, Araracuara, Colombia, 20 January 2017.

46 Ibid.

47 This group was founded in 2008 in the Urabá region as a continuation of paramilitary dissent.

forced displacement, forced recruitment, threats, torture and sexual violence.⁴⁸ As in the previous cases, the indigenous women of this community have also been victims of violence, including homicides, forced displacement, and domestic and sexual violence as a product of sexual hierarchies within their communities. Despite the fact that most cases of violence against indigenous women go unreported, the following two examples reveal both the violence and the resistance practices found in this region.

The first case involves Luz Salazar, an Emberá woman who suffered domestic violence perpetrated by her partner, a young indigenous leader. He was physically and verbally violent, in both private and public spaces, and forbade her to go out in public or to participate in our course. In Salazar's words, 'He gets drunk and hits me and says ugly words.'⁴⁹ The Emberá culture has historically fixed gender roles in which women are relegated to the domestic sphere: parenting and food preparation and cultivation. Thus, women's bodies and their sexuality are under the control of their husbands, as well as political and spiritual leaders. This indigenous community also continues to practice clitoral ablation to control women's sexual desire, to prevent infidelities and to abolish 'lesbianism.' In this context, domestic and sexual violence within the indigenous family is naturalized, as in the Sierra and Amazon regions, and practices of physical, emotional and sexual violence are exacerbated.⁵⁰ Salazar says,

He does not let me participate in the diploma courses. He says I should stay in the house taking care of the children, and that if I go participate, it is really to be with another man.⁵¹

Furthermore, Salazar has great difficulty denouncing her partner because he is an indigenous leader. Thus, as in the Sierra and Amazonian regions, there is both communal and familial loyalty towards the offender. As recognized in other scholarly work,⁵² the domestic violence perpetrated in the community and family spheres is the most silenced and unpunished during armed conflict.⁵³ Despite these difficulties, Salazar left her husband and went to live with her mother, thus demonstrating her capacity to imagine another kind of life. In addition, she utilized the retelling of her

48 Ministerio del Interior, Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas Embera, Wounan, Katio, Chamí and tude del Departamento del Chocó – Orewa, *Plan de Salvaguarda Pueblo Embera: Documento Unificado Planes Regionales* (2013).

49 Personal interview, Luz Salazar, Riosucio, Colombia, 1 July 2016.

50 Gill Hague, Aisha K. Gill and Nazand Begikhani, "'Honour"-Based Violence and Kurdish Communities: Moving towards Action and Change in Iraqi Kurdistan and the UK,' *Journal of Gender Studies* 22(4) (2012): 383–396. See also, Lorraine Radford and Aisha Gill, 'Losing the Plot? Researching Community Safety Partnership Work against Domestic Violence,' *Howard Journal of Crime and Justice* 45(4) (2006): 369–387; Elizabeth L. MacDowell and Ann Cammett, 'Models of Invisibility: Rendering Domestic and Other Gendered Violence Visible to Students through Clinical Law Teaching,' *Violence against Women* 22(12) (2016): 1438, doi:10.1177/1077801215625853.

51 Personal interview, Luz Salazar, Riosucio, Colombia, 1 July 2016.

52 Emily Rosser, 'Depoliticised Speech and Sexed Visibility: Women, Gender and Sexual Violence in the 1999 Guatemalan Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico Report,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 1(3) (2007): 391–410. See also, Boesten, supra n 23.

53 Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, 'Political Violence and Gender in Times of Transition,' *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law* 15(3) (2006): 829–849.

story to strengthen solidarity among women beyond ethnic and cultural borders, thus building bridges to eradicate these practices.⁵⁴

The second case involves Delia Casama, an Emberá Katío, who broke the male indigenous leadership's paradigm by assuming the territory's defense struggle in the 1990s. Delia negotiated directly with the paramilitary chief to stop the assassination and displacement of the indigenous male leaders of her community by signing a local peace agreement for seven years. She was also the indigenous women's coordinator and empowered her team with this dictum: 'Women should not fear men and should leave the kitchen'⁵⁵ – thereby rupturing ethnogender power relations and roles, questioning the status quo and leaving the 'passive apolitical role.' This case reflects women's contribution to the breakdown of traditional gender roles and the ability of women's knowledge to move towards the center in direct political negotiations with armed actors at the local level, thus reconfiguring Colombian transitional justice.

CONCLUSION

Colombian transitional justice is an ongoing process. Its 'establishment' was the result of using human rights discourses and its 'consolidation' can be seen in the examples of relocating victims to the center of processes dealing with the past. In this context, treating and prosecuting violence against women, particularly sexual violence, continues to be a challenge for national justice, transitional justice and indigenous justice. The inclusion of restorative measures in transitional justice is an important achievement. However, when the knowledge of indigenous women is incorporated, it risks creating a gender-neutral conception of justice. This can result in the legitimization of gender (and other types of) violence in the name of tradition, which can in turn lead to ignoring the particular experiences of violence against indigenous women, as well as their agency and demands. In addition, indigenous women's experiences of violence, reparation processes, resistance practices and peacebuilding agendas go beyond the gendered perspective of violence as a 'weapon of war.' For this reason, it is important to reflect on the victimization of indigenous women.

In the Sierra, violence against indigenous women, particularly domestic and sexual violence, is understood beyond the conception of violence as 'a weapon of war.' Also, it is important to acknowledge the judicial authorities' abuse of political power and the increase in violence against indigenous women ex-combatants. In the Amazon, we highlighted how the experiences of women in periods of violence, such as forced prostitution and trafficking, have become standard practices, even by traditional authorities. The recent increase in resource exploitation in this region also contributes to the violence that women currently experience. Similarly, women in Chocó live in a region where different kinds of violence have been normalized.

54 Ángela Ixkic Bastian and Lina Berrió, 'Saberes en diálogo: Mujeres indígenas y académicas en la construcción de conocimiento,' in *Prácticas otras de conocimiento(s). Entre crisis, entre guerras* (2015), https://ceas.mexico.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/pracc81cticas_otras_de_conocimientos_a-a-v-v-_dossier-compressed.pdf (accessed 6 November 2017); Amandine Fulchirone et al., *Tejidos Que Lleva El Alma: Memoria de Las Mujeres Mayas Sobrevivientes de Violación Sexual Durante El Conflicto Armado*, 1st ed. (Guatemala, n.d.).

55 Personal interview, Delia Casama, Riosucio, Colombia, 1 July 2016.

Notwithstanding the homogenization of indigenous populations and the silence around gender-based violence in the name of tradition, we believe that supporting the movement of indigenous women from the margins to the center would play a key role in implementing transitional justice in Colombia. An example is the Sierra's Arhuaco women's assemblies and their capacity for political leadership. Likewise, the proposal to initiate reparation processes from a spiritual perspective, as well as the participation of women in the local justice administration, can lead to important changes in transitional justice. In the Amazonian case, the reimagining of Arana House and its survivors is an example of resilience and resistance. Finally, the Chocó case demonstrates the growing empowerment of indigenous women in direct negotiation processes towards local peace.

The cases described in this article share equivalences and specificities. For example, the case of Sierra is perhaps the only scenario in which the FARC's demobilization is occurring without much dissent. In contrast, in the Amazon, many fronts have not demobilized, and there has been relocation from the south of the country to this region. In Chocó, the armed conflict has continued. However, in the midst of current difficulties, including ongoing armed conflict in the south of the country, women continue to strengthen and consolidate their knowledge. Through the production of human rights reports and the increased participation of women as a political strategy by grassroots leaders in national and international spaces, we seek to strengthen the visibility of local women's traditional knowledge. We believe that in order for this local knowledge to travel to the center, we must expand the spaces for dialogue, denunciation and articulation with the National Commission of Indigenous Women and propose the idea of an indigenous women's tribunal. Although sexual violence is hypervisualized within transitional justice, the sexual violence experienced by indigenous women has not been addressed from their own perspective. This is our goal – to make visible their experiences and their knowledge through our research in three regions of Colombia.