

**Identity construction in childhood and adolescence: fundamental for  
peacebuilding in Colombia**

Thesis presented as a requirement to apply for the degree of *Master of Arts (M.A.) and  
Magister in Conflict Memory and Peace*

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“What happened in the past that was painful has a great deal to do with what we are today, but revisiting this painful past can contribute little or nothing to what we need to do now”

**William Glasser**

A Juliana Córdoba Conto, la mejor amiga y quien me hizo entender la importancia de la niñez y adolescencia en la construcción de paz.

Agradezco a todos los profesores de esta Maestría en el Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario y en la Katholische Universität Eichstätt – Ingolstadt.

A mi familia y amigos por su apoyo incondicional.

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## Summary

Childhood and adolescence are fundamental stages in the life of every person, since it is during these stages that the identity process is generated and reaffirmed. For this reason, in a peace-building process such as the Colombian, it is relevant to study the concepts regarding the conflict that adults who lived through the conflict during these stages of their lives have. In this way, it will also be possible to understand to what extent the process of identity construction in children and adolescents is fundamental for the role they will have to play in their adult life as "peacebuilders". These processes do not only depend on the governmental level, as they are the result of the experiences at all levels of the protective environments such as the family, school, community, society and institutions.

Key words: identity, childhood, adolescence, peacebuilders, protective environments.

## Resumen

La niñez y la adolescencia son etapas fundamentales en la vida de toda persona, pues durante éstas se genera y reafirma el proceso de identidad, es por esto que, en un proceso de construcción de paz como el colombiano, resulta relevante estudiar los conceptos respecto al conflicto que tienen adultos que vivieron el conflicto durante estas etapas de sus vidas. De esta forma también se podrá comprender como el proceso de construcción de identidad en niños, niñas y adolescentes resulta fundamental para el rol que deberán desempeñar en su vida adulta como consolidadores de paz, procesos que no sólo dependen del nivel gubernamental, pues son el resultado de las vivencias en todos los niveles de los entornos protectores como la familia, el colegio, la comunidad, la sociedad y la institucionalidad. *Palabras clave:* identidad, niñez, adolescencia, consolidadores de paz, entornos protectores

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## **1. Introduction**

After all the world conflicts during the 19th and 20th century, the importance of memory and memory processes for both peace building and non-repetition has been highlighted. It is for this reason that this thesis has as its theme identity as part of the memory of children and adolescents; as the present and future generations that are or will be in charge of the consolidation of a stable and lasting peace.

In my thesis I intend to analyze aspects, which with the signing of the peace agreement in Colombia, must be in public affairs and policies reformulated and redesigned for children and adolescents. These are regarding to the construction of memory that define, among other aspects, their identity and empathy in relation to the conflict and its actors, which are fundamental for the role they will have to play in their adult life as "peace consolidators".

For this future role, the training children and adolescents have regarding memory, identity, and empathy, is fundamental, since an inadequate management in this regard could lead to a situation in which new generations do not participate as peace builders or peace consolidators, but as actors in a new conflict.

In order to analyze this comprehensive training, that is, not only at the school level but also at the standard of life or life quality, it is not only the obligation that exists at the governmental level, since it is also essential to generate responsibilities at all levels of the protective environments of children and adolescents, such as the family, the school, the community, society and institutions.

Considering the difficulty that represents to study children and adolescents because they are still in the process of building their identity and empathy, in addition to

not having yet consolidated concepts or positions regarding the Colombian conflict or the construction of peace, the memory of childhood and adolescence will be analyzed through reminiscence in young adults.

A feminist approach will also be taken in this work because of the importance it guarantees in peace building and the importance of the female perspective regarding the violence that occurred during the Colombian conflict in their stage as "girls" in it. It also guarantees a study that eliminates the indicators of inequality and reveals different positions of women's protagonism in peacebuilding from different gender and sexual identity positions.

The general objective of this research is to establish the relationship between the construction of identity during childhood and adolescence towards the Colombian conflict and the construction of peace that women who lived these stages of their lives during the years 1990 to 2000 in Colombia.

As specific objectives, this research will seek to: expose the processes of identity during the stages of childhood and adolescence, analyze how social and gender intersectionality influence the conception of the Colombian conflict and review how the construction of identity and memory processes through the different levels of protective environments can result in generations of peacebuilders.

The research question posed for this academic thesis is: What is the relationship between the construction of identity during childhood and adolescence towards the Colombian conflict and peace building among women who lived these stages of their lives during the years 1990 to 2000 in Colombia?

## **2. Theoretical framework**

Memory and identity are in a dialectical relationship, because although memory is a generator of identity, and ontogenetically prior to it, identity stands as a framework for the selection and significance of memory, so it is futile to understand them as a causal effect relationship, beating both concepts in such a seamless way (Candau, 2008). Memory, among other factors, is a constitutive element of identity. A subject who lived only in the present, or the longing for a dreamed future, without stopping to remember his past, would not know who he is (De Zan, 2008).

Identity has been treated from different disciplines and by diverse authors. From perspectives that seek to explain how it is constructed and to what extent it encompasses, generating concepts that concern it. Identity in general terms is defined as a narrative construction made from a reflection of the individual on his own biography (Ricoeur, 1996, and Giddens, 1997).

Regarding the construction of identity by children and adolescents, it is the field of psychology that has dealt with it most frequently. There is a lack of studies on the construction of identity in children and adolescents, except for those who present traumas or psychopathologies (Quiroga, F., Capella, C., Sepúlveda, G., Conca, B., & Miranda, J. 2021). Psychologists have established that identity begins to be organized from childhood, observing evolutionary differences in its construction from infancy to adolescence. Identity changes with development, integrating more and more elements to it, making its construction more complex (Beyers & Luyckx, 2016; Negru-Subtirica et al., 2016; Sepúlveda, 2020).

Psychoanalysis has worked on the life cycle, identity construction and identity crises. Psychohistory is particularly related to the development of the subject and a supportive social environment. In the construction of identity, the developmental processes are violated when there is not an enabling social environment that recognizes the individual's capacities, or when there is no family environment that allows the construction of an idea of selfhood. In this sense, adolescence, as a stage of the life cycle, corresponds to the configuration of spaces for tolerance or for totalitarianisms; the construction of identity or its delay, and identity crises as a problematic area (Erikson, 1998).

The Social and Human Sciences have also dealt with the identity of children and adolescents has been studied in relation to memory. It is relevant to have common elements, that is, approaches that allow discussing in each discipline the construction historical memory and identity, in addition to their relationship with the conflict and its resolution (Bulla, 2016). However, they tend to focus on children and adolescents who have been displaced or are disengaged, in this sense it has been possible to raise the existing relationship between the way in which a society resolves its daily conflicts and the broader social field of socio-political conflicts.

Various academic writings seek to decenter the inquiry around the direct or indirect victims who have been exposed to the armed conflict, and to approach it from a look and a sense of identity construction, of historical memory. In addition, it has been exposed how the construction of historical memory and identity should be addressed in future researches through biographical and life history terms, with particular emphasis on the tools that are established for the resolution of conflicts in the course of life (Bulla, 2016).

Another discipline that has conducted research in this regard is social work. The research has been conducted on the identity of children and adolescents disengaged from the armed conflict and in this sense has been articulated with the different laws associated with their protection. In this regard, it has been estimated that in this complex trajectory they construct their individual and collective histories and the discourses through which they narrate and are narrated, they represent themselves as subjects and as members of diverse collectives and identify their places in these and in the general social order (Cifuentes, 2008).

Law is an area that has also dealt with the subject from the perspective of children and adolescents in the context of conflict in order to explain their rights violation. In other research, law has been used as a theoretical and conceptual framework or state of the art in children's rights for studies in other areas such as psychology, social work or the humanities. In this sense, the children and adolescents' rights violation has been exposed in four areas: existence rights, development rights, participation rights and protection rights (Fajardo, Ramírez, Valencia, & Ospina-Alvarado, 2018).

Law and psychology in relation to the identity of children and adolescents as victims, have established that although this role is required for their recognition and for the restitution of their rights. Nevertheless, in the processes of implementation of public policies for their protection affected by the armed conflict it can also immobilize the processes of management of their own lives. That other part of their lives where they continue to be beings with capacities and potentialities to move forward despite all the traces of war. It can also immobilize the capacity they have as relational agents with the

potential to transform themselves, their families, their schools and their communities. (Fajardo, Ramírez, Valencia, & Ospina-Alvarado, 2018).

Gender identity in children and adolescents is another issue that has been developed by law due to the challenge and multiple jurisprudence at the global level in this regard. In this field, work has been done on the fundamental right of children and adolescents to their gender identity, being a constitutional right of gender self-determination, which is also recognized in international human rights law (Gauché & Lovera, 2019).

Regarding the feminist approach in research, the social sciences have highlighted the need for it when dealing with children and adolescents in the context of the armed conflict. These since being a child means being threatened by a permanent right violation and being a girl or young woman means being limited in the development of her potential as a citizen in the public sphere and remaining at constant risk of being violated in the public or in the private spheres. In this sense, the civic participation of girls is affected by the assignment of roles related to the reproduction of the patriarchy, which seeks to restrict the contact of girls and young women with peers of the opposite gender, and the lack of real spaces for participation (Niño, 2012).

It is important to review the studies on empathy with respect to what in this work are called the protective environments of children and adolescents. From a psychological point of view, Vygotsky proposed, from a historical-cultural perspective, the fundamental role of the social context in this process. Through the family and the educational system, culture provides the tools to interact with the environment, including strategies for conflict resolution.

From this perspective, it can be considered that the instruments that have been socially and culturally constructed for the solution of problems, particularly those associated with conflict, are of a local, family and peer nature. It is evident that in a historical-cultural context we learn what we think about conflicts and how we think about conflicts through "what is said" or "what is done" which entails advantages in the approach to the community, which will make the appropriation of new forms of resolution more difficult (Montealegre, 2013).

Empathy has also been the subject of study from the area of psychology, it has been indicated that empathy emerges from the second year of life, so it is necessary to study it from childhood to adulthood, as its development becomes more complex over time (Zabala, M. L., Richard, s, M. M., Breccia, F., & Marcela, L., 2018). Thus, empathic capacity is defined as an emotional response that comes from understanding the state or situation of another person, like what that person is feeling (Eisenberg, 2002).

Regarding the methodology that was used in the interviews, reminiscence has been studied mainly by psychologists and has been understood as the personal recovery of experienced episodes that are part of our past wisdom (Serrano; Ricarte; Ros; Navarro; Aguilar & Nieto, 2006). Life review, also developed from psychology, has been understood as a mental process that occurs naturally, normative, and universal, where the reintegration of past experiences and unresolved conflicts can be reviewed again offering a resolution to them, as well as a feeling of serenity and wisdom (Butler, 1963). This perspective will be developed with a focus on childhood and adolescence (socio-biological dimension, age and time) and a gender perspective (socio-vital dimension) (Serrano & Latorre, 2005).

Regarding to qualitative techniques, autobiography has been understood from sociology to have an objective not as the analysis of the narrative structure, or a history of the individual subject, but the sociological being who is less a subject in himself than the events that organize his life and his situation. The theme is to capture a priori, as a theoretical act, those events both internal (personal history) and external (social history) that could be influencing as potential for change in the trajectory of an individual (Panaia, 2004).

"To construct the autobiography implies estrangement from one's own history, distance between what has been lived and what has been narrated. Memories, times, places, affections, ethnicity, voices of others and one's own voice converge in the ordering of fragmentary experiences, in a structure that gives them meaning; meaning in the here and now, there and before and also after, to establish relationships not previously thought of, perhaps unthinkable until now, but that allow us to read the past in a new register (...) The autobiographical narration is an invitation to enter into the history of the other, to understand it from the sense that its protagonist attributes to it, to find in it the traces of the social and the particularities of the subject, to venture, through language, into an individual history refined by multiple voices" (Cifuentes, 2008).

This autobiography is intended to be developed through in-depth interviews, a technique developed by anthropology whose main intention is to enter into the life of the other, penetrate and detail the transcendent, decipher and understand the tastes, fears, satisfactions, anxieties, worries and joys, significant and relevant of the interviewee. It consists of building step by step and thoroughly the experience of the other (Robles, 2011).

### **3. Methodology**

The methodology that is used in an academic investigation allows to establish new theories or modify existing ones. It can also generate knowledge or provide solutions to the social, scientific, or philosophical problems. It was important to this work to choose a method that generated new and personal information but without revictimizing the interviewees or judging their position or concepts about the internal conflict and peacebuilding in Colombia.

The method used is reminiscence, as the personal recovery of experienced episodes that are part of our past wisdom (Serrano; Ricarte; Ros; Navarro; Aguilar & Nieto, 2006) and life review as a mental process that occurs naturally, normative and universal, where the reintegration of past experiences and unresolved conflicts can be reviewed again offering a resolution to them, as well as a feeling of serenity and wisdom (Butler, 1963). This perspective is developed with a focus on childhood and adolescence (socio-biological dimension, age and time) and a gender perspective (socio-vital dimension).

Qualitative techniques are used to develop this perspective. As a central technique was developed the autobiography, which does not have as its object the analysis of the narrative structure, nor a history of the individual subject, but the sociological being that is less a subject in itself than the events that organize its life and its conjuncture, the theme is to capture a priori, as a theoretical act, those events both internal (personal history) and external (social history) that could be influencing as potentials for change in the trajectory of an individual (Panaia, 2004).

This thesis was developed through in-depth interviews, which beyond being a term that dimensions the content of the interview, the main intention of this type of technique is to enter into the life of the other, penetrate and detail the transcendent, decipher and understand the tastes, fears, satisfactions, anxieties, anxieties, anxieties and joys, significant and relevant of the interviewee; it is to build step by step and thoroughly the experience of the other (Robles, 2011).

The women who were interviewed were chosen taking into account their gender, since it was established from the beginning of this research to have a feminist perspective.

Secondly, their age was considered and that they were contemporaries. Since it was necessary to guarantee that they had lived during the stages chosen for this research, their childhood and adolescence, to achieve the objectives of this academic work.

Thirdly, their level of proximity with the conflict was considered. Three women were sought who had different levels of proximity to the conflict direct, medium, and indirect. Thus, a woman recognized as a direct victim of the Colombian armed conflict by the State was chosen. A woman who has a medium proximity, having near relationship with someone who had a direct level. And finally, a woman who had no apparent direct relationship with the internal conflict.

Finally, it was important that every interviewee knew at least one other interviewee to carry out an analysis of "crossed narratives", to obtain different life experiences that in the different interviewees, come together at some point in their lives. The point is to give account for the identity they have as part of the conflict, the empathy they have towards

other actors of the conflict and how their experiences and memories of childhood and adolescence account for their different perceptions (Mata, 2018).

An in-depth interview was conducted with the three interviewees, maintaining the same conditions. The guarantee of anonymity and that they would be in places chosen by them for the interviews. A semi-structured interview was created initially for the one closest to the conflict and was adapted for the other two interviewees. The three interviews consisted of four stages, 3 milestones in time i) adulthood ii) childhood iii) adolescence and a final reflection.

In the first stage, general questions were asked about the family nucleus, studies, work and respect to concepts of the Colombian conflict such as the Peace Agreement, victims, gender focus, forgiveness and forgetfulness, relationship with the conflict, and her plans and dreams for the future.

The second stage of childhood was divided into three aspects. Personal aspects in which they were asked about their date and place of birth, childhood memories, family conformation, where they studied and if they practiced any cultural or sports activity. Family Aspects where family relationships and family socioeconomic status were discussed. Finally, social aspects were treated with respect to other protective environments besides the family (community, neighborhood, church, school), gender approach, memories of armed groups and relationship with violence.

In the third stage of adolescence, the participants were asked about their main memories, how they were affected by the conflict, how the conflict affected their lives as adults, their relationships with other peers and their approach to gender.

Finally, in the point of reflection, they were asked if once they had carried out this exercise of reminiscence, they could find moments that marked them and that nowadays lead them to have positions with respect to the armed conflict, their actors and the construction of peace in Colombia.

#### **4. Colombian context 1990s and 2000s**

After the assassination of three presidential candidates in the 1980s, the decade of the 90s, known as the third phase of the internal conflict in Colombia, began with a new President of the Liberal Party, Cesar Gaviria. The new President, in accordance with the campaign and his successor Luis Carlos Galán, advocated for the issuance of a new Political Constitution that was more pluralistic and inclusive from the former constitution that had been in force for 100 years.

The new Constitution, which was built in a pluralistic manner, even with guerrilla members who had laid down their arms, brought great advances compared to its conservative predecessor. This new Constitution recognized fundamental rights and a special mechanism for their protection, as well as the recognition of the ethnic plurality that inhabited the country. Notwithstanding the guarantees and freedoms it provided, it favored an economic opening by privatizing services that were provided by the Colombian State. This opening affected the agrarian sector and the peasantry, which generated the displacement of these workers to specific areas of the country. (Comisión de la Verdad, 2022).

During the Constituent Assembly a great violence was generated by the issue of extradition that led to the creation of the group led by Pablo Escobar "los extraditables"

(the criminals that could go in extradition to pay their crimes in the United States). The members of this group were Pablo Escobar, Gustavo Gaviria, Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha, Carlos Lehder, Juan David Ochoa, Jorge Luis Ochoa and Fabio Ochoa Vásquez. After the referendum regarding the New Constitution, Pablo Escobar announced that the group ceased to exist. His extradition to the United States was approved by the national Constituent Assembly.

After the extradition was signed, in 1991 Pablo Escobar and the Ochoa brothers surrendered to justice, but they did not stop their war, mainly against the police and against their enemies from other cartels. Escobar wanted extradition to be eliminated from Colombian law and until this was made by the government, he opened new war fronts in which the paramilitaries found a way to continue operating allied with the cartels and managed to avoid demobilization. In these years, drug trafficking became an economic, political, military, and territorial power.

Although the new Constitution was intended to be an instrument that would contribute to the construction of peace, for some, the non-reform of the military forces in this new charter meant that the ideal of peace that had been proposed was not possible. The fight of the military forces against the guerrillas had been going on for 30 years, so they couldn't accept the end of the confrontations and that the war against communism was dead (Truth Commission, 2022).

The great power obtained by drug trafficking in the territory led them to generate alliances with the guerrillas in different areas of the country. For the military forces these alliances and their new objective of the fight against drug trafficking did not differ from the war that had been waged before. These events intensified the war in the civilian

population and generated a new wave of violence that brought massacres in different areas of the country.

Although during this decade there were disarmament and different negotiation tables between the government, guerrillas, and paramilitaries, several of the negotiations were suspended, postponed and finally never reached the agreements that would achieve peace. This caused the FARC-EP and the paramilitary groups to grow stronger during this decade.

During these years, civil society was the main victim not only of homicides, massacres and forced disappearances, but also of displacement, dispossession, recruitment of minors, sexual violence, arbitrary detentions, targeting and destruction of peoples, communities, and life projects (Truth Commission, 2022).

By 2002 Colombia was the country with the second largest humanitarian crisis after Sudan. This brought Colombia under the scrutiny of international organizations and compliance with international humanitarian law conventions and instruments. Strict compliance with human rights conventions represented a drawback for some experts since the government and the national army were obliged to comply strictly while the guerrillas were not. At this stage, the internationalization of the Colombian internal conflict was generated.

Therefore, the security agreement between the United States and Colombia known as "Plan Colombia" was created. Initially this plan was thought as a socioeconomic strategy, however it ended up being a new war plan in which Colombia committed itself to fight against drugs and to harden its forces with the economic and military resources from the United States.

With a new world discourse against terrorism, President Álvaro Uribe Vélez was elected, promising to fight against insurgencies and recover territorial control by the State. A new sum cero discourse emerged, whoever was not on the side of the government was on the other side. Very close to the military forces and with the resources of the United States, Uribe was reelected for another presidential term in order to finish his long-term plan end all the insurgencies.

The second Uribe´s presidential period was characterized by the continuity of the war. In order to achieve a strategic military and political defeat, methods unbefitting of the rule of law were used and war crimes were committed. During Uribe's governments, most violence indicators dropped, but respect for human rights continued to deteriorate. "Stigmatization and harassment of political opponents and social organizations, peoples and communities increased, and one of the worst barbarities of the armed conflict took place: extrajudicial executions of civilians presented as killed in combat." (Comisión de la Verdad, 2022).

## **5. Results of the interviews**

Even though the interviews were practiced in an order that relied in the method of reminiscence, the results are present in chronological order. For each interviewee will be present four main topics: general information, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, a final reflection, and an analysis from the interview.

In general information will be present place of birth, gender, sexual identity, age, studies, occupation and the relation between the interviewee and the Colombian conflict. In childhood and adolescence is exposed the place they lived, the context of this place,

their family, their after-school activities and the remembrance they have of the conflict by that time. for more comprehension of the reader.

In the adulthood it would be added the main concepts of Colombian internal conflict as the peace agreement, what they understand as victims and victimizers, women in war, forgiveness and forgetfulness and their peace building role.

In the final reflection is present in their voices what each one of them dream for their future and their reflection after all the interview. Finally it is present a short analysis for each of the interviewees.

It is important to highlight that I tried to present this results with the greatest number of textual quotes from the interviewees to achieve the reader's immersion in each one. However, in the annex to this work it can be found the complete transcripts in the original language to understand better or go further into the qualitative aspects of the interviews. Also is important to point out that the names of the interviewees have been modified.

**DANNY** was born in La Dorada (Caldas), she identifies as a woman, heterosexual, single, mother of two children. She is 34 years old, is a journalist that work in human rights and identifies herself as a victim of the internal Colombian conflict.

In her childhood she lived between La Dorada (Caldas) and Bogotá. La Dorada is located in the middle Magdalena region. Foundation date 1893. Population: 70.486. It has an area of 500.8 km<sup>2</sup>. It is part of the department of Caldas and is located on the left bank of the Magdalena River. Is also known as “Colombia´s heart” for its geographical location. It is bordered on the east by Puerto Salgar in the Department of Cundinamarca, on the west by the municipalities of Victoria and Samaná in the Department of Caldas, on the

north by San Miguel in the Department of Antioquia and on the south by Honda in the Department of Tolima. It has an urban extension of 29.30 km<sup>2</sup> and a rural extension of 471.50 km<sup>2</sup>.

In La Dorada there is a high quality in the production of meat and dairy products, several industries in the region have been dedicated to the processing of the raw material that is produced in abundance in the municipalities of the department. (Gobernación de Caldas)

La Dorada had for 2020, 10.532 recognized internal conflict victims (Unidad para las Víctimas, 2020).

*“(...) it (La Dorada) was a paramilitary zone where many things happened with the girls, where you could not trust anyone, where you did not know who the neighbor was, or whose relative he was, or whose friend he had. There was total impunity, so if a girl was raped, it stayed that way. (...) It was an area where prostitution was booming, so it was also like safeguarding us from being prostituted by a friend or a friend's mother or someone else”.*

Her family was composed by *“I am the fourth of 5 daughters, the last of my mother's first relationship and at the same time the first of my mother's new relationship, so I was the older sister of my younger sister, yes? And the younger sister of my sisters who lived in Bogotá, so was very crazy thing. Well we are 5, plus my mom and dad, but my family was super extended because when I lived in Bogota, I lived in my grandparents' house, a house of 200 square meters, with 3 courtyards, in that house lived four families, five with my grandmother, so to speak. So my family nucleus when I was in Bogotá was my grandmother, my grandfather, my three older sisters and the family of four aunts. In the*

*same house that had apartments and very large courtyards where we played. But if I was in La Dorada my family nucleus was my mom, my dad, my younger sister and me. So I can't say this was my family nucleus (laughs) I had two family nuclei depending on where I was". The main income was from the work of her biological father that sold craft or as she called him a "hippie", her foster father that had a work as Electric technician and her mother did not work she was a housewife.*

*Her after-school activities were "My two great passions were literature and journalism. I did press, I wrote a column for the local newspaper, I did radio, I was the reporter for the schools and I directed a TV magazine about the places to go and things like that. When I arrived here in Bogota, I was involved in all the radio and video projects that were in the schools in Lucho Garzón's Mayor's Office. I was kind of involved in that and in libraries, I even worked in libraries and those were my two passions, that made me have a lot of connection with books, because back there were a lot of books, and nobody else liked books, so I remember that the nicest gift at that time was when I was 9 years old when my aunt gave me a whole collection of books, I read them all and during my break at school I went to the library to read".*

*The remembrance of the internal Colombian conflict she has of her childhood is "All the time there were motorcycles, there was a point that they called "el limonar" and it was like a traffic circle where there sell lemon in stands and in fact with the whole issue of the demobilizations all those people entered into the process of the demobilization of the AUC because they were like the ones who advised everything. But it was seen as a very close relationship between the paramilitaries and the State, so it wasn't like a motorcycle would passed by, kill someone and leave and that was it. So there it was fine*

*for the mother to prostitute her daughter but it was not well seen if you were a fag or a transvestite, that's why they killed you, right? So it was more like a castrated society, of things that were not supposed to be done and it was like in the cities, there were invisible borders, invisible limits because you knew how far you could go”.*

*(...)*

*“I was outside playing with my friends at 6 o'clock that day, and I was looking out the window, and suddenly it sounded like a motorcycle was coming and it parked in front of my house, one of the guys got off, shots rang out, he turned back. I remember the guy who got on the bike staring at me and I was scared shitless, I mean if you tell me now to "describe him" I have no fucking idea, I just remember those eyes staring at me and me holding on to a railing, scared shitless”.*

In her adolescence she lived in Bogotá. Her remembrance of the Colombian internal conflict is extended because in this period her and her family were victimized. *“I was between 12 and 13 years old, I remember that he (biological father) was in La Dorada but he could go to La Dorada for a maximum of two days, one night, they didn't let him stay longer... and he left and we knew that he was going to follow a route through the “Magdalena Medio” and a couple of months later they called us that an armed group had kidnaped him, and then we never heard anything again. Then we did the whole thing with the Attorney General's Office and so on and that's when they told us that he supposedly lived in a border zone, and that... he had been in prison for drug trafficking, so it was like... we didn't believe him with that kind of scope”.*

*(...)*

*“(...) we went to a discotheque to a party of someone... and it was like an event of someone, I don't remember who, because it was like a friend, of the friend, of the friend.... I remember that my dad was on a trip and so they gave me permission and I was like talking to a friend and my friend was in front and what I see is guys pull out a gun and shoot at us... I throw myself on the floor and then see all the people through the nightclub's windows leaving and my friends happily huddled together stealing the bottles of drinks (laughs). That's what I can say I remember about deaths there, but there were deaths all the time”.*

*(...)*

*“In fifth grade I managed “computadores para educar” and they took me to the “children of peace” with Nohrita de Pastrana (First Lady at the time). Well it turns out that later we passed a project to manage the issue of the adequacy because there was no internet, there were computers but no internet! Then we began to manage the whole thing and the money was lost and there were reports that everything had been executed, I began to investigate who was the contractor in the project. When I was 12 o 13 in the seventh and eighth grade they published me a column every Sunday in the town newspaper and one day an old man who read the newspaper in town said to me -"mija, what happened this weekend you didn't write?" - “what do you mean I didn't write?” I did write, but indeed the column was not there and I think that was the moment, I think that until now that has been the most painful moment of my life. The Mayor had links with paramilitarism and it turned out that the contractor was his brother and clearly had links with the paramilitaries and they didn't put a price on me to kill me, they put a price on me to rape me. My dad had to take me out in the electricity car, inside the big electricity rolls*

*to Honda to be able to get to Bogotá alive and not raped (long pause) That marked me a lot because it touched everything that was important to me.... I, it was one of the longest periods that I had been living with my father and my mother, I had a life, I was important in town, I was on the radio, on television and in the press, I was unreachable, I mean and this happened to me, it was like, like very brutal and arriving in Bogotá was a shit”.*

*(...)*

*“I had to deal not only with being displaced and not welcomed but also with the shame of being displaced, we are talking about a time when the eternal imaginary of the displaced was that of the little sign at the traffic light asking for coins (laughs) I made up that we had a Villa with a swimming pool and even horses, I told that "they took us out because we were rich" because I mixed the paramilitary with the guerrilla (laughter) a total madness but because I was ashamed to really tell what had happened to me (...) it was very, very, very hard for me to talk about my truth, about what really happened (pause) and I came to understand it when I did my thesis at the University, talking about the memory processes of women ex-combatants. I felt that there I was able to catharsis a lot of things, to stop feeling ashamed for the fact of being displaced. (...) I don't know if one ends up normalizing or romanticizing or what, but I think that I would hardly be the woman I am today without having gone through everything I went through, and if it had not been for the international cooperation funds for the victims' fund to be a reality, I would not be what I am, I would have been a social studies teacher and bitter because I would have never known that studying communication was my dream, so I think there are many things and I also feel that it is much easier to look back than when one is living the situations, so I think it is very complex”.*

At the moment of the interview, in her adulthood, she lived in Kennedy, Bogotá D.C. and she identified her family nucleus her mother, sisters, son and daughter. She understand the Colombian internal conflict as *“a difficult dynamic to understand, because I believe that currently there are no conflict processes that have to do with political ideologies but rather are rooted in drug trafficking and those are other dynamics. The means do not matter but the end will always be to profit and that makes everything much more complex, especially since for some time now it is, it is Mexican cartels that manage the drug trafficking routes and drug distribution. I think that the conflict always ends up affecting the less favored classes and the most vulnerable population, and that there is perhaps no road map or a clear compass from the state policies to face these problems because on one hand there is like a romanticization of what the guerrillas were at some point, there is also a very blatant justification of what has been paramilitarism and with the GAOML (Grupos Armados Organizados al Margen de la Ley) it is another crazy story because they are people profiting from the misery of others and well.... I think that all this, all this has been a breeding ground for the circles of violence but also of poverty and inequality”*.

About the Peace Agreement she stated *“(...) the peace agreement did us a lot of good, I think it was a well thought out peace agreement. I think it was a total nonsense to have submitted it to a plebiscite. I think it resulted in that many of the things that, that the victims wanted to see reflected that were not reflected, that there was evasion of responsibility of many actors. I think that the Peace Agreement suffered a hard blow with the government change the implementation of the agreement became a welfare issue, then one sees that what they are implementing is like entrepreneurship, eh education,*

*eh? and I am not saying that this is not important, of course it is part of, but what is more important as the issue of land restitution, as the processes of reparation and the duty to make people believe that peace is a matter of all, not of the victims and of the actors and the state, but of all as a society was relegated to a very, very, very, very, very, very low priority. So we are doing what we have to do and to be able to have a couple of nice storytellings and to put them on social networks and that's it".*

Been asked about the difference between victims and victimizers she answered *"I believe that in Colombia all people in one way or another... people who have not been actors of the armed conflict have been victims, because the war has had even harmful consequences in the development of the country. So, I believe that... talking about victims is a complex issue because one of the debates we have always had is to... mmm... to move from the victim's discourse to the survivor's discourse, right? Survivor of the armed conflict, and as this has some legal obstacles but also there is not really an interest in assuming the responsibility of allowing people to overcome the victimizing event through the tools provided by the State, eh?"*.

For the role of women in war she explained *"Illegal groups were more interested in having more men than women in their ranks, but if we talk about the impact of the warlike acts, because of the way of conquering the territories and so on, they always took more women, because it was easier, or well I don't know if it was easier, but it was very... it generated a greater impact for example, eh... to arrive to a community and rape all the women to establish dominion, yes? Or to take the women to cook and wash for them, or to put the women as bell-ringers, it was easier, yes? Eh... but then we come back to the same thing if I say that there were more women than, where do I leave all the stories of*

*men who have told me that they were taken to war at the age of 7, at the age of 15? where do I leave those stories? So, I feel that there is clearly a component of gender-based violence in the war that is terrifying, but there is also an invisibilization of the role, of the impact that this had on men and I think that this is also a form of gender-based violence, to assume that men carried less of the burden”.*

For the question about the forgiveness and forgetfulness that was expected with the peace building process she regret *“There is something very, very regrettable and it is that in the name of reconciliation the right to not forgive is denied, the right to... to not, to not want to be part of processes that turn out to be more painful for people is denied. I think it is also very important to understand that in this process it has not been allowed that, that there is a mental health component that allows people to really be resilient, but what is happening is that people are forced to continue with their lives by the same dynamics of survival that we have as people. So, there is no real mental health policy that accompanies the processes and that allows people to ... make a more profound mental health exercise”.*

She understands she has a peacebuilding role *“I believe that I build peace with my job in my communication processes, when I see they can revictimize people, or can put the other in complicated protection issues, or do not respect the safeguard and the right of people to privacy. I believe that I build peace because many times what I find in colleagues is the desire to give the peace donors products forgetting that finally we are working with people, and people who trust us. There are also processes in which I continue to participate, which directly contribute to what we could say the peacebuilding in Colombia, which has been pigeonholed a lot in the issue of reincorporation, I have a*

*couple of friends, very close friends who are reincorporated, with whom eh, also from time to time we dream and do things that contribute to the peacebuilding that provide real tools to people in reincorporation and their children, to continue believing in peace. I said one day to someone that if I were to die today, I would go peacefully. I have not stopped doing what, what I wanted to do, nor have I stopped contributing from my place in the world, and I believe that life has given me much more than what I could have ever dreamed of, I believe that giving the possibility to my immediate environment is the best way to continue to contribute to peace”.*

*Talking about her dreams and future she said “Well look, one day I sat down and I said, what am I doing with my life? I am waking up at 5 o'clock in the morning, to take a bus, having an schedule. I love my work because if I did not love my work, everything would be wrong! I would not be able to stand the “Transmilenio”. That day I understood that I am working to fulfill the dreams of others, of someone else who dreamed that NGO, of someone else who conceives a way, not totally different from mine of building peace and a better world for all, but that finally is someone else's dream and that is costing me my life. There is a song that says that if time is gold we are not millionaires because I lose my life, I earn a salary, so I said: what do I want to do with my life? I said, “Oh, I can't start a organization and go beyond my needs because behind me there are two little mouths that I don't want to go through many of the things that I went through. I started to look at the possibilities, before studying communication I studied a degree, the humanitarian world and social responsibility led me to work with teachers and I realized that, I realized that pedagogy is not something that makes me comfortable, so I want to go to live in a place where there is not an oversupply of assistance, nor an oversupply of corporate*

*social responsibility, nor an oversupply of cooperation, but surely there is a need, as in all Colombian territories. A place that allows me to build a decent quality of life for me and my children, but that also gives me the space and the opportunity to influence others to also have a decent quality of life, because finally in the territories, I have had the opportunity to travel a lot in Colombia, very complex territories and what I have realized is that people do not dream of a car, a house and a scholarship; people are happy if they have a place to put their heads and three meals”.*

*(...)*

*“I would like to combine teaching and compensate life for the opportunity to have a stable job, with the creation of a collective that allows me on Saturdays to give back to society a little of what life has given me, to have a small land, my dog, my chickens and to see my children grow up”.*

After all the journey of her life made in the interview, she has a final reflection. *“I think I could say that I began my relationship with the conflict by normalizing, that is, I was told so many times "if they killed him it was for something" that I would surely say "yes, if they killed him it was for something", there is no need to ask anything else, but when they took me out I understood that if they take you out it is for something, but not for something bad, you can represent a risk for being uncomfortable, for wanting to speak the truth, for wanting to do the right thing.*

*(pause)*

*I also understood that the displaced person is not the one who stops with the sign at the traffic light and that the one who do it is nor for pleasure, he does it because he does not have a support network. But I also understood that those who are in*

*paramilitarism are not in paramilitarism because they wanted to be, but because there are a lot of things at stake that made them believe that this was the best decision. Longings, desires, dreams, others may call it hunger for power, for blood, whatever, there may also be very dark desires. Now I can also understand that the one who was a guerrilla, normally was a guerrilla child, that the woman who was in the war is not in the war because she said one day "oh how nice to go to war" that being in the war they lived very... very hard things. What I can find today and having worked with victims and knowing other stories that seem to me even more terrible than mine, because that's how we are, isn't it? What is more or less worse? Like trying to level the pain and trauma. When a friend who has lived in Bogota all her life and is a psychiatric patient told me "pain is pain and what may seem silly to you, for me is the end of the world and it may hurt me more than you and it's okay because we are human beings".*

*So I can say today that what I, my experience with the arm conflict, not only as a victim but also in other processes, leads me to think: how do we deconstruct the enemy? How do we acquire tools to see the other as that, as a human being, to strip him/her of all titles, no matter how terrible or praiseworthy they may seem. Because in the end what we have is a human being with motivations, with desires and with a perspective on life that to me may seem very far-fetched, but listening to her I can understand her, not to exempt them from responsibility, not to romanticize her, not to normalize her but to understand that finally the context and the immediate environment influences much more than what we believe and how the mind also plays a very good or a very negative role in what we are.*

*I do believe that having a relationship with the conflict makes who I am and is what allows me today to ask myself many more questions about and what role do I have in this, what can I do in this? And to be aware that one is a lighthouse and one is emitting light and not always one's light goes in the same direction and it is not my responsibility what everyone does with my light but it is my responsibility, with myself, to never stop questioning myself if what I am today is what I want to be tomorrow, if what I am today is what works best, because I also recently read something and it is "who you were, was that person you needed to survive, and I feel today that I do not need to save the world, I do not need to save myself, I am simply going to be responsible for my life and responsible for what I should be responsible for, for my children, for my growth, for my immediate environment and let the others be, I believe that one should let the others be and should and must worry about oneself and not allow anyone to cut the wings of what one wants to be".*

From DANNY's recollection of her childhood and adolescence interview, different situations can be evident that lead her to the concepts she has as an adult regarding the conflict and the construction of peace in Colombia.

Is evident that her family nucleus is extensive and includes stepsisters whom she considers sisters. Also, her upbringing in her grandparents' house made her grow up with her extended family. This implies that since she was a child she had a large protective family environment, which makes her a more empathetic person in her adulthood.

The fact that since she was a child, she was passionate about reading and journalism led her to be a social communicator, but this implies that since she was a child she always enjoyed the news so she was always updated on the political, social and

economic situation in Colombia. In the development of the interview, her communicative capacity is evident, but also in the development of the concepts related to the conflict, his knowledge regarding the different groups, their modus operandi and the relationship with the country's politics and economy is evident.

It is also clear that during his childhood and adolescence he lived in a paramilitary zone, surrounded by violence, where he was taught to be afraid, and that the government has no presence in the country. This can be analyzed in her responses and the relationship she has with her lack of affinity with the Uribe government and the links with paramilitarism, which leads her to be empathetic with the peace process and the victims.

Her victimization also led to corruption, the ties between conflict and political interests, as well as the role played by the media. In this sense, she developed, understands and redefines periods of his childhood and adolescence with elaborate concepts such as a “castrated society” or “imaginary borders”.

Finally, it is also clear that she felt stigmatized and discriminated against as a displaced person, which even led her to tell different versions of what happened and the causes that led her to be a victim of the conflict. This background has a direct relationship with her empathy, her interest in the victims, her broad understanding of the victims and perpetrators who, as indicated, have even taken her to spaces and to have friends who belong even to different parties and armed groups in the internal conflict.

**KIRA** was born in Bogotá, she identifies as a lesbian woman, single with no children. She is 31 years old and has studies in interior design and photography. At the

moment of the interview, she was unemployed studying photography and identifies herself in the internal Colombian conflict as a victim's friend.

In her childhood she grew up in Manizales (Caldas) and Bogotá. Manizales was founded in 1849 by settlers from Antioquia, today it is a city with economic, industrial, cultural and tourist activities. Its cultural activities include the Manizales Fair, the Manizales Bullfighting Fair, the Manizales International Theater Festival, being the most important theatrical city in the history of Colombia, and the Grita Festival.

Manizales is known as the "City of Open Doors", it is also known as "*Manizales del Alma*" due to a bullfighting *pasodoble* that bears his name as well as "*La Perla del Ruiz*", "*La Capital del Afecto*", "*La Capital Mundial del Café*" and "*La Colina Iluminada*". (Alcaldía de Manizales (n.d)). In Manizales there is a characterization of 7,082 victims of the armed conflict. (Alcaldía de Manizales, 2021).

KIRA remember a lot of places growing up in Manizales "(...) *"the plan" is like a straight place because there are no a lot of flat places in Manizales, like a plateau that is flat, yes, that is the plan, so the plan is the plan. There was also a place called the "Casa de la Cultura" that was in another plan near the "Plaza de Toros" and there they did recreational activities, so there they would say today we are going to do paintings and we would also do the "marranadas" which was done in December with our friends and the people of the neighborhood, so in December they would kill the pig and we would go to the "marranada" on the 24th and eat pigs, but we were a little poor, right?"*.

(...)

*"Well, I remember... in our house, well, my aunt was there, she was a seamstress, my other aunt sold chickens, so, everything was in the same house. There was an*

*advertisement outside for chickens and clothing (laughs). It was in the house, so you climbed the stairs of the house and you found my aunt Graciela, the chickens were in the kitchen with my aunt Chelo, eh, there was my grandfather's workshop, on the corner there was a bakery, on the other corner there was a "revueltería".*

*The "revueltería" is like the "líchigo" they call it here, where they sell vegetables, fruits... the "revueltería", that is, a mixture of many things, eh, what else was there? There, as we were near 23rd Street, there were like all the normal businesses, like clothing stores, shopping malls, there is only one shopping mall, which is a little far away the "Parque Caldas".*

*Her family nucleus was composed by "(...) at that time there was my dad was a watchman, my mom was a housewife, when I was born, we lived there in the center, eh, my mom came from Manizales because she met my dad, well she met my dad there in Manizales, but her idea was to leave my grandfather's house, because my grandfather said that studying was for prostitutes. My grandfather had 15 children, my mother was the youngest, then, of course, she went out partying with her aunts and everything, then she realized that the only thing she could study was manual things, like embroidery, sewing machine. She couldn't finish school, and she wanted to leave, so she met my dad who lived very close or across the street, and they ended up coming here to Bogotá, they got married and they came to live here to Bogotá to look for a new future or something like that... well we ended up living in a tenement there in the center of the city my dad was a bit of an alcoholic, my mom realized that with what my dad earned, it wasn't enough".*

*(...)*

*"I was maybe 10 years old, I don't know, and my grandfather's house was... in my grandfather's house there was a mechanic shop, my grandfather was a mechanic, all his sons were mechanics and so were his nephews and nieces and so on, so as my mother told you, he had many sisters, there lived several sisters and their children".*

The main family income in her childhood was the salary of his father that worked as a watchman and her mother was a housewife.

Remembering her after-school activities she said *"I was always super friendly when I was little. So everybody had to do something with me, so I would go and talk to the boys and girls I didn't know, I wasn't embarrassed at all, I would go "Hello, hello, hello, do you want to be my friend?", "Hello, can I borrow your bicycle?".*

*(...)*

*"I played yermis, I played with children, I played bat, "pidobate" it was called, I played bicycle (...) It was like baseball, but it was called pidobate, was a stick with a ball... those that they sold at auctions for about 2000 pesos, that smells like fruits, you know? that is like a round plastic ball? So pidobate, then the idea was to throw it and the other person would run away like that, to the 4 stations".*

Her conflict remembrance in her childhood *"No, I knew all that here when I was a teenager, I didn't know it when I was a child, I don't, I don't remember it, I don't remember it, maybe it was something that I saw around, I mean in my memories it doesn't exist, I mean, not the conflict, but like drug addiction yes, because let's say in my family there was... my mom says we have a curse, right? So, uh, several uncles, my cousins became drug addicts, um, my uncles drank, uh my grandfather was very angry, like that kind of thing, but not as a conflict, not as victims of the conflict".*

(...)

*“(...) no because it is a city, in the city it didn't happen, in the poorest neighborhoods, there maybe... maybe I remember eh... what they did that they said that the Black Eagles were going to be like a cleansing, then they killed people maybe, I remember that”.*

*She spent her adolescence in Bogotá in Fontibón. “Well I and my mom, I remember we came for a vacation, I was 13 years old, eh, we came for a vacation and my mom stayed, I was in eighth grade, I was studying at “Paulo Sexto” in “La Enea”, in another neighborhood of Manizales which is near the airport and my mom came because she had no job and she stayed here at my uncle's house who lived in Refugio, in Fontibón, then we came for a vacation, my mom decided to stay and I told my mom to send me to Manizales to finish school, but I went there, there was my dad's sister, my aunt Marta, who stayed with me, I first stayed at my grandfather's house with my aunt, but my aunt couldn't stand me because I was already a little rebellious and I wanted to go to parties and everything. Later she sent me to my aunt Marta's house, who also lived in the plan where my cousin Stephanie lived, who at that time no longer lived there because they had already gone to live in Medellín, so she lived there in the plan, then I lived there with my aunt and her 3 children, who was my father's sister”.*

(...)

*“My mom stayed working here when I went to Manizales to finish school, eighth grade, which in the end they ended up throwing it away because I went to a party. Then when I came back here, I came back to live and... I remember my mom made me come with a horrible box, in a bus (laughs) I hadn't even been on a plane yet”.*

(...)

*"I felt good, the thing is that I have always been one of those people who knows how to adapt to situations, so if you have to be in a super good place, because let's say I in Manizales, let's say .... Of course, I had my classmates who didn't have much money, because we didn't have money, but I always, I always liked to get together with people who had, who had money, or no money, but who studied in the best schools, because I studied in the little school Barrios Unidos and my friends were from Colegio Santa María, so I had different friends, because I liked to get together with them, I don't like to get together with those from the little school, since always, since I was a little girl".*

Her conflict remembrance in the adolescence *"I remember there was a girl who wanted to beat me up all the time because once they were fighting in a heavy rain, I mean, the girls who had a rivalry, they were going to fight outside the school, right? I remember they were fighting (laughs) and I was running with a friend, I remember her name was Lady, my friend, and I shouted "whores" or something like that and I ran out like crazy. I remember the next day they called me to stop me like "Quiubo, what are you shouting at us? - "No, I'm not" I was all prudish, all dumb, because obviously it scared me because she was a very big girl, I was very small, but then, let's say that the violence and that, I mean, not the conflict and that, but violence in general. I saw it here at school when other girls from the other schools went, like to. pick fights, to take knives, I remember that they robbed us outside the school, they robbed us, like that".*

(...)

*"DANNY lived in Villa Mar too, the same neighborhood as me, about 4 or 5 blocks away, so, of course, we became friends because we would go and come together from*

*school, I would go and pick her up and vice versa, I always left her first and the other way around always. So that's where I met her and we became friends, but she lived with her aunts, and her mother lived in "La Dorada" with her father at that time, uh.... let's say that at that time there weren't, like, a lot of conversations, because one who speaks as a teenager, I don't know about bullshit, parties, nonsense, when we were in 11 grade or so, we had some more conversations, like more real.*

*I took her to my house, so she could meet my mom, there she told us that she came from "La Dorada" that she was a victim of the conflict, that they were threatened, that they couldn't do anything anymore and the father was (...) I don't remember very well, I'm not very clear about the father, but I know that they killed him a couple of years ago in "La Dorada", they killed him, the mother was displaced, well first they were displaced and he came back and they killed him, something like that I understand, I'm not very sure and she obviously never told us that".*

*(...)*

*"To me it didn't make any difference, she would have been my friend, if she had been a victim or not, because we had many things in common, eh, we liked the same music, we were like fingernail and dirt, we loved to go to, at that time we loved the rock dancing and those things, then we went to the "media torta", to "Rock al Parque" those plans of rockers, of teenagers.*

*Now in her adulthood she still lives in Bogotá, but in a better neighborhood in Chapinero. She identifies her family nucleus "Well, my basic family nucleus, if you ask a question about my family specifically, is my mother, my brother who is 16 years old and*

*my stepfather, that is my family, like my primary family, no, because there is also my father, but not with him, because I don't have a close relationship with him in many years".*

*About the Colombian Internal Conflict she stated "Well, I don't consider myself a person with a lot of... with a lot of knowledge about it, well, let's say that they are like basic concepts, like what they taught you at school, like, like the Armed Forces, like the conflict started because of certain, like certain groups, or certain, in certain areas where people were like tired ... with the Government and... and so obviously it affects us all, right? or it affected us at the time. I think it still exists, obviously the conflict, but not, well not, like on a large scale, like at that time, like in the nineties. Well, at that time it was being born, so I don't have much information about it, but I think it does, I think it still exists".*

*The Peace Agreement "(...) seems to me that was the best thing to do because it gives an opportunity to people who did not have it, I feel that people who at the time were... as if they were recruited eh... had no other options... it was like either you do it or you die, so I think that the peace agreement helped a lot to many people and also how to find peace, people who were victims or victimizers to find their peace. So I think it is a good thing, it was a good thing and I think it is still a good thing.*

*(...)*

*"Not with this government (2018 -2022 Duque's government). Well, I am not very political or anything like that, but what one sees in the media and in social networks and so on, I see that what they are doing is trying to end what the last government did (2012 – 2018 Santo's government). As if peace is no longer peace and in fact now we are seeing more and more massacres, those things that were not seen for a while, I don't know if the*

*media did not make them viral or not, but let's say that there was a certain tranquility in a certain way”.*

*Her perception about the difference of Victims and Victimizer: “Well yes, it's a little redundant, or I don't know, but they are people who had no other option and that, and they were weak people at the time, they had no way to defend themselves... they had no way to take another path, other opportunities, I don't know... of course, I don't want to give them that feeling of regret, you know? I don't want to give them that feeling of pity because... because, well, I think that feeling is not appropriate, but it is more like they are people who suffered at the time and that... and maybe they are already at peace, like the peace agreement issue, I think”.*

*(...)*

*“I think they are both victims, aren't they? I mean, obviously the person who was besieged by these other people, who say they are the perpetrators, well, that is like a concept that we have, but the perpetrators are also victims because if they had no other way, no other path, no other perspective in life... if... where you are, I don't know, supposing that being in a place where there are these groups, or these bad people, who recruit you and you are just another person from the village, I don't know, well, I don't think they were thinking "oh, I want to go out and kill, oh I want to go out and destroy villages and do harm", but they are also victims, so I don't think they would be different because... because neither of them had options, right?”.*

*Women in war “There is a sexist concept that we are the weaker gender, I don't consider women to be the weaker gender just because we are women, but because we are a little more fragile because of... of course, men probably also had a... or if they had,*

*I don't know, I guess, rapes, but let's say that it is always something more marked, because women, for example, get pregnant... umm... the issue of the period, that they are in the..., I don't know in... in those mountains, enduring the cold, and maybe being victims of frequent rapes. Of course, I think women were more affected than men, in a certain way no, because there are, well, of course, if it is a boy who was recruited when he was, I don't know if he was 10 or 7 years old, I guess that is more or less the age range eh... maybe he was not raped, but they incited him to do things that he did not want to do, so he also... he also suffered, but women were attacked more”.*

*The concept of Forgiveness and forgetfulness “I think it is a process that each one carries out in his own way, but above all you have to love yourself... love yourself... want to forgive, right? Because if you don't forgive and you are not at peace with your demons or with your own things, you won't be able to forget and vice versa, you know? You need to have a balance between those two things (...) it is different for each one? For everyone it is different, because to a great extent, the people who were indirectly or directly affected, approaching it from a close subject, that is, as if I was the subject of the conflict or my friend was a victim of the conflict or each one, because each one has a different perception of a situation and the experiences also make you generate those differences, don't they? Like... my perception is not going to be the same as that of a friend who lived in a conflict area where she could have seen dead people or where she could have seen that someone close to her was killed, if I am, let's say here in Bogotá and I only know about the conflict, but it does not touch me physically because I am in the city, you know what I mean? Let's say emotionally it can touch me because let's say I have people close to me, but it is completely different”.*

Asking her if she feels she has a Peacebuilding role, she stated: *“No, no, not really, I haven't had the opportunity... a few years ago I met a person who had a foundation... however... it is a foundation with a different cause, right? it was the children of the prostitutes of Santa Fe, in fact I also had the opportunity to live in the Santa Fe neighborhood about 10 years ago, and I saw what they said about the “red or tolerance sector”. I don't know if that is what they call it or what they call it now, but how... how to work with prostitutes and that kind of thing, yes, but not with victims of the armed conflict”.*

*(...)*

*“Well, from my area I would like to contribute, uh, if it were possible, what happens is that those, those organizations or those groups, or those, uh, associations, I don't know how to call them, they are rather closed, you know, it's not like they publish and say: “hello, the photographer who wants to come and do field work”, you know what I mean? It's not like one has knowledge of those, of those groups that exist, or of those foundations, of course if you look on the internet, you can uh... there are organizations and foundations that are dedicated to that, but let's say that they don't have like a... like a clear communication about their role”.*

*(...)*

*“The only, the only way I can perceive me is as an outsider, you know? because since I didn't live it directly, let's say I don't feel it as mine, as my own, but let's say that maybe my only contribution I could have made was, I don't know, to offer my friendship, for example, to my friend... or... or to have voted for the peace agreement, but not indifferent, but as an outsider, you know? how I am present there, but I am not doing much to improve it, to do something for the cause, you know?”.*

Dreams and future: “(...) well, I'm currently in a, in a space in the university, because we are learning journalistic photography, eh, and the truth is I feel a certain affinity towards that, I really like it, you know? How to capture that feeling, like this “paisa” photographer Jesus Abad Colorado like... feeling that passion for social work, for collective work, for work, that is, that can generate some kind of change, I would like to, uh, work, yes, work to improve a little the perception of the conflict and the victims and so on, I would find it very interesting to do a project about that. However, I am more a specialist in fashion photography and other types of things that go completely against that, you know? I would like to participate in some project like that, uh, I would like to leave the country, mmm... it is a bit complex in Colombia they do not appreciate art very much if you do not have an important family name.”

(...)

I would like to make a retrospective, you know? like a before and after the conflict, like let's say a person, of course, for that you have to do a field study and do interviews, you soak a little more of the subject, however, I think it would be nice. Like getting in to a place that was a victimized by the conflict, a place where there are people and how to capture that, that person and then sit down to talk and maybe get a laugh out of them, like making that comparison of... we all have that human part inside, you know? I think that would be interesting, I don't see myself as a photographer of... journalism or reportage, no, that's not my passion, however, I am taking a certain love for that, you know?”

Final Reflection: “Well, I don't know, this question is a little difficult, but I think that if I had not met DANNY, I wouldn't know firsthand, well, the conflict, right? I mean,

*because you don't see the news every day, but you normalize the news so much that in the end you don't even care about it, but having a person so close to you that grew up with you, that helped you in the school fundraising, you know? And that believes in a cause makes you a little, a little more empathetic towards that same cause, you know? because she teaches you and you know her, you no longer don't know her, so I think that yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, I am more empathetic for having met her and yes, yes I changed because of that, if I hadn't met her I would surely be indifferent, I think... more indifferent”.*

In KIRA`s case it is important to indicate that, like DANNY, she grew up in an extended family environment, which also shows empathy towards others. Her childhood and adolescence did not took place in a city of violence from the internal conflict. This allowed her to share the streets of his city with peers his age and live without fear, which generated bonds with his contemporaries, which is evidenced in her adulthood of how she relate to others remarking the bond between identity and empathy.

Although she does not have memories of the internal conflict, she does bring up different problems in Colombia such as violence, poverty and addictions. For this reason, she is not indifferent to other people's problems and can develop empathy towards victims and a broad relationship in the concepts of victims and perpetrators.

As she herself indicates, she identifies herself in the conflict as an “outsider” since she is not a direct victim of the internal armed conflict. Having known DANNY since school and continuing to be his friend made her a different person at it is quote. This friendship allows her to have more conciliatory concepts of peacebuilding, although it does not have

an exaggerated clarity of the concepts of conflict, she does not show herself as an antagonistic or polarized statements.

Finally, although she does not work or actively participate in peace-building projects, she is interested in wanting to learn more about what happened and even from her craft and art to be able to contribute in the future to the historical memory and reparation of the victims of the armed conflict in Colombia.

**ALLY** was born in Bogotá, she identifies as a heterosexual woman, married with a foreign husband and one child. She is 37 years old and work as a lawyer in one of the best Law Firms in Bogotá and identifies herself as not having any relationship with the Colombian Internal Conflict.

She grew up during her childhood in Cali (Valle del Cauca) and Brasil. Santiago de Cali is located in the southwestern part of Valle del Cauca, bordering Yumbo and La Cumbre, Palmira and Candelaria, Buenaventura and Dagua, and Jamundí. It covers 560.3 km<sup>2</sup>. The average temperature is 24.8 °C. Santiago de Cali is located at the confluence of two life zones (Tropical Dry Forest and Subtropical Dry Forest), presence of a National Natural Park and seven rivers that make up the most stable water resources. This allows for a high variety of ecosystems and therefore a diversity of biological species, fauna and wild flora with genetic potential of extraordinary value for humanity. (Alcaldía de Santiago de Cali, 2010).

Cali is the main recipient of the population affected by the armed conflict, mostly from Colombia's Pacific region. The city is home to more than 146,000 registered victims and close to 1,500 demobilized members of illegal armed groups who have been

reintegrated into society (...) between January and October 2023, the Regional Center for Attention to Victims (CRAV) attended to 6,405 people affected by acts of violence, who were forced to leave their territories and upon arriving in Cali declared themselves victims of the armed conflict (Alcaldía de Santiago de Cali, 2023).

ALLY remember Cali as a place where *“There was a lot of money in the 1990s (...) Mafiosi, well, what happened is that we were not in our adolescence, we were little... so we were not yet... luckily we didn't have to live through that because my mother, for example, my mother had friends whose daughters were 14, 15 years old and if a mafiosi noticed them, well... it was very hard, they had a very bad time”*.

Her family nucleus was *“My mom and my sister, well my dad and my sister, well my parents are divorced”* (...) *“Love, a lot of respect, not between my parents, but we did with my parents, that is, in an individual way (laughs). And then with my sister, the relationship between two sisters, well, they fight, but they still adored each other”*.

By that time her family income came from her father that is an Engineer and the owner of two companies. Her mother is an economist and she worked as a public servant.

She do not remember she had a lot of hobbies or being passionate about some activity or sport *“Not really only the activities that the parents put you through”*.

Eventhought she said she identifies as none her relationship with the Colombia Internal Conflict she remembered of this time *“We were eating chicken with my mom and a guy came to kill the guy at the next table and then my mom put us under the... that event for example I have it well marked. We were eating roast chicken... at the “Brasa Roja”... and eh... it was Cali, it was the 90's, there were a lot of mafiosi... then probably one of those mafiosi was sitting around and a hitman came to kill him and shot him in*

*front of everyone but... ugly, Cali was very hot at that time, wasn't it? Then there were car bombs and all that, now I don't remember car bombs and so on, I remember explosions, I remember once they chased my mom all over Cali because I was in the car with her... But in the end, in the end, I don't know if the guy gave up, or if my mom managed to escape, I don't know what happened... but it happened because my mom got in his way, because life wasn't worth anything, for those "dog-washing" mafiosi... life wasn't worth anything. Still, but you could see it, it was like more, you could see it more in the city... you could see it more. Then we were eating chicken and the guy came to kill the guy at the next table, almost, well, a shootout broke out because the other guy also had an escort so a shootout broke out, I remember that my mom put us under some stairs and we pulled her to get in with us and she couldn't fit... I have that marked, I remember it a lot, I don't like going to "Brasa Roja".*

*Her adolescence was in Bogotá. She remembered "El Club El Nogal" bombing... El Nogal bomb I remember! (...) because I lived nearby and because I was taking a course at the Red Cross and I finished 8 days earlier, if I hadn't been there, it would have been a lot of work, I would have had to take shifts (...) I would have had to go later because all the Red Cross members were called to, to be, to help the people who were there".*

*(...)*

*"I do not remember a lot precisely because of that, because one does not necessarily have much contact with other types of... populations due to the privileged conditions in which one grew up, due to the privileged conditions in which one grew up".*

Now in her adulthood she lives in Bogotá in a very exclusive neighborhood “El Country”. About the Colombian Internal Conflict she emphasize ““(…) undoubtedly we have not overcome it, undoubtedly the signing of the Peace Agreement did not overcome the conflict in this country, it did not bring peace to this country, we are still dealing with the conflict and we are going to deal with it for many more years, especially at this moment”.

Also criticized the Peace Agreement “(…) it didn't work (...) because they continue to confront each other, because people continue to... people say that they follow certain... parameters given by the agreement and in the end the only thing they know how to do is to commit crimes... I am generalizing, obviously there are people who do not, there are people who genuinely repent, there are people who lay down their arms, there are people who straighten up their lives, but there are many who do not, there are many who continue and who returned to their... to what they know how to do and they keep on doing it and once again we are seeing... and we keep on seeing how they keep on killing each other, but apparently it doesn't matter, how did the Minister say? That that's what the soldiers are for?”.

Asked for the difference between victims and victimizers, “Well, we are all victims of the armed conflict in some way, but obviously there are direct victims of the conflict, people who have had to leave their families, people who have had to leave their land, who have lost their families, they are direct victims of the conflict and people who have had to participate directly in the conflict not by their own will but because they have been forced to do so by the situations in which they live”.

(...)

*“In some way I am a victim, we are all victims of the conflict, yes, but certainly not in a direct way. Because in the end we have all been affected by some consequence related to the conflict because of the situation of the country, jum? We have all been questioned just because we are Colombians, we have all been looked at as being related to drugs, or are related to the guerrilla, or are related to the FARC, or don't say anything because it is the Colombian way of life, yes? We have all been pigeonholed in certain parameters because of the conflict or we have been able to access or not to certain things because of how we are from Colombia, now that I say that I feel I am a victim who requires reparations and so on, well, no doubt not, I am not a direct victim of the conflict!”*

*Any person who has been pigeonholed into taking up arms and who has tried to resolve conflicts through arms, has had a direct participation in the conflict. People who have been in high positions and have let this happen under their noses without doing absolutely nothing and have accepted money and so on from drug trafficking and have participated in all this, without a doubt they are direct actors in the conflict”.*

*(...)*

*It's one thing if you have been taken by the system, or how you live or how you grew up and because of certain circumstances that surrounded your life and especially your childhood, you had to get involved in the conflict, but that does not mean that you were a victim of the conflict and leave it at that, no! Because all that got into your being, you participated, you did the same, yes? all that is part of you, so there must be a consequence and it cannot be simply that you are the victim.*

*I mean it is part of who, not necessarily who you are, but who you were for a large part of your life, jum? So in the end it will determine, it can determine, unless you have*

*certain... jummmmm I don't know if one is capable of correcting after so much time the conception of a person who has for example the value of life jum? So, can one say that the child who took the guns and grew up and at 15 years old had killed 200 people is the same victim as the one who had his whole family killed and that's it? No! I don't think he is the same victim! I think they are both victims of the conflict, yes, but there are more victims than others, yes? And I don't think that to that boy, to that bad guy who has killed 200 people you have to say I understand that you were a victim of the conflict because you grew up and that's it, so now take this pencil and go on with your life... no, I think things are not like that!"*

*(...)*

*"In I know an ex-combatant? NO! Blessed Virgin! But maybe yes, and you don't even know, do you? No, but of course not!!!! Ex-combatant? (long pause) (laughter) Why would I have a fucking ex-combatant? No! That maybe if you know people directly affected by the conflict yes".*

*Women in war: "(...) in any part of the world, women, just because they are women, is that... it's the problem of the body, isn't it? In addition to everything else, women have always been... that is, they have always had an additional issue and that is that they are raped, abused, humiliated, yes? Then, in addition to any harassment that a person may go through because of the conflict, because of the body, then being a woman who gets fucked, she has a way of increasing the probability of being a victim, yes!"*

*Forgiveness and forgetfulness: "No, I don't think it's possible, I don't think people forget, they forget at the time (...) If I had been a direct victim of the conflict, without a doubt I believe that one cannot forget just like that, no, I don't think so, I don't think so,*

*because why did I lose everything and then we signed a paper and everything and then he starts his life normally? No! It is that acts have to have consequences. And it can't be like "oh, I'm sorry" and I go on with my life, I go on with my life but two months later I'm going to start again a... I don't know what kind of criminal gang and I'm going to go on doing the same thing I know how to do".*

Eventhough she has a critical view of the Pace Agreement, she understand the Peace building role in head of all society. *"I work as a mother every day in a peace building space with a two year old child (laughs) no, seriously! It is serious because for example, you see, I was educated with "rejo"... they gave you... well they hit you, they gave you your "pela" and so on and that is no longer used, now we are raising under the concept of talking, right? Of being more respectful and it is a challenge because having been raised under that other regime, now I cannot explain to my son that he should not use violence using violence, so changing the chip we can create an impact on future generations. Now this does not mean that we do not set limits for children, which is also coming, because then the child arrives and does what he wants because I cannot hit him. It is one thing not to hit them and another thing not to set limits, and that will also have other consequences in the future, which will be someone else's problem. But if it is a space for peace building, of course it is, because parenting is no longer based on violence, or at least not in all homes. I think we can all help the next generations to have different concepts, but I think this generation is already screwed, ours has nothing left... there's nothing left to do!"*

(...)

*“I do not know, to my knowledge, any victim of the conflict, a former combatant, or any productive projects (...) I have never buy in productive projects, not because I don't believe in it as a project, not because... I mean, I don't think that a project must have more merit because we are talking about ex-combatants than because it is from mothers who are heads of families, yes... I mean, that is a nice project and that's it, but whether they are laying down their arms is another thing. Not because it was done by a former combatant. There are projects of... for example, when we are talking about projects for mothers who are heads of households, ..... Of... foreigners who are here in a difficult situation and form good projects, eh... peasants and others, but the fact of being an ex-combatant seems to me to be... (long silence) well, it is what they should have done from the beginning, no?”.*

*(...)*

*“I think it is very good that people want to rearrange their lives and that people want to dedicate themselves to legitimate things, I think it is very good, yes? really, really very good? but I think that there are people who are surrounded by blood, if you understand me? They are surrounded by hate and they are also people who for a long time, well, there are levels, aren't there? One thing is the person who was with a gun in the jungle because he got it, yes? and the other one is the one at the top, who had an easy life with easy money, yes? And now it is his turn... now he is reincorporating into society, he will certainly not receive even a third of what he is used to receive, so it is not easy to reincorporate.*

*I do not see it so easy for that reason, because he knows how to do something else, he has practice in something else that also gave him, represented a better income,*

*jum? That is why I am talking about a higher level, not about the soldier, because in the end it was what he had to do, in the end it was what he had to do (...) had to pick up a weapon and go out to confront, well, well, it was done and now he can change his life and put it on the right track, jum? But obviously, any armed person, not because he is a reintegrated person or not, but any person, to live next to a person who is armed or who was armed, who had a bloodbath around him, well ugly!”.*

*Her dreams and future are “(...) to retire quickly, but I don't think it will happen, I don't think we will make it because there are certain governments that will prevent us from retiring (laughs). To finish these four years undefeated, for example, that's what I have, I have that dream (laughter) and if not, I will cry, very badly, very badly!”.*

*Final reflection: “Let's see, that probably has to do with what one was and so on, but I cannot say that then all the people who had a childhood like mine think the same as me, you have to see, now a lot of trade unionists grew up divinely, jum? But, how many private university students were there marching and all that stuff, well... things that one has to see... What happens is that I think that as an adult, one reevaluates other things, the thing is that the student... or rather the youth is very complicated... jum... there are very utopian things.... And they are, they are fine, it's nice, yes and obviously... and it's not about empathy and it's not about saying that nobody deserves everybody should be in prison and that they should kill them all and so on, no, it's not that! It is... It is the conceptions, it is what I was telling you just now about Francia Marquez, so because she is black, because she is a woman, it is her turn to vote for her? What does it have to do? ..... What does it have to do? Does that make her a good ruler? No, in my opinion it has nothing to do with it, jum? When the elections were held, a friend that lives in Prague said*

*to me "are you going to vote for Francia"? And I said "Of course not!" Then he said "I think it's wrong that you as a woman don't vote for Francia" so I said "You know what I think is wrong? That you as a man tell me how I should think as a woman" WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH IT! What has one thing to do with the other, I believe that the fact of being a woman does not make one either good or bad in certain positions, that has nothing to do with it!*

*Of course there are utopian things, there are idealistic things, there are things that... that if... and obviously if one is in certain environments then one is perhaps more inclined to certain positions... jum? Yes, why not? And it certainly has to do with the, maybe it has to do with the contexts, maybe it has to do with the conditions of the people you surround yourself with, yes! But I don't think it is the only parameter that determines a person's thinking, notice that there are many people who, like the one who rebelled from the family, the one who thought differently jum? And it happens a lot... maybe I don't know".*

From the ALLY's interview it can be concluded how she grew from her protective surroundings in privilege. In a family with economic sufficiency, she lived abroad, studied in private schools and even makes reference to different friends in his adulthood who reside in Europe.

She doesn't have great memories of her passions or activities growing up beyond going to school and the extracurricular activities her parents enrolled her in. Although he grew up in Cali, a city with a large number of victims, he has memories of violence but with respect to drug trafficking and organized crime.

She does not know anyone who had a direct relationship with the conflict, she even expresses fear of actually meeting someone as an ex-combatant because she is completely away from anyone involved in violence. This situation explains her concepts from an antagonistic and polarized place. She shows its strong rejection of the peace agreement, the reincorporation and the possibility of a change of life for those who belonged to an armed group, since in their opinion they will continue to commit crimes.

Despite her strong positions, she shows empathy for the living conditions of others and in recognition of the great privilege he has and the small Colombian population that has his capabilities. She claims to contribute to projects but not those who committed violence since there are also other populations who did not resort to violence and should be the ones who receive support for their lives.

Although as an adult she opposes the recognized concepts of peace, she has the ability to redefine and expand them, especially in the face of peacebuilding and the collective duty that exists to build peace for every Colombian.

## **6. Conclusions**

In this academic thesis it can be understood how the main concepts from the framework can be applied in practical research. From the interviews it is shown how memory and identity have a dialectical relationship, because although memory, among other factors, is a constitutive element of identity.

It can be also concluded that even though identity has large studies in the psychological field it can also be studied from different disciplines to understand different social and human relations. Regarding the construction of identity by children and

adolescents, it is shown how its construction is complex. Also from the interviews it can be understood the lack of studies of identity besides trauma experiences, as it was exposed from the interviews the main facts from these stages of life are the ones that generated them a great suffering, while happy memories were just brought up as good moments without a lot of detail in their narratives.

It is also reaffirmed the importance that psychohistory states in identity construction in relation of the subjects and supportive social environments that recognizes the individual's capacities, or when there is no family environment that allows the construction of an idea of selfhood.

In this research it was also challenging to step aside from the major academic writing trying to decenter the inquiry only around the direct or indirect victims who have been exposed to the armed conflict, and also approach subjects that had not a direct relation with it to understand their point of view.

It has been also exposed in this work how just the implementation of law and public policies are not the unique means to achieve the victim's protection affected by the armed conflict. There are needed other tools as that can mobilize the capacity of the individuals to be relational agents with the potential to transform themselves, their families, their schools and their communities.

Another conclusion is how empathy and identity construction have a close relation, both are human processes that starts near in life and that have deep pillars in the experiences that a person has in their childhood and adolescence stages. Empathy understood as an emotional response that comes from understanding the state or situation of another person, similar to what that person is feeling (Eisenberg, 2002) is an

affirmation of the close relation with identity and the importance it has in ourselves and adults perceptions.

Regarding the methodology that was used in the interviews, it was also very important for this thesis to achieve the recollection of personal information to create an academic beyond the theoretical framework in a respectful way for the interviewees. From this premise it can be stated that reminiscence is a method that can be used not only by psychologists and can be used as other qualitative techniques as life review or biography to the personal recovery of experienced episodes.

In this academic thesis, the importance of childhood and adolescence in the processes of identity construction was exposed. As evidenced in the interviews conducted, identity is part of the memory of the subjects, while memory is a fundamental part to understand the conflict and the construction of peace. In this sense, understanding the process of identity construction of people immersed in a conflict is fundamental to understand the reception of the concepts in reconciliation processes.

In the interviews, it became evident that in childhood there is a process of construction of individual identity, especially in the family environment. The three interviewees expressed happy memories as well as traumatic ones related essentially to the family, as in the case of separation from their biological parents.

However, during adolescence, a more complex process of identity construction was exposed, in which individual identity is redefined. This complexity also involves the integration of an identity construction through collective memory memories and greater interaction with other environments such as friends, community, and society. This more complex interaction of adolescence leads in the three interviews to talk about the other

and empathy as the understanding that there are others who are different from me and generates this construction of identity in relation or opposition to the other.

In the adulthood stage, despite the evident differences of the three interviewees, they have similarities in their concepts, especially in the gender approach and the role of women in war and life in general, their belonging to a specific social group in a country full of social gaps and opportunities, as well as the fact that we are still in an armed conflict in Colombia.

However, it was also highlighted the conceptual differences that exist among the three interviewees regarding the conflict, peace agreements, victims and perpetrators, forgiveness and forgetting, and the roles they play in their professions and personal lives as peace builders.

It should be noted that the interviewee who was closest to the conflict as an adult not only understands the dynamics of the conflict, the actors, the importance of the peace accords and the essential concepts of the conflict. She also goes beyond that, directly criticizing the application of the Agreement, the polarization of actors to a collective responsibility of all Colombians, the concept of forgiveness of forgetting to an evolution of having the right not to forgive and even the idea of building useful tools for reconciliation with ex-combatants, being herself a victim of the armed conflict.

Secondly, the interviewee, who has a close friend who is a direct victim of the conflict, although she defined herself as a stranger to the conflict, has some basic concepts of the conflict, although she says she is not knowledgeable, but she highlights the intention to work as a peace builder and different empathetic concepts towards the perpetrators and the importance of reconciliation.

Finally, the interviewee who indicated that she had no relationship with the conflict has strong antagonistic positions against the peace agreement, the impossibility of forgiving and forgetting, the reintegrated persons, the possibility of reconciliation or the possibility of contributing to peace building from her work or her personal life beyond her private life or the people she care about.

In this sense, the question posed in this academic thesis can be answered in the way that there is a direct relationship between the construction of identity in childhood and adolescence, especially by the degree of participation or closeness they had in the armed conflict, with the concepts, perception and role they play in their adult life as peacebuilders.

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