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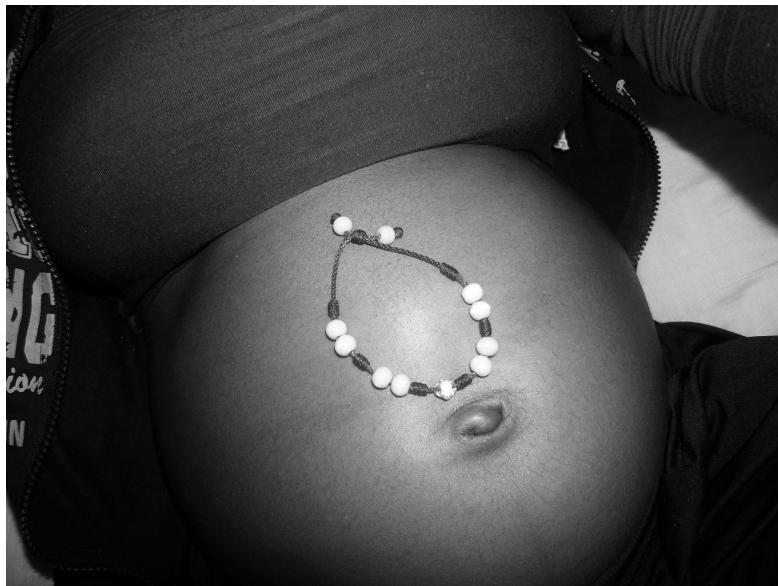
Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies

Displaced Affects:
Emotional Embodied Experiences of Displaced Women in Colombia

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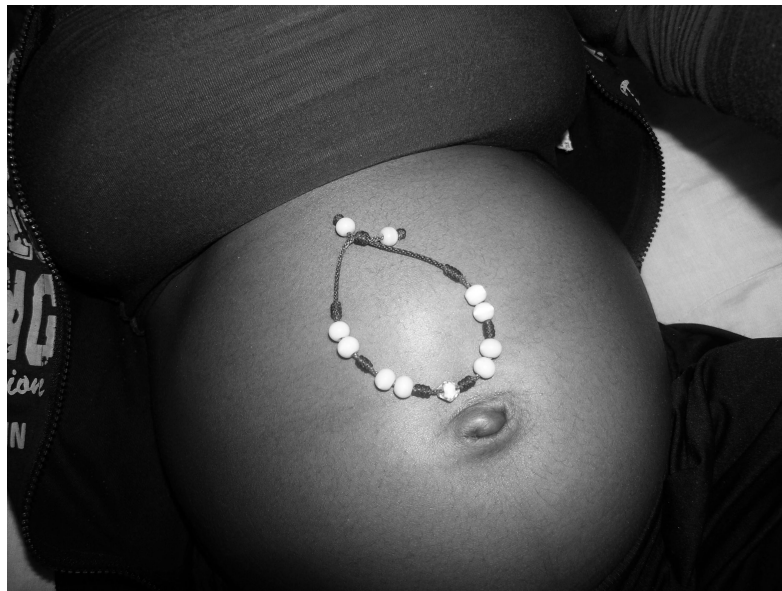Carmen Gregorio Gil
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ABSTRACT

This research aims to contribute to Colombia's historical memory regarding the knowledges, experiences, and embodied subjectivities of displaced women, as active members of a society determined by more than fifty years of lasting conflict. Drawing on what has been called the 'affective turn', this work explores emotion as a pivotal bridge between the individual and the social, opening new possibilities for investigating and conceptualizing the subject of feminism as embodied, located and relational. Working with oral and visual narratives of displaced women, this research explores *emotional-embodied-experiences* of war, violence, and forced displacement, relevant in the constitution of oppressed/subversive subjectivities. Analyzing different spaces women have inhabited, objects they have interacted with, and social relationships they have established, during their forced mobility, this research aims to trace different *actors* within emotion's sociality, recognizing that emotions of gendered violence are not processes inside victim's minds and bodies, but effects and affects of social dynamics. This analysis aims to contribute to current debates regarding Colombian society's accountability for maintaining and perpetuating social injustices in displaced women lives. By locating participant's narratives at the core of knowledge theorization, this research elucidates new ways of entangle theoretical approaches in everyday life dynamics, widening the influence of the affective turn over cultural and social sciences approaches.

RESUMEN

La presente investigación busca contribuir a la memoria histórica Colombiana respecto a los conocimientos, experiencias, y subjetividades encarnadas de las mujeres desplazadas como miembros activos de una sociedad caracterizada por más de cincuenta años de conflicto armado. Inspirado en lo que se conoce como el 'giro afectivo' éste trabajo explora las emociones como un puente crucial entre lo individual y lo social, abriendo nuevas posibilidades para investigar y conceptualizar el sujeto del feminismo como encarnado, situado y relacional. Trabajando con narrativas orales y visuales de ocho mujeres jóvenes Colombianas, víctimas del desplazamiento interno, éste trabajo investiga algunas de las *experiencias-emocionales-encarnadas* causadas por la guerra, la violencia, y del desplazamiento, relevantes en la constitución de subjetividades oprimidas/subversivas. Analizando los diferentes espacios que estas mujeres han habitado, los objetos con los que han interactuado, y las relaciones sociales que han establecido, durante el desplazamiento forzado, esta investigacion busca rastrear diferentes actores dentro de la socialización de las emociones, reconociendo que las emociones de la violencia de genero no son procesos dentro de los cuerpos y mentes de las víctimas, sino efectos y afectos de las dinámicas sociales. Este análisis pretende contribuir a debates actuales sobre la responsabilidad de la sociedad Colombiana en el mantenimiento y la prolongación de las injusticias sociales en las vidas de las mujeres desplazadas. Situando las narrativas de las participantes en el centro de la teorización del conocimiento, esta investigación muestra nuevas formas de entrelazar propuestas teóricas con dinámicas del día a día, ampliando la influencia del giro afectivo sobre los estudios culturales y de las ciencias sociales.

THANK YOU / GRACIAS

Para cada mujer que vive su
historia en silencio.
Juntas somos más.

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Photograph 1. Taken by Luisa

‘This is my favorite photograph. I enjoyed taking
it because it was hard and I fought for it.
Like in life, you have to fight
for the things you want’
(Luisa).

INTRODUCTION

"Emotions?
Life. That is what life is about, no?"
(Angy).

"That life is complicated may seem a banal expression
of the obvious, but it is nonetheless a profound theoretical
statement –perhaps the most important
theoretical statement of our time"
(Gordon, 2008: p. 3).

I selected these two quotes to introduce both the relevance and the complexity of what my research is about. Emotions might be the most omnipresent element of humanity. They are everywhere, in everyone, and yet they are extremely difficult to grasp. Even when the power of emotions is based in our senses (what we can feel), they might feel out of touch, out of sight, and out of materiality. This complexity is a legacy of several attempts to perfectly dissect and analyze the human body, the human life, frame it into intelligible pieces in order to fit a schema, the schema of science and its rationality (Jaggar, 1989). Nevertheless, because emotions are embedded in what life is about, these attempts reached a limit in which trying to ignore and evade the power of emotions was a negation of what humanity is about. This limit was also drawn by acknowledging the fact that women were excluded from this intelligible schema, both as subjects of knowledge and subjects to be acknowledged (Lutz, 2001). My feminist research aims to transgress that limit, the limit of rationality, and represents an attempt to grasp the omnipresence of emotions, but one that is, although widely negated, in fact material (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, Ahmed & Stacey, 2001).

That life is complicated is the biggest challenge for anyone interested in analyzing or understanding how individuals live and relate with each other. Avery Gordon argues that social analysts have constantly failed to grasp the density of social relations, but must importantly, 'the power relations that characterize any historically

embedded society' (2008: p. 3). According to Gordon, we need to acknowledge that power relations are never 'as transparently clear as the names we give to them imply', mostly because 'power can be invisible, it can be fantastic, it can be dull and routine' (p.3). My research departs from the argument that emotions are at the base of how power becomes invisible, 'harming you without seeming ever to touch you' (p. 3), and that the omnipresence of emotions is what allows power to move between individuals, across spaces, and beyond temporalities. In this sense, my research argues the need to disclosing the power of emotions, in order to disarticulate the most complex and challenging forms and functions of power relations.

Colombia, my country of origin, is a complex and unique society. Characterized by more than fifty years of ongoing civil war, having three generations born and raised in violence, Colombia is an example of how power, when scantly distributed, can be devastating. This state of war is defined as a low-intensity asymmetric war, between illegal armed groups and military forces of the Colombian government, and instead of having immediate fatalities, it has prolonged consequences corroding every corner of its territory (bodies and spaces). Violence in Colombia is not an exception, but rather part of the politics of everyday life. Our reality is an example of how life is complicated, or rather, *very* complicated. Tracing and revealing the causes and consequences of this conflict has been one of the most challenging tasks of many contemporary social analysts, and although the political and economic basis of the conflict seems clear, it is still unclear how violence is articulated and embedded in everyday life dynamics.

Going beyond traditional analyses of Colombian armed conflict, my research brings light to the corners, to the margins, of how power relations are built and prolonged among human bodies. This analysis is focused on those bodies that are out of sight in a patriarchal and militarized reality, women's bodies (Confortini, 2006), arguing that part of the complexity of understanding war and power dynamics is located in comprehending how social difference (gender, race, and class) is materialized (2006). In addition, my analysis departs from the argument that it is the omnipresence of emotions what powers and fuels these systems of human categorization (Ahmed, 2004; Probyn, 2005; Berlant, 2008, 2011; Sedgwick, 2002; among others). In this sense, my research analyses how emotions are at the base of Colombian armed conflict, and how power comes to life as the lived experience of violence in women's bodies.

This argument is based on a phenomenological understanding of how subjects are embodied trough a lived experience of 'intercorporeality', in which every subject is embodied through relationality (and touch) with other bodies (Merleau-Ponty, 1968), creating the world as we know it (Butler, 1993; Grosz, 1994; Braidotti, 2000). With this approach my research reveals that even when power and violence travel though the invisible omnipresence of emotions, they always leave material traces: the embodiment of vulnerable and precarious bodies (Butler, 1993).

While approximately 220.000[1] persons have died as consequence of Colombian armed conflict, the vast majority of its victims are persons that have been internally forcibly displaced across the country. With 6 million persons, Colombia has the second highest number of internally displaced persons in the world[2], and these bodies represent one of the biggest challenges of the upcoming post-conflict[3] processes and restitutions. While this population is made up of men and women (almost equally), recent studies have revealed specific vulnerabilities for displaced women[4], underlining that forced displacement must be conceived as a gendered phenomenon. My research is a contribution to these studies, but instead of focusing on judicial or economic vulnerabilities, it draws attention to the gendered emotional consequences of violence, war, and forced displacement in Colombia.

Studies coming from schemes of traditional psychology have situated this population at high risk of suffering psychological impairments. Although establishing measures of mental health is a responsibility of political and academic institutions, my research suggests that these approaches are not able to grasp the complexity of the emotional. Following the work of several scholars[5] concerned with deconstruction of the value and meaning of emotions, as site of ontology and epistemology, my research proposes a destabilization of psychologized notions of mental health by comprehending the realm of the emotional both as psychobiological, as psychosocial. In addition, following notions of embodiment, intercorporeality and lived experience, my research

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[1] *National Report of Forced Displacement in Colombia 1985 to 2012.* Unidad para la atención y reparación integral a las víctimas (2013).
[2] UNHCR Annual Global Trends Report: *World at War,* released on June 2014
[3] In 2012, Colombia began a peace process to end the armed conflict between national armed forces and FARC guerrillas. This is the third attempt to reach a peace agreement with this armed group and it is the closest that Colombia's government has even been to ending this armed conflict with a political solution. Negotiations as currently taking place in La Habana, Cuba, and Oslo, Norway.
[4] See Chapter 1.
[5] See Chapter 1.

suggests that emotions are not only part of the social, but instead, that it is through the relationality of emotions that our own body gets materialized: 'it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces and boundaries are made: the I and the 'we' are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 10).

My research explores the relationality of emotions happening in settings of violence, war and forced displacement, as processes in which women's bodies are materialized. Additionally, as I mentioned before, this embodiment is made through power relations that shape some bodies as vulnerable and precarious. Drawing on concepts of psychoanalysis and Marxism, this process is theorized in the work of Sara Ahmed as 'affective economies', in which emotions accumulate over time, 'as a form of affective value', erasing processes of production or the 'making' of emotions. (2004: p.11). In this sense, emotions relationality has the power of shaping bodies through the circulation of objects of affect (persons, spaces, objects, words), leaving no traces of its historical production, but shaping vulnerable material bodies. This is the process by which the emotional acquires the status of omnipresent, fueling the invisibility of power relation, and recreating the theoretical argument that life is complicated.

Following these arguments, I analyze how power relations within violence and forced displacement are shaping women's bodies as sites of vulnerability. This focus has the objective of disclosing the particular violence that is exerted over women's bodies, but also attempts to explore how war and violence dynamics manage to get under the skin, traveling in women's bodies across geographical territories, and time temporalities. In this sense, my research explores different forms of violence consequences, as processes in constant reshaping, with the purpose of having a more detailed (complex) sense of which must be the extent of any reparative action or restitution plan in post-conflict processes. As Gordon argues, 'we need to know where we live in order to live somewhere else. We need to imagine living somewhere else before we can live there' (2008: p. 5).

Using a feminist epistemology in which women's experiences are placed at the core of knowledge building (Harding, 1991) I developed an empirical methodology to explore and co-create situated knowledges (Haraway, 1988) of forced displacement in Colombia. This required travelling back to Bogotá (my hometown, and one of the cities with the highest number of displaced persons) to run fieldwork for one month. In

cooperation with ACDI-VOCA and Gente Estratégica, two non-profit organizations working with the displaced population, I had the opportunity to meet Angy, Luisa, Leidy, Paola, Yeny, Rosita, Nasly, and Yorlenis, this research's situated knowledges of forced displacement. These eight women (between 18 and 29 years-old) arrived to Bogotá some years ago moving away from violence in the countryside. With the objective of collecting oral and visual narratives, our collaborative project was comprised of two different methods: in-depth interviews/life stories and participatory photography/photo elicitation.

Life stories as a method opened a space for my participants to express their feelings in the form of oral narratives (Anderson & Jack 1991; Ardener, 1975), creating a more interactive situation, erasing the traditional hierarchical relationship of interviewer and interviewee (Corradi, 1991; Ghorashi, 2008). In addition, acknowledging that emotional and traumatic experiences sometimes exceed the realm of the discursive, my research argues that photographs have an affective power that allows the expression of meanings and messages beyond words (Barthes, 1981; Brown & Phu, 2014). Based on Roland Barthes affective comprehension of photographs, my methodology uses photo elicitation and participatory photography methods to enable alternative and non-traditional narratives of violence and forced displacement (Wang & Burris, 1997).

I travelled back to Bogotá to feel life stories (Burns, 2006) of displacement, but I was confronted with the second dimension of the theoretical statement that life is complicated: 'even those who live in the most dire circumstances posses a complex and oftentimes contradictory humanity and subjectivity that is never adequately glimpsed by viewing them as victims or, on the other hand, as superhuman agents' (Gordon, 2008: p. 4). This is what Gordon names as 'complex personhood', and represents the accountability of social analysts in acknowledging that 'even those called 'Other' are never that' (p.4). This acknowledgement led time to discover that women's bodies are shaped by violence and displacement consequences as sites of vulnerability, but also that women are constantly, and actively, re-shaping their bodies as sites of resistance in every reaction and displacement they make while moving away violence. In this sense, my research not only theorizes about how violence gets under the skin, but also about how women resist those materializations.

As a result my analysis is structured by three emotional-embodied-experiences lived by displaced women: *isolation*, *silence*, and *displacement*, which have emerged in war, violence and displacement settings. These three experiences have been fueled by fear, and have evolved in different shapes, and in different emotions. My analysis reveals different objects of affect that allow emotions and power to move while my participants are in constant displacement, and how emotional re-significations are produced as an active reaction of women to resist violence.

In the following you will move through fours different chapters. The first chapter gives a situated background regarding forced displacement in Colombia, and exalts why it should be addressed as an emotional gendered issue. The second chapter gives the theoretical basis informing the analysis and methodology of my research. Chapter 3 will displace you back to Bogotá, where the fieldwork of this research took place, in order to understand details of the emotional encounters that allowed this collaborative project to happen. And finally, Chapter 4 is dedicated to the analysis of the emotional-embodied-experiences of isolation, silence and displacement. This chapter illustrates how the relationality of emotions is at the base of discourses, practices and consequences of war, violence and displacement experiences in Colombia. The findings presented in this chapter reveal how women's bodies and subjectivities are shaped as sites of vulnerability and oppression, while at the same time, explores how women elaborate re-appropriations and re-significations of these embodiments in order to resist violence and its material consequences.

CHAPTER 1

REVEALING THE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA

The main purpose of this chapter is to offer a situated understanding of the social and theoretical relevance of studying displaced women's emotions as meaning-making processes within violence scenarios. The first section describes the socio-political background of internal displacement, one of the most prominent forms of violence of Colombia's armed conflict. This section provides evidence of specific risks and vulnerabilities that confirm female victims of forced displacement as the main target of various forms of violence and social discrimination. The second section focuses on psychological consequences of violence and war, and elucidates how the psychobiological approach to human emotions has overpowered the psychosocial realm of the emotional within Colombian studies of forced displacement. The third section establishes the theoretical framework informing this research. Drawing on what is known as 'the affective turn' this section engages with feminist critiques and contributions in the theorization of human emotions as political, economic, social and cultural processes. The fourth section makes an argument about theoretical and political gains of studying Colombian forced displacement from women's everyday emotional experiences Establishing relations between power/emotions, personal/political and warfare/everyday violence, this section presents the main contributions that this research attempts to make to forced displacement studies.

Internal Forced Displacement in Colombia: *a gendered issue*

This research addresses Colombian forced displacement as a form of gender violence requiring extensive investments in terms of economic, social, political and cultural *reparations*. This section provides evidence of the risks and emotional vulnerabilities that forced displacement female victims hold as being the principal target of different

forms of violence and social discrimination in Colombia. From a feminist perspective my research argues the necessity of revealing different forms of violence affecting women's wellbeing, but it also suggests the incorporation of gender as an analysis category within war studies (Confortini, 2006). According to Catia Confortini, a feminist analysis of gender violence within war scenarios should not only inform of the types of violence exerted against women, but it must also explore how war dynamics are embedded within power relations recreated by gender structures (2006). Following this discussion, I argue for the relevance of disclosing gendered power relations that are constitutive of war and violence scenarios in Colombia, and highlight the necessity of critical and argumentative approaches of research in order to effectively clarify the causes, consequences, and responsible actors within this situation.

After more than fifty years Colombian society continues to face one of the longest running armed conflicts in the world. After Israeli-Palestinian and India-Pakistan conflicts, Colombia holds the third place as the longest internal civil war in the Western hemisphere. Between 1958 and 2012 this low-intensity asymmetric war caused more than 6 million victims of violence, constituting the bloodiest conflict in Latin America. Historically rooted in violent confrontations among political parties and guerrilla groups, this conflict's evolution is interlinked with drug trafficking and international warfare laws. The multiplicity of actors in the struggle for power (left wing guerrillas FARC and ELN, paramilitary groups of extreme right wing, and military forces of the Colombian government) has dispersed local and international efforts directed to find sustainable solutions, prolonging the duration and devastating consequences of this conflict. As a result, Colombia has around three generations born and raised in a society with an ongoing state of conflict, which has impacted millions of lives and has reinforced social injustices and disparities among population in terms of wealth, education, health, and quality of life in general.

Although consequences of this conflict have alarmed local and international institutions, it was not until recent years that the Colombian government explicitly started investing resources and actions into measuring its real impact. Trying to establish a reliable measure of this conflict's consequences in terms of human capital, recent reports have overwhelmingly reveal that more than 80% of the victims of this conflict have been civilians. According to the report *Basta Ya Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad* (2013) (*Stop Now Colombia: memories of war and dignity*) carried

out by the National Center for Historical Memory in Colombia, between 1958 and 2012 approximately 220.000 persons died, of which 177.307 were civilians and 40.787 combatants from different sides. Along with these numbers Colombian conflict has resulted in around 25.000 disappearances, 30.000 kidnappings, 1.754 victims of sexual violence, 6.421 children enrolled in guerrillas groups, 10.189 victims of anti-personnel mines, and approximately 6 million internally displaced persons. The preponderance of civilians in this victim count is one of the most alarming characteristics of this ongoing war and represents the greatest challenge for Colombia's current transitional justice and victim's reparation processes (2013).

Internal displacement, in particular, represents the type of violence with more victims across the country. According to UNHCR's (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) annual Global Trends Report: World at War, released on June 2014, 59.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. This represents the worst humanitarian mass displacement ever recorded and constitutes the "nation of the displaced", as this population has been named by the UN. From the total number, 38.2 million individuals have been displaced inside their own territory. By the end of 2014 Syrian Arab Republic held the highest number worldwide of internally displaced persons (IDPs) with 7.6 million individuals. With 6 million IDPs, Colombia has the second highest number of displaced persons in the world.

Colombian forced displacement must be analyzed within the context of a constant power struggle for political, economic and territorial control. Although forced displacement is a phenomenon with different phases and historical changes, its constant and main cause is the illegal appropriation of lands with commercial or political interests (growth of illegal drug crops, exploitation of natural resources, territory alliances, large-scale development projects). As a result, since the 1970s vulnerable peasants, indigenous, and afro-Colombian populations have lost their land and property due to guerrillas, paramilitary and military actions, causing geography and land ownership changes which aggravate historical inequalities of land distribution (1.4% of the landowners own 65% of the total agricultural land)[6].

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[6] Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, October 2008.

As a consequence, between 1985 and 2012 around 10% of Colombia's population was declared displaced[7]. The majority of IDPs come from five departments across the country (Antioquia, Bolivar, Magdalena, Choco and Nariño) representing 45% of the total of cases. Of all of IDPs 14% auto-identify themselves within an ethnic group, and afro-Colombians represent 94% of this group. In terms of age characteristics around 39% of the victims were under 15-years-old at the time of the displacement, which represents a current preponderance of victims between 10-19 years old. This augmented presence of adolescents represents a vast challenge for Colombia's situation in terms of education, teenage pregnancy, drugs, and crime prevention[8]. In terms of gender categories[9] the population of IDPs constitutes almost the same amount of men and women (100 women for every 96 men), but differs widely across age ranges. While most of the male population is concentrated around 'dependent ages' (less than 15-years-old and more than 60-years-old), there is a high concentration of female population in 'economic active ages'.

Descriptive statistics of this phenomenon in Bogotá, the geographic location in which this research took place, replicate the national panorama in all its variables. Located in the center of the country Bogotá is the capital of Colombia with approximately 7,794, 463 inhabitants. Although several cities throughout the country have received large amounts of IDP's, Bogotá has been one of the principal recipients of this population. Between 1985- 2002 a total of 480.000 persons (23% of IDPs) arrived to the capital looking for governmental assistance[10]. The composition of the IDPs population in Bogotá also displays particular vulnerabilities for women and children. Approximately 80% of this population is between the ages of 0-27 years old, and while the proportion between men and women is almost equal, 48% of IDW are heads of families. According to local reports[11] only 26.8% of the IPDs population is affiliated with the educational system, a situation which raises great concern given that 65% of IPDs in Bogota are children and adolescents. On the other hand these statistics

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[7] *National Report of Forced Displacement in Colombia 1985 to 2012*. Unidad para la atención y reparación integral a las víctimas (2013).
[8] *NRFDC 1985 to 2012* (2013).
[9] This national report makes reference only to male and female gender categories.
[10] *La población desplazada en Bogotá una responsabilidad de todos*. Proyecto Cómo Vamos Bogotá. ACNUR 2003.
[11] ACNUR 2003.

show a highly vulnerable position for women who are responsible for almost 65% of the displaced population living in Bogotá.

While in recent years the capital has experienced some developmental advancement, it is not adequately prepared for receiving and efficiently assisting with the numerous inquires for assistance demanded by thousands of displaced families.[12] At this point it is relevant to highlight additional challenges for public policy makers due to specific characteristics of internal displacement in comparison with other types of human migration. First, internal displacement in Colombia is caused by terror and violence leaving no opportunity for IDPs to make plans regarding economic or alternative choices (Ibañez & Velez, 2008). In this sense, there are no guarantees that these new urban scenarios are going to meet the needs of this population. Second, in contrast with the situation of refugees, IDPs are abruptly dispersed across urban territories without a specific space, center or territory to occupy. Without a place to go and facing precarious material and social conditions, IPD's face higher risks in comparison to other types of human migration. This situation exacerbates forced displacement consequences demanding local authorities to develop emergency plans for social assistance.

The distribution of the IDP population in Colombia show that internally displaced women (IDW) face a significant number of vulnerabilities (Andrade, 2010). After being threatened and/or abused, IDW are forced to leave their material and emotional support, trying to find a safer environment for their families. One of the principal situations that displaced families have to face when arriving to urban centers is a change of gender roles inside the economic sphere. After losing their partners because of disappearances, kidnappings, displacement or guerrillas' forced enrollments (Meertens, 2004), most IDW arrive as heads of families to unknown cities. In other cases, even when IDW arrive with their partners they rapidly become the main source of income for the family due to the characteristics of the job market available to this demographic. In addition, the population of IDW is characterized by low levels of education: 15% are illiterate and 21% can only read and write with difficulty, facing increased limitations when adapting to urban and employment scenarios. Job opportunities for IDW are in most cases low-income informal or instable positions (mostly as housekeepers), which increase the feminization of poverty in Colombia

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[12] ACNUR 2003.

(Ibañez & Moya, 2006). Furthermore, besides being the principal source of income for the household, IDW continue to be the lead caregivers for their families, maintaining past gendered responsibilities within their everyday dynamics. Far from being a source of empowerment, this situation exposes women to different kinds of social inequalities as a result of scarce income (Baud & Meertens, 2004), precarious living conditions (USAID, 2005) and social discrimination (Britto, 2010). Besides holding the social stigma of being categorized as IDW, these women confront racial and sexual discrimination, which perpetuates women's propensity to be the target of gender violence (sexual harassment, sexual abuse, physical and psychological abuse).

Although Colombian armed conflict has exerted incalculable amounts of gender violence among women (Britto, 2010; Granados, 2012; Meertens, 2012; Pinto, 2011), governmental politics have constantly failed to address women's particular situation, giving more relevance to fatalities, most of them male victims, and ignoring different forms of violence affecting women's lives (Britto, 2010). Sexual violence, gender violence, prostitution, human trafficking, sexual harassment, forced abortion, teenage pregnancy, sexual slavery, and female kidnapping are only some of the several forms of violence that millions of Colombian women have faced in complete anonymity and with a total lack of judicial recognition (Montealegre, 2008).

As a result women have come together across the country creating numerous initiatives with the purpose of exposing women's demands and needs as the primary affected population of internal forced displacement. The work of several feminist movements emphasizes the necessity of incorporating a gender perspective in analyses of conflict, in order to give more accurate assertions regarding social, political and legal implications of these forms of violence. Although these initiatives have achieved several political and judicial gains for women enhancing their own empowerment and autonomy (Britto, 2010; Granados, 2012; Miller, 2005; Ruta Pacifica de Las Mujeres, 2013; Pinto, 2011; Sandvik, 2013) there are still great challenges in establishing comprehensive frameworks to properly address the magnitude and consequences of the violence that Colombian IDW have to face every day.

Intangible Consequences of Forced Displacement: beyond psychological scales

Although IDW are in urgent need of economic, health and educational assistance, this research is particularly concerned with specific *intangible consequences* of living as displaced women in Colombia. As Donny Meertens argues, Colombian women could be catalogued as 'triple-victims' within forced displacement: 1) victims of *traumatic events* as witness of violent events (assassination of their partners, or family members, burnt down homes, sexual assault), 2) victims of *material losses* (houses, belongings, crops, animals, businesses) causing a disruption in every aspect of their domestic routine, 3) victims of the *social and emotional alienation* suffered after arriving to unknown urban centers (Escobar & Meertens, 1997). The first and third types of victimization refer to fragmentation of women's identities as individuals, citizens, and political subjects, but also a tear in the social tissue of family and community bonds (1997). Therefore, by intangible consequences I refer to social, political and emotional losses encountered by IDW (as victims of multiple forms of gendered violence) that goes beyond material or economical restitutions. These consequences are immersed in everyday interactions and require entering into the realms of the psychological and the symbolic.

The psychological consequences of war, violence and displacement are one of the major challenges in Colombia's post-conflict stage. As I mentioned before, forced displacement represents a multiple-loss experience and this 'intensity of loss is often compounded by trauma' (Shultz et.al, 2014). The circumstances of forced displacement combine the 'stressors of extreme trauma with devastating loss' elevating the 'likelihood for progression to psychopathology' (p. 3). Perhaps counterintuitively, results of numerous systematic reviews have shown that IDPs who remain within their own country experience worse mental health outcomes than refugees (Porter & Haslam, 2005; Roberts & Browne, 2011). This includes increased risks of suffering depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, bipolar affective disorder (BPD), and generalized anxiety disorder (Andrade, Parra & Torres, 2013).

Between 1985 and 2012 84%[13] of IDPs reported 'death threats/psychological abuse exerted by armed actors' as the leading cause of forced displacement. In constant fight for power, different armed groups employ physical and psychological manipulation to take control over bodies and territories. As a consequence, before arriving to urban settings the majority of IDPs experience long periods of isolation inside their houses, which can dramatically change their lifestyle. These changes represent an accumulation of psychological stress experienced before, during and after forced displacement, and increase the likelihood of IDPs suffering from post-traumatic disorder (PTSD) once they have arrived in urban areas. These dynamics clearly display the emotional and psychological weight of war in Colombia.

Since Colombian forced displacement is concentrated mostly in rural areas, which are most of the times populated with social minorities, the adaptation to urban dynamics is one of the principal stressors affecting IDPs mental health. As a result IDPs of ethnic minorities are forced to change their cohabitation norms, which causes mental health imbalances (2007). According to Serna (2007) the loss of intangible cultural heritage is one of the principal factors of psychosocial instability for IDPs when arriving to urban settings. In particular women coming from ethnic backgrounds (Afro-Colombians or indigenous) experience difficulties finding new social networks, which increases their risks of suffering BPD (Andrade, Agudelo, Ramirez, Romero, 2011). In addition, some IDPs have reported suffering somatizations from several diseases after dealing with depression or stress during their adjustment processes (Sacipa, 2003). These findings suggest the existence of additional psychosocial vulnerabilities faced by IDPs who belong to ethnic minorities of the country upon arrival.

Although these studies have described the presence of psychological disturbances produced by forced displacement, a wider comprehension of how these intangible consequences operate and perpetuate IDW's vulnerabilities inside/outside war settings is still necessary. Quantitative analyses of mental health are mostly focused on positivist methodologies drawing generalized statistics, leaving the specifics of the problem aside (Rustin, 2009). The studies cited above (and many others) are in most cases focused on descriptive methodologies, which are important to establish the magnitude of the problem, but are insufficient in delineating intervention strategies or

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[13] *National Report of Forced Displacement in Colombia 1985 to 2012*. Unidad para la atención y reparación integral a las víctimas (2013).

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more in deep understandings. By focusing only on the psychobiological relevance of emotions, most of these approaches ignore psychosocial processes working within the realm of the emotional (Lutz, 2001). On the other side, these quantitative analyses are focused on establishing direct correlations between psychological disorders and different types of violence of Colombian armed conflict, but do not consider the violent experiences of everyday life. This represents a failure in recognizing specific vulnerabilities of this population in terms of gender, race and class. In particular, gender violence is not addressed (most of the time) as a cause of IDW's psychological impairments, which leads to the masking and perpetuation of women's oppression within Colombian patriarchal society.

In light of these limitations on current approaches to studying the emotional state of women as victims of violence this research suggests that forced displacement must be addressed as a personal, but also as a social issue. The multiple consequences generated by forced displacement on IDW's lives demands a grounded analysis focused on psychological and psychosocial spheres. In addition, if forced displacement is theorized as a social issue it requires the incorporation of various categories of social difference that are constantly shaping the psychosocial sphere. An intersectional analysis of gender, race and class is necessary in order to comprehend the complexities that forced displacement demands. Finally, as a gendered phenomenon, forced displacement in Colombia requires a feminist perspective to stress differentiated and specific consequences of violence in women's bodies and minds within 'the social'.

Towards a New Understanding of Displacement: women's emotions as psychosocial matters

Moving away from traditional or positivist conceptions of human emotions, my research proposes an alternative study of 'affective economies' (Ahmed, 2004) produced by forced displacement in Colombia. This study differs from psychological accounts of the consequences of violence/forced displacement by incorporating a more holistic analysis of emotions. Suggesting that conventional psychological research on emotions 'does not adequately describe the wide range and variety of affective performances, affective scenes and affective events' (Wetherell, 2012: p. 3), this

research argues for a socio-political, economic and cultural comprehension of *the emotional*. This perspective requires deconstructing the 'overly naturalized and rigidly bounded concept of emotion' in order to 'treat emotion as an ideological practice rather than as a thing to be discovered or an essence to be distilled' (Lutz, 1988: p. 4). Arguing that forced displacement is a form of violence powered by emotional practices and discourses based on ideological agendas, my research highlights the relevance of identifying structures of power working through IDW's emotionality.

My research is grounded in feminist and critical theorizations inside of what could be called the *affective turn*. This 'turn' is a renewed interest in social sciences for incorporating the emotional sphere in the study of human relations. It appears to be a transdisciplinary intellectual shift emerging out of the 'textual turn', representing a renewal of interest in "emotions, feelings and affect (and their differences) as objects of scholarly inquiry" (Cvetkovich, 2012: p. 133). Theoretically speaking this turn to affect emerged as a reaction towards some limitations of post-structuralist and linguistic approaches in explaining and comprehending social complexities (Liljestrom & Paasonen, 2010). Though it is possible to trace theoretical influences (Baruch Spinoza, Silvan Tomkins, Gilles Deleuze, Luce Irigaray, Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, among others) across different authors working in 'the affective turn', it is still 'difficult to define as it has come to signify a range of different, and sometimes contradictory, movements and articulations (Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012; p. 115). Nevertheless, beyond establishing closed definition of 'the affective turn', this research is concerned with critically considering "how can we understand the complex implications of the turn to affect in and for feminist theory, and how we might examine its potentialities for theoretical, political and social transformation" (Pedwell & Whitehead 2012; p. 115).

Although most of contemporary literature is displaying the affective turn as a *new* social understanding, several feminist theorists have advocated in the last two decades for sharpening our senses when embracing this paradigm turn (Hemmings 2005; Ahmed, 2008; Cvetkovich, 2012; Khanna, 2012). Ahmed (2008) in particular invites us to be suspicious in our use of the category of the 'new', mostly because while affect theory provides a valuable terrain to question coercive and biased assumptions about social and political life, 'such openings are not framed productively (or accountably) through an elision of the critical and diverse contributions of feminist,

postcolonial and queer analysis' (Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012; p. 118). Therefore as a feminist researcher I find it relevant to emphasize earlier works from different disciplines that contributed to the construction of current critical approaches to emotion studies. Situating the 'affective turn' requires an inclusive analysis of different theoretical approaches and preceding 'turns' in social sciences.

During the last half of the twentieth century different perspectives simultaneously draw their attention to emotion studies with the objective of developing a counter discourse in opposition to biological and pathological theorizations regarding the definitions and functions of human emotions. Conceived as a coercive power structure working over women's lives, the reason/emotion binary opposition built by Western science and philosophy was one of the most relevant deconstructions within the feminist agenda. The work of Alison, M. Jaggar in *Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology* (1989) traces how this binary opposition was enhanced by different redefinitions across dualisms during the seventeenth century. For both Greeks and medieval philosophers reason was linked to value because it provided access to the objective structure of reality (seen as both natural and morally justified). However, with the rise of modern science the value of the 'natural' disappeared and values were relocated only in human beings. The creation of the 'natural fact' (inanimate mechanism of no intrinsic worth) and 'human value' (imbedded in their preferences and emotional responses) meant that reason had to stay away from any value (human preferences) in order to give a reliable insight of reality (Jaggar, 1989). In this sense reason was reconceptualized as the ability to make valid logical inferences, independent of human attitudes and preferences, suggesting that reason was objective and universal.

These conceptual movements around 'reason' provoked a corresponding reconceptualization of 'emotion'. Nonetheless, instead of redefining emotion as an independent concept it was outlined as oppositional to reason: non-reliable, irrational, and particular. Displaying the hierarchical component in every binary opposition, reason as a more 'relevant-powerful' category is in this case the base upon which knowledge is constructed. In this sense, emotion is subjected to reason's definition, lacking an independent meaning by being defined by the absence of reason but not by the presence of emotion. The relation between the irrational and the emotional was a key aspect to diminish the value of emotional practices and subjects. Working in contraposition to reason, emotion was associated with the irrational, abnormal and

pathological (Lutz, 2011). Positivist approaches to emotion implied a view of the emotional system as an archaic trait of human bodies, defined as our linkage with inferior species in the Darwinian narratives of evolution. Still within theoretical and social representations to be emotional is 'to have one's judgment affected: it is to be reactive rather than active, dependent rather than autonomous' (Ahmed, 2004: p, 3). The irrational is something that needs to be contained, hidden and silenced.

The discipline that one might expected to be more concerned with incorporating emotions when creating social theory – academic psychology –was in fact the one in charge of incorporating essentialist notions of emotions (Rustin, 2009). Based on William James' (1890, 1981) theorizations, traditional psychology classified emotions as essentially aroused by bodily states, negating their possible relation with mental states with own existence and affectivity (James, 1884). Since emotions were 'something' out of rational control, they were attached to human body's 'predictable nature' (something that didn't need too much theorization). Expressions of emotion were measured within normalized scales drawing distinctions between healthy and pathological emotional behaviors. Exhibiting a total control over emotions was a requirement in public spheres, mostly populated by male subjects. By this logic emotions were relegated to the private sphere of life, which was easily associated with the female subject. Emotional was used as one of the fundamental categories to describe and characterize the 'nature' of 'woman' as an inferior subject (Lutz, 2011). This scientific narrative came to life as discursive and social practices that contribute to the concealing of emotions within women's bodies, spaces and minds (Lutz, 2001).

After this historical and theoretical deconstruction of the hierarchical opposition between reason/emotion, several deconstructions were carried out to move from a psychobiological understanding of emotions to a psychosocial framework. Feminist contributions evolved in parallel with cultural and critical theory studies under what is called the textual or discursive turn. Under the influence of L. Wittgenstein (1958), J.L. Austin (1962) and J.R Searle (1969, 1983), critical theory studies started developing new approaches revealing 'different meanings –and not only factual descriptions and statements of logic –communicated through language' opening the way to a more comprehensive study of emotions (Rustin, 2009). This shift was developed from different disciplines, widening theoretical knowledge regarding emotions and underlined their relevance in social interactions.

Social constructionism freed emotions from hard sciences studying and interpreting them through qualitative approaches, taking them out of 'the individual' and placing them onto 'the cultural and social' (Harre, 1994). Discursive social psychology proposed an ontological level of discourse practices, placing emotions as artifacts socially constructed through language (Edwards, 1999). This perspective suggested that emotional discourses could be manipulated through rhetoric and narrative styles used by discursive subjects. This perspective allowed thinking on power structures operating through emotional discourses, but it also revealed counter-narratives generated by people to resist oppression (Edwards, 1999). In addition, Catherine Lutz (1986, 1990) based on her ethnographic work suggested the necessity of incorporating the cultural context when analyzing the language, discourse and interpretations of emotions. Her statements directly highlighted limitations of Western sciences when working within different cultural contexts. Additionally, in her work *Language and the politics of Emotion* with Lila Abu-Lughod, Lutz emphasized the importance of emotions as a social phenomenon, arguing that emotions are created through language, not just expressed by it. In this sense emotions were interpreted as social practices with significant effects on social reality (Abu-Lughod & Lutz, 1990).

Interpretative sociology also suggested the relevance of emotions when analyzing social structures. Theodore Kemper (1978) emphasized the function of emotions within public life. According to this author emotions are relevant when analyzing how power mediates our social relations. One of the focuses of his argument was the role of emotions in developing and maintaining the hierarchy of social structures. Based on Kemper's work, later sociologists like Jack Barbalet (2001) and Arlie Hochschild (1990) opened the discussion to further kinds of social structures; social macro-structures of emotion and personality structures inside individuals' minds. This work was relevant to later theorizations on the evident connections between power exertion and emotional discourses and practices. From history studies Carol, Z. Stearns and Paul Stearns (1985) created the concept of 'emotionology' stressing the relevance of having a historical perspective while working with emotions. This perspective indicated the relevance of social, political and economic spheres in the cultural production of emotions across history, adding historical variability of emotions to the discussion (Stearns, 1990).

Finally, in addition to this non-linear body of work, we find several feminist approaches on emotion theory within this discursive and socio-constructionist paradigm. One of the main projects of second wave feminism was to dismantle biased scientific notions regarding women's emotional subjectivities (Lutz, 2011). As a result, feminist theory has been engaged with emotions in several ways: feminist readings of developmental emotion dynamics (Chorodow, 1988; Traube, 1992; Modleski, 1991; Allison, 2001; Erwing, 2001), emotion as authentic femininity (Griffin, 1978; Showalter, 1977; Jaggar, 1989; Lee, 1993; Ruddick, 1989; Noddings, 1984), emotion as an epistemic resource (Watson, 1996; Bordo, 1987; Jaggar, 1989; Haraway, 1989; Spelman, 1991), emotion as cultural discourses on power (Abu-Lughod, 1986, 1990; Kondo, 1990; Lutz, 1988; Mageo 1996; Scheper-Hughes, 1992; Koonz, 1987), emotion as social labor (Hochschild, 1983; Di Leonardo, 1987; Cvetkovich, 1992), and emotion as life on the social margins (Chesler, 1992; Seremetakis, 1991; Trawick, 1990; Butler, 1990). Some of these perspectives viewed emotions as tools for collective social change (through the vindication of women's emotionality), while others emphasize their central role in the reproduction of patriarchal social relations. This shift generated theoretical and methodological changes in feminist studies, situating the emotional at the center of analysis as the potential bridge connecting binary categories (mind/body, psyche/social, and personal/political).

Nevertheless, by the 1990s critiques pointed out some limitations of these approaches, suggesting that language, discourse and representations were not sufficient to encompass the complexities of the social analysis of emotions (Wetherell, 2012). Some critical theorists particularly stressed the absence of materiality within this symbolic account of the world. This limitation was addressed in the unavoidable task of incorporating the irreducible material presence of the body within social and cultural analysis. Consequently, feminist theorizations around the 1990s placed bodies at the center of the discussion (Koivunen, 2010), and moving away from 'research based on discourse and disembodied talk and texts' (Wetherell, 2012: p. 3) this approach required opening an active dialogue with more traditional 'sciences' like psychology, biology, and neurobiology. Questioning the theoretical distance between feminist and cultural theory and biology some contemporary theorizations turned back their attention to former authors (Baruch Spinoza, Silvan Tomkins and Antonio Damasio, among others)

that back in their time were already proposing alternative understandings of the binary heritage of Descartes' mind/body structure (*Cogito ergo sum*).

In dialogue with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's corporeal phenomenology, feminist theory incorporated notions of 'lived embodiment', 'embodied subject' as 'being-to-the world', as 'worldliness' (Grosz, 1994) as new understandings of 'experience' as located midway between mind and body, 'in their lived conjunction'. This approach situates the body as the link between much of the binary oppositions discussed above and suggests a connection between some other binaries: outside/inside, private/public, self/other, and individual/social. This new understanding of the body opens new possibilities for 'investigating and conceptualizing the subject of feminism as embodied, located and relational' (Koivunen, 2010: p 8), and constitutes the theoretical framework informing this research (following chapter).

In conclusion, my project is theoretically situated within the affective turn defined as a renewed interest in social sciences for incorporating the emotional sphere in the study of human relations. In particular, this research questions previous conceptualizations regarding hierarchical oppositions between the binary system of reason/emotion, and highlights the relevance of deconstructing biological and fixed definitions of the emotional. Following feminist theorizations my analysis also exalts past and current negative associations between emotions and femininity, revealing the existence of power dynamics exerted by patriarchal systems of sociality. Suggesting that emotional discourses and practices should be situated and understood within particular cultural, political and social realities, my research develops a situated analysis of emotional processes within Colombia's society. Finally, as I proceed to elaborate in the following chapter, my analysis places the body at the center of discussion and explores how emotions are pivotal in social analysis not only as discursive practices but also as embodiments of social injustices. With this approach my research proposes an alternative understanding of the gendered emotional weight of war and displacement in Colombia.

Examples of current engagements with the affective turn can be found in different theorizations happening in Geography and International Relations (IR) studies. Dialogues between these disciplines and feminist and cultural theories have turned into new frameworks in the study of current social issues like war, violence and migration. These proposals are establishing conversations across different disciplines in order to underline the emotional component of these urgent matters. In their recent publication *Emotions, Politics and War* (2015) Linda Ahall and Thomas Gregory stressed the necessity to re-centre emotions within the study of international politics. By exalting the role of emotions in the study and comprehension of violence and war dynamics, these new approaches are suggesting that 'we cannot make sense of war if we are unable or unwilling to pay attention to the sensual experience of those affected' (p. 2).

These approaches are working next to contributions from the field of feminist geopolitics, defined as politics grounded in the analysis of everyday experiences of *both* men and women while living in war and conflict areas (Dowler & Sharp, 2001). These proposals are exposing the absence of emotions and women's experiences in traditional narratives of war and argue for understanding the complex emotional relations between violence and everyday activities (Dowler and Sharp 2001, 174; see also Hyndman 2004; Fluri 2008, 2009; Dixon and Marston 2011; Brickell 2012; Dowler 2012). According to these new theorizations in order to comprehend war dynamics it is not enough to analyze political decisions in warfare states, but it is also necessary to explore individuals' daily experiences as victims of violence. Following these proposals, my research analyzes women's everyday experiences revealing how warfare also operates through everyday violence, and by placing *emotion* at the center of the analysis of forced displacement, this project contributes to a broader understanding of warfare politics in Colombia.

The history of feminist theory/politics in the task of making women's emotional experiences visible has roots in the several attempts to comprehend the relationship between emotions and power, within the private and political spheres. During the 'textual turn', feminist anthropologists and historians focused on describing and theorizing the connection between emotional life and relations of power described in

their historical and cultural variations (Abu-Lughod, 1986, 1990; Kondo, 1990; Lutz, 1988; Mageo 1996; Scheper-Hughes, 1992; Koonz, 1987). Drawing on the Foucauldian notion of discourse, these contributions revealed the place of emotional discourse in societies with different configurations of power and different kinds of gender politics (Lutz, 2001). Revealing different forms of emotional oppression exerted over women's bodies and lives, these contributions located the private, emotional, and personal within the sphere of the public and political. As a result, the feminist maxim 'The personal is political' aimed to make the emotional and the acts of intimacy of everyday life the index of national/sexual politics and ethics. The main contribution of these projects was the political and ideological understanding of the emotional and the vindication of women's emotionality.

Nonetheless, as emotions are embedded in cultural, political and historical transformations this political positioning is now going through a series of changes that demand our critical attention. Lauren Berlant suggests in her work *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* that this maxim 'has now been reversed and redeployed on behalf of a staged crisis in the legitimacy of the most traditional apolitical and sentimental patriarchal family values' (1997: p. 177). According to Berlant the private and intimate spheres are now been used by political discourses to re-direct power and oppression strategies, suggesting that the primary guiding maxim of feminism these days might be 'The political is the personal' (p. 8). While I agree with Berlant's analysis, I would argue not to choose either one of these two maxims, but instead I suggest that they are constantly operating simultaneously. It is still necessary, in particular in Latin-American societies, to vindicate women's emotions as public and political matters and, at the same time, emotional strategies used within warfare and situations of violence should be understood as the political operating over the private.

As I mentioned before, women's emotional experiences within warfare and forced displacement in Colombia are still in the process of becoming social and political issues. Currently, several feminist movements are fighting to open public and political spaces in order to expose the private suffering and resistance of Colombian women as primary victims of warfare dynamics. However, as the majority of studies in this area show, a more holistic comprehension of the causes and consequences of women's mental health "impairments" is still needed. In this sense, this project seeks to make a contribution to translating displaced women's emotions to political and academic

debates with the objective of revealing particular damages of violence affecting women's lives. On the other hand, my research also highlights ongoing political and social strategies operating over women's emotionality while living within the social and political category of 'displaced women'. Colombia's current debates regarding peace agreements and transitional justice politics are positioning victims' mental health (emotional states) at the center of the discussion by designing and implementing several psychosocial interventions both in rural and urban areas. Although I am not focusing on a particular program or intervention, I argue for the importance of recognizing political interests travelling across social and political discourses regarding women's mental health as victims of Colombia's armed conflict and forced displacement.

CHAPTER 2

BRINGING THE EMOTIONAL BACK TO THE BODY

This chapter is dedicated to establishing the epistemological and methodological framework that I will use to study emotional embodied consequences of violence and war. The first section describes how subjectivity is relational, situated and emotionally embodied. Drawing on Sara Ahmed (1999; 2001; 2004; 2010) and Baruch Spinoza's (1674) theorization on emotions, this section describes how emotions' relationality is constantly drawing boundaries across bodies; creating and recreating embodied social difference (gender, race, class). In addition, this section underlines the relevance of incorporating material objects and spaces in the analysis of displaced women's emotional embodied subjectivities. The second section describes the design of my methodological approach as an attempt to explore the presumed intangible consequences of violence and war. Proposing a feminist approach, my methodology places women's experiences at the center of building situated knowledges and suggests the use of oral and visual narratives as methods of research in order to explore alternative ways of communication to bring back the flesh and embodiment of emotions' relationality.

Emotional Embodied Experiences of Women on Movement

As previously mentioned before, my research is focused on the analysis of the intangible consequences of violence and war in Colombia. The word intangible refers to losses, changes, impacts, which are not visible to hegemonic discourses mainly because they cannot be measured according to traditional standards (For example: health or education deficiencies, material or economic disadvantages, psychological disorders, etc.). In particular, my research is focused on consequences that involve emotional processes within: psychosocial interactions, everyday life experiences, and incarnations of social difference (gender, race, and class). My intention on naming these

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consequences as intangible emphasizes the blindness towards these issues that derives from traditional understandings based on a quantifiable rationality (Jaggar, 1989), but also posits a paradox: even when traditional analyses have rendered several aspects of the functionality of emotions intangible (invisible), these could be traced and found in the *embodied* (material) *subjectivity* of those who are experiencing them. This approach focuses on 'the conditions under which bodies are enculturated, psychologized, given identity, historical location, and agency' (Grosz, 2005a: p. 2), and contributes to the development of a politics of 'imperceptibility', which, according to Elizabeth Grosz, is always 'leaving its traces and effects everywhere but never being able to be identified with a person, group or organization' (2005b: p. 194). In this sense, this research resists the assumed intangibility of emotional processes (of everyday life experiences) within traditional analyses of war and conflict in Colombia by exploring:

> Which are the *emotional-embodied-experiences* ('intangible consequences')
> constituting the (embodied) subjectivities of displaced women while living
> within settings of war and violence? And, more importantly, which specific
> emotions are triggering and prolonging these experiences?

Embodied subjectivities

My approach is informed by earlier feminist and phenomenological conceptualizations of embodiment in which 'bodies are not longer assumed simply to be given in and to the world but are rather understood as both the locus of thinking –the site from which thinking takes place –and as the object of thought –as being already subject to interpretation and conceptualization' (Gallop, 1988, cited by Ahmed & Stacey, 2001: p.3). Theorizing the body as both the subject and object of thinking unsettles fixed notions of corporeality and establishes a close relationship between body and subjectivity. In her work *Volatile Bodies* (1994), Elizabeth Grosz places the body as a 'point of mediation between what is perceived as purely internal and accessible only to the subject and what is external and publicly observable, a point from which to rethink of several of the binary pairs associated with the mind/body opposition' (p. 20-1). This renewed understanding of the body has provoked the deconstruction of the relationship between depth and surface (Grosz, 1994), between inside and outside (Braidotti, 2000),

and between self and other (Butler, 1993), revealing that boundaries or contours of the body should not be taken for granted.

Many of these feminist deconstructions are based on Merleau-Ponty's (1968) definition of *experience*. According to the author, it is through experience and the multiplicity of sense perceptions (bodies can be touched as well as seen) that subjectivities are embodied: 'experience is neither questionable nor untrustworthy as ideological, but always necessarily embodied, corporeally constituted, located in and as the subject's incarnation and as such something to be explained' (Grosz, 1994: p. 94-5). This conceptualization of experience not only emphasizes the fleshy and material aspect of embodiment, but also exalts the 'worldliness' of embodiment as subjectivity. This notion, known as 'intercorporeality', emphasizes that 'the experience of being embodied is never a private affair, but is always already mediated by our continual interactions with other human and non-human bodies' (Weiss, 1999: p. 5). In this sense, this reconceptualization of the body proposes a new understanding in which bodies' boundaries and surfaces are not pre-given and the social and cultural production of the body is recognized.

Furthermore, the phenomenological framework highlights the multiplicity of sense perceptions (bodies can be touched as well as seen) in this intercorporeality of experience, and 'affect/affective is posed as a constitutive dimension of subject's being in and relating to the word' (Han-Pile, 2006). In particular, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the reversibility of touch: "the handshake too is reversible; I can feel myself touched as well and at the same time as touching' (p. 142), and suggests that 'the very experiences which make the body 'my body', as if it were a 'sole body before a sole world', are the very same experiences which open 'my body' to 'other bodies', in the simultaneous mutuality of touch and being touched, and seeing and being seen' (Ahmed & Stacey, 2001: p. 5). In this sense, it is through feeling other bodies that one's subjectivity is embodied and, as Ahmed argues, 'my body' does not 'belong to me': 'embodiment is what opens out the intimacy of my self with others' (p.5).

Although these phenomenological accounts of experience and embodiment give relevant tools for social and cultural analysis on embodied subjectivities, some feminist critiques have pointed out an element of universalism in Merleau-Ponty's work and have tried to explore how bodies may be lived differently. My work underlines these critiques, and follows Ahmed's proposal of trying to understand how this inter-

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embodiment involve the social differentiation between bodily others? (2001: p. 6). An understanding that places the affective at the core of experience, and the embodiment of intercorporeality as subjectivity, requires an analysis of micro and macro power structures working on the interconnectedness of (such) bodies. This approach resists opposition between social and individual spheres and explores the changes that constitute the social as 'changes in ourselves, circulating through our bodies, our subjectivities, yet irreducible to the individual, the personal and the psychological' (Clough, 2007: p. 3).

Current feminist and queer theorists such as Ann Cvetkovich (1992, 2003); Judith Butler (1997, 2004); Lauren Berlant (1997, 2008); Ranjana Khanna (2003); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003); Teresa Brennan (2004); Sara Ahmed (2004, 2010); Clare Hemmings (2005, 2011); and Sianne Ngai (2005), are exploring 'the way feeling is negotiated in the public sphere and experienced through the body' (Gorton, 2007: p. 334), in order to reveal some of the embodied consequences of power structures working over material and psychic bodies. These theorizations are focused on how emotions 'are formative not only of subjects but also of social relations and forms of politics and political mobilization' (Koivunen, 2010). Inspired by these theorizations, my research not only analyzes the way in which displaced women's subjectivity is embodied, but also explores how different emotional-embodied-experiences of war, displacement, and violence, are constantly shaping women's bodies (while in contact with other bodies) materializing categories of social difference as a result of power relations.

In particular, this research takes the work of Sara Ahmed as a point of departure by placing emotions at the center of analysis, as a site of embodied meaning-making and social ordering, but also as the process by which the very boundaries of individuals and communities are drawn and redrawn (2004). This framework proposes a new understanding of emotions and leads to a new conceptualization of sociality in which 'all actions are reactions, in the sense that what we do is shaped by the contact we have with others' (p. 4). In the following section I delve into Ahmed's conceptualization of what emotions 'do', when conceptualized as relational, in order to define the theoretical framework that precedes my analysis on emotional-embodied-experiences of displaced women.

Shaping bodies through emotions

The word 'emotion' was traditionally associated with alternative meanings before used to describe psychological or physical arousals. Before the eighteenth century the word emotion was related to movement/displacement based on the Latin *emovere,* meaning to remove/displace to *e* (variant of *ex-*) 'out' + *movere* 'move'. The work of Spinoza in *Ethics* (1674) resonates with these roots insofar as he posits the relevance of emotions in their capacity to activate bodies and generate movement. In this work the author explores alternative understandings of the binary mind/body and its connection with the emotional. Defying the Cartesian understanding of the connection of this binary, Spinoza proposes a level of correspondence or parallel development between mind/body, negating any kind of hierarchy in their functionality. According to this conceptualization 'the body cannot determine the mind to think, nor can the mind determine the body to motion or rest, or anything else' (2002: p. 279). Nonetheless, the place given to emotions within this parallel functioning is what constitutes a pivotal particularity of this definition. For Spinoza 'emotion [*affectus*]' is defined as 'the affections of the body by which the body's power of activity is increased or diminished, assisted or checked, together with the ideas of these affections' (p. 278). According to Spinoza the mind's power to think and the body's power to act (and the relation between these two powers) are both related to the arousal of 'the emotional'. Furthermore, Spinoza emphasizes the relational aspect of the emotional suggesting that both the power to think and the power to act corresponds to external encounters: the mind's power to think corresponds to its receptivity to external ideas, and the body's power to act corresponds to its sensitivity to other bodies (2002). In this sense *'the greater our power to be affected, he posits, the greater our power to act'* (Hardt, 2007).

Sara Ahmed takes this conceptualization in her work *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) and explores with more specificity these 'external encounters' through which the parallel development of mind/body is affected. According to Ahmed, external objects become objects of affect both when we have contact with the object (encounter) and through our orientation towards that object. In this sense, emotions are described as relational because they 'involve re-actions or relations of 'towardness' or 'awayness' in relation to such objects' (p. 8). In addition to Spinoza's conceptualization, Ahmed suggests that it is not only necessary to encounter objects to be affected, but also that

the direction of our re-actions towards the object is what creates the effects of the affective encounter.

Furthermore, Ahmed questions traditional conceptualizations regarding these encounters between the external and interior, the social and the psychological. In her work the author critiques both the psychological 'inside out' and the sociological 'outside in' models of emotions' understanding. In the first, emotions are conceived as internal processes and its logic is 'that I have feelings, which then move outwards objects and other, and which might then return to me' (p. 9). According to the author this model must be replace by a less psychologized conception conceiving emotion as social and cultural practices, and not as mere 'individual self-expressions' (2004). Although Ahmed is informed by these sociological critiques (Lutz and Abu-Lughod, 1990; White, 1993; Rosaldo 1984; Hochschild, 1983; Kemper, 1978; Katz, 1999; Williams, 2001; Collins, 1990), she argues that the cultural and sociological argument about the sociality of emotions mirror the psychological model in which 'inside out' has become an 'outside in' model; both assuming 'the objectivity of the very distinction between inside and outside, the individual and the social, and the 'me' and the 'we'' (p. 9). In response Ahmed argues for a model of sociality of emotions in which emotions create the very effect of the surfaces and boundaries that allow us to distinguish an inside and an outside in first place: 'the 'I' and the 'we' are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others' (p. 10). In this sense Ahmed refuses the abbreviation of the 'and' (psychological *and* social, individual *and* collective) and suggests that 'emotions are crucial to the very constitution of the psychic and the social as objects, a process in which the author suggests that the 'objectivity' of the psychic and social is an effect rather than a cause' (p.10).

Although Ahmed suggests that the subject's reading of the object determines the direction of ones re-action, she argues that emotions do not reside *in* objects but they *move* through the circulation of those objects. Following Descartes's conceptualizations, Ahmed suggests that 'we don't have feeling for objects because of the nature of objects' (p. 6) and affirms that 'we do not love and hate because objects are good or bad, but rather because they seem 'beneficial' of 'harmful'' (Descartes, 1985: 350, cited by Ahmed, 2004: p. 6). This means that whenever we make a reading of the object we are encountering ('beneficial' of 'harmful'), we automatically attribute significance to the object. These attributions are mediated through previous *impressions* that objects left

with us and determine whether the object is read as 'good' or 'bad'. Ahmed employs the concept of impression to avoid making analytical distinctions between bodily sensation, emotion and thought, and argues that they all should be included when analyzing the human experience (2004). In this sense, every encounter with an object (material or non-material) involves a subject, an object, 'as well as histories that come before the subject' (p.6). With this formulation Ahmed suggests that objects become sticky, or saturated with affect, as sites of personal and social tension, and it is the movement and circulation of these objects that allows emotions to travel across bodies, objects, and I will add, time and space.

Following Ahmed's analyses of *affective economies* 'where feelings do not reside in subjects or objects, but are produced as effects of circulation' (p.8), I analyze how the circulation of objects associated with different emotions, is constantly shaping the collective/individual, public/private, psychic/social spheres in displaced women's lives. My analysis takes one step forward from Ahmed's conceptualizations insofar as it refers to the experiences and voices of those who are being alienated in Colombia's society through emotional discourses and practices. Ahmed's formulations on emotions functionality are most of the time focused on how power is exerted by those in privileged positions, but leaves less room for analysis of how these *other* bodies also react to emotional interpellations. In this sense, my analysis explores how social difference and injustice are materialize through the relationality of emotions, but also explores sites of emotional resistance created through this subjective embodiment of women's experiences within war, displacement, and violent settings. In addition, this analysis is structured by emotional-embodied-experiences in order to reveal how different emotions work simultaneously, and how they are transformed through time and space, maintaining the power to shape vulnerable/subversive bodies. With this objective I employ Ahmed's conceptualizations, but instead of making a separate analysis of emotions (as she does) I analyze how they all coexist and work through the subjective embodiment of these experiences.

Displaced embodiments

Following recent feminist studies focused on establishing connections between geography, emotional meaning-making and everyday experiences, I also argue the

necessity of studying the presence and influence of different affective objects (persons, spaces, objects) which are active in the constitution and shaping of displaced women's bodies and realities. Within cultural geography, in dialogue with feminist geography, recent years have seen a growing awareness of the multiple sitings of experiences. In particular, there has been a shift from an emphasis on material and territorial places to a consideration of metaphorical and psychological spaces (Keith and Pile 1993; Parr 1998; Pile 1993). This approach is concerned with the spatiality and temporality of emotions and with the way they coalesce around and within certain places (Bondi, Davidson, Smith, 2005). The concept of emotional geographies is a result of these new theorizations and 'attempts to understand emotion –experientially and conceptually- in terms of its socio-spatial mediation and articulation rather than as entirely interiorized subjective mental states' (2005: p. 4).

Considering that human forced displacement is 'literally' a *movement* across geographic places, and that one of the greatest challenges for its victims is adapting to new spaces, I find it is relevant to incorporate the concept of emotional geographies within the study of forced displacement. This approach helps to situate emotions in temporal and spatial manners, not by fixing them, but by trying to render them visible within their abstract functioning. In this sense emotions are defined as 'vital (living) aspects of who we are and of our situational engagement within the world; they compose, decompose, and recompose the geographies of our lives' (Smith & Bondi, 2009: p. 10). In particular, feminist geographers bring a critical awareness of the gendering of emotions emerging from women's spatial experiences (such as the particular fear felt by women in night-time urban environments). Investigating some taken-for-granted emotional aspects of embodied experiences[14] feminist scholars have illustrated the intimate connections between physical (material) and mental health (2009).

This approach analyzes embodied experiences of displaced women in constant relation to the physical spaces they have inhabited during their multiple movements across the country. In accordance with Smith & Bondi, this analysis of emotional geographies 'might transform the assumptions and actions embodied in such ordinary

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[14] Feminist explorations of embodiment have uncovered feelings about experiences of sexuality (Browne, 2004), pregnancy (Longhurst, 2001), disability (Dyck, 1999), chronic illness (Moss, 1999), and the consumption of foods (Heenan, 2005; Mathee, 2004) and fashions (Colls, 2004) all of them cited by (Smith & Bondi, 2009).

practices as walking, driving, reading and living in the wake of traumatic losses and displacements' (2009: p. 13). Additionally, this exploration will trace what David Sibley (1995) termed as Geographies of Exclusion, understood as 'manifestations of conscious and unconscious feelings that arise in the real and imagined movement between 'selves' and 'others', expression of which is played out in the exclusionary qualities of social life' (Sibley, 1995; cited by Bondi et al, 2005: p. 8). This analysis advances an interpretation of the socio-spatial dynamics of racism and other oppressions that grants emotion a central role (2005). By applying this analytic concept, my research seeks to identify feelings and emotions, which generate social discrimination through physical spaces occupied by displaced women. This framework expands the gaze of the analysis by incorporating different *actors* in the functioning of emotions, making a contribution to current debates regarding Colombian society's accountability for maintaining and perpetuating social injustices in the lives of displaced women.

Furthermore, if emotions are not fixed processes inside women's bodies but effects and affects of social dynamics, they are susceptible to be changed and *transformed*. Taking emotions out of the minds of IDW and situating them in the social sphere also offers the opportunity for women to re-appropriate these dynamics creating new "affective economies" to resist and transform scenarios of violence.

As several feminist works have shown, subjective resistance is always possible through re-appropriation and re-signification, even when subjects emerge from power structures and domination (Butler, 1997; Braidotti, 2006). Rosa Medina Doménech (2012) suggests that we must address the historical formation of subjectivity as a site of power exertion over women's bodies, but also as a possibility to create emotional resistances. As Rosi Braidotti argues, we need to trace how contradictory and diverse threads of subjectivity become tangled and construct a false façade as a single unity, displaying subjectivity as inherent or congenital (2006). Departing from these ideas Medina Doménech proposes the concept of resistance, not as a volitional act, as western humanist tradition has argued, but as the historical attempt of women to break this fixed unity of subjectivity as something coherent or rational (2012). This approach opens a space for exploring how women actively participate in their embodiment as subjects while escaping intercorporealities of violence and war. In this sense, my research explores how women make re-appropriations and re-significations of their emotional

embodied subjectivities, resisting and transforming their experiences while being displaced.

In conclusion this research emphasizes the relevance of studying everyday (spatially and temporally located) experiences of displaced women as a more integral and political form of elucidating the material and immaterial consequences of violence in Colombia. Having clarified the research questions and the theoretical understanding of how women's subjectivities are embodied through emotional experiences, the following section will describe the proposed methodology in addressing these questions.

Methodological Embodiments:
Women's situated knowledges of forced displacement
in Colombia

'Everything happens for a reason, if I was not a victim I would not be here, and if it was not for this project we would not be here, talking, because even when it feels bad to remember, it makes you feel good and even more so if you find a person like you with that big smile and not judging us'
(Angy).

The deconstruction of the binary opposition of reason/emotion also revealed the need to accept and embrace the role of emotions within research practices (Jaggar, 1989). As I noted in the first chapter, emotions are associated with concepts of irrationality, subjectivity, and female behavior, which infiltrate science and research methods, commonly described as rational and objective practices. Critiquing the presumed role of objectivity within positivist research methods, feminist theorizations argue for a new approach to knowledge building strategies[15]. These feminist approaches demonstrate several biases emerging in science and positivist methodologies, questioning not only the existence of objectivity but also the desperate need to find it.

My research is informed by one of the feminist epistemologies that emerged as a response to this necessity of finding new ways of doing research. *Feminist standpoint*

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[15] Gilligan, 1982; Lorde, 1984; Abu-Lughod, 1986; Jaggar, 1989; Braidotti, 1991, 2006; Haraway, 1991; Harding, 1991; Hill Collins, 1991; Code, 1993; Stanley & Wise, 1993; Hemmings, 2011.

epistemology is a philosophy of knowledge building based on placing women's concrete experiences at the center of the research process, constituting a theory of knowledge construction, but also representing a method of doing research (Harding, 1991). This epistemological and methodological framework argues for exalting women's specific knowledge, derived from particular gendered experiences and cultivated as unique sets of skills (Collins, 1990). According to some feminist standpoint scholars, women as members of an oppressed group have cultivated a 'double consciousness' that is tuned in to the 'dominant worldview of the society *and* their own minority perspective' (Nielsen, 1990: p. 10). As a result women have a 'working, active consciousness' (Smith, 1990; p. 19; hooks, 2004) that allows them to 'protect themselves and to ensure survival' (Brooks, 2007: p. 64). This double consciousness is theorized as a more holistic view of the world and represents a 'mode of seeing' that could enhance social transformation.

Feeling Oral Narratives: Life stories as a method

'We are more sensible. As women, we remember'
(Leidy)

With this focus, my methodology proposes the use of life stories as a method to allow women time and space to express their feelings in the form of oral narratives (Anderson & Jack 1991; Ardener, 1975). This method creates a dialogical and interactive situation that includes both the storyteller and the researcher (Ghorashi, 2008) and makes the traditional hierarchical relationship of any interview less visible or present for both parties (Corradi, 1991). In addition, this method povides space for reflection on past experiences (Ghorashi, 2008), which are the main focus of my research, and allows for the expression of a wide spectrum of feelings associated with those experiences.

Furthermore, following the focus of my research on embodiment, the telling of life stories is believed to create identities in the encounter between storytellers and researchers (Ochberg, 1994). This kind of embodied reflexivity recognizes the existence of 'physical' exchanges in the research encounter and acknowledges their power to shape the embodied subjectivity of both the researcher and the researched (Burns, 2006). If we recognize that no body can exist outside processes of

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intercorporeality or intersubjectivity we must admit and account for the effects of discourses on the bodies/subjectivities of both participants (Burns, 2006). This is particularly important when working with emotional meaning-making insofar as Chorodow (1999) suggests, sometimes our past has the power to shape our present, but most significantly, when 're-enacting' our past by remembering, 'our memories may change under the impact of the present experience' (Loewald, 1975: p. 360, cited by Chorodow, 1999). In this sense, generating a safe space for women's life stories not only offers women the opportunity to give past experiences a place in the present (Ghorashi, 2008), but also the attentive act of listening and sharing in their suffering has the potential to change their memories through a positive and reparative experience in the present. Finally, sharing life stories allows women to discover that others share their experiences and this could 'help the person who had experienced this pain (or any other feeling) to feel stronger by realizing that her story was a collective story' (Ghorashi, 2008: p. 121).

Feeling Visual Narratives: photography as a method

'The this is important, and this is the story about how it happened, with pictures that lock the story in our minds'
(Sontag, 2003: p. 84)

Launching from Roland Barthes' statement: 'a photograph is always invisible: it is not that we see' (Barthes, 1982: p. 6), I suggest the use of photography as a medium to narrate intangible consequences of forced displacement in Colombia. Acknowledging that emotional experiences (often) exceed the realm of the discursive or narrative (Smith & Bondi, 2009), my research also explores *that* which cannot be spoken. As previously mentioned, the emotional has been rendered invisible by traditional sciences insofar we are missing alternative methods to 'measure' or narrate how women's subjectivities are emotionally embodied. Based on the affective power of photography (Brown & Phu, 2014) my research argues that photographs involve meanings and messages beyond the realm of the discursive. But, how is Barthes' definition of *the*

photograph related to women's emotional-embodied-experiences of forced displacement?

Photography is another area of knowledge that has been touched by the affective turn (although this is also a reversible touch insofar affect theory has also been influenced by photography studies) (Brown & Phu, 2014). Feeling was also an epistemological problem for late twentieth-century critique of photography that 'saw the photograph as fundamentally a 'material product of a material apparatus' whose history can be understood only in reference to the specific institutional frameworks in which the image is produced and circulated' (p. 3). This 'straight' photo criticism ignored the affective weight in photographs and by 'marginalizing feeling, effectively marginalized photography's shadow subjects, most notably, women, racialized minorities, and queer sexualities' (p.3). Nevertheless, the renewed attention to feeling and affect in cultural studies and the politics of viewing revealed the need to not just think about photography, but also to feel it.

The relationship between emotion and photography has its roots in Roland Barthes' (1981) *Camera Lucida*, in which the author questions the rational and 'objective' rules of photography critique. For Barthes, photography cannot be comprehended as a whole (universal or objective) because each photograph comes to life as a subjective animation: an attraction between the photograph and the viewer in which 'the photograph is not in itself animated but it animates me' (p. 20). Placing 'the irreducible essence of the photograph in its affective power' (Gordon, 2008: p. 106), Barthes (as a *Spectator)* declares his interest in photography as the result of 'sentimental reasons: I wanted to explore it not as a question (a theme) but as a wound: I see, I feel, hence I notice, I observe, and I think' (1981: p. 21).

Moreover, Barthes suggests that this affective power embedded in photographs works through different layers. According to the author, each photograph contains an element called *studium,* which is an *average* affect that creates an interest, 'one that is even stirred sometimes, but in regard to [it] my emotion requires the rational intermediary of an ethical and political culture' (p. 26). In this sense the *studium* refers to 'recognizable and culturally comprehensible signs' (Gordon, 2008: p. 106) of the photograph and, because it appeals to our cultured habits, it generates a 'polite interest', and educates and communicates with civility (Barthes, 1981: p. 27). In contrast, Barthes argues that only some photographs (the ones that subjectively animates me, and

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exist for me) contain a second element named *punctum*. This element is what 'breaks' the *studium*. It 'rises from the scene, shoots out like an arrow, and pierces me' (p.26), creating a 'wound', or a 'prick', it is 'the punctuation mark of an affectively moving episode (Gordon, 2008: p. 107). This element is what animates me, but it also animates the photograph itself: 'the *punctum* is not simply my aesthetic experience; it is what brings to life the life external to the photo, what Barthes calls the 'dynamics' of the 'blind field'' (2008: p. 107).

These two layers of affect communicated through photographs are an example of how emotional meaning is embodied as a subjective experience. Although hegemonic and collective narratives of war and displacement in Colombia are able to communicate *average* emotions through a 'rational intermediary of an ethical and political culture' (*studium*) (Barthes, 1981: p. 26), I will argue that it is only through an emotional embodied subjectivity that the affective power of violence can truly convey a message and come to life (*punctum*). In other words, Barthes' understanding of the affective subjectivity that conveys an existence to photographs resonates with how the consequences of violence come to life through an emotional embodiment of experiences, which evades traditional understandings of war, violence and forced displacement. It is only through situated and individual (although sometimes shared) narratives that the real affective power of violence can be known, and it is through these emotional-embodied-experiences that the intangible consequences of displacement can be described and animated.

Based on Barthes' affective comprehension of photographs my methodology uses photo elicitation and participatory photography methods to enable alternative narratives of violence and forced displacement. This methodological proposal is based on three principal assumptions: (1) traditional photojournalism of war is (often) unable to grasp the situated and embodied affectivity of war as photographs are produced within hegemonic narratives and re-produced visual tropes (Zarzycka & Kleppe, 2013); (2) although the 'photographer could never intentionally inscribe a *punctum* in an image' (Smith, 2014), the *stadium* created by the photographs of displaced women portrays the embodied subjectivity of their violent experiences and reveals 'the Occasion, the Encounter, the Real' (Barthes, 1981: p. 4); and (3) using photographs as a narrative tool within interviews displays how emotional meaning is located midway between past/present/future and conscious/unconscious levels.

Current feminist and cultural studies critiques on war and refugee photojournalism are focused on (among other subjects) revealing different ways in which photographs are produced and reproduce based on predetermined visual tropes. Tropes could be defined as conventions that remain unaltered despite travelling between geopolitical settings (Bal, 2002) insofar as they function as a 'strong image' (Groys, 2008: p. 84): 'an image that can guarantee its own identity, independently of its specific time, space and context' (Zarzycka & Kleppe, 2013: p. 979). This 'strength' of photographs produced by traditional photojournalism and documentary photography commonly subjugates the 'fragile subjectivities represented and offsets the political urgency of the event through universalization and personalization' (Zarzycka, 2013: p. 180). When talking about trauma and violence this is particularly alarming as these tropes 'replace the un-picturable with the recognizable, transporting internal sensations into a knowable, external world' (Zarzycka et al., 2013: p. 980). In addition, acknowledging that 'photography excites a spectrum of feelings' (Brown & Phu, 2014: p. 1), these visual tropes 'create particular affective states through a series of subtle proposals as to how we should feel and act towards suffering others', while also generating 'emotional infrastructures that often comply with normative and patriarchal values' (Zarzycka, 2013: p. 179-80)

Following these critiques, and with the purpose of furthering academic and political comprehension of war and trauma, I used participatory photography as a method for enabling the creation of alternative visual narratives of displaced women. If women are the Operator (photographer), the *studium* created in their photos could work as a 'kind of education which allows us' to discover women's embodied subjectivities, and 'to experience the intentions which establish and animates' their practices, even when we experience them according to our will as a *Spectator* (p. 28). In this sense, new parameters of social interpretation (*studium*) could emerge by enabling women to create subjective visual narratives of their experiences. Participatory photography not only reverses the gaze of traditional documentary photography (Wang & Burris, 1997), resisting the power of photography to transform 'subject into object' (Barthes, 1981: p. 13), but also destabilizes the creation of visual tropes of war and trauma, exalting the specificities of women's embodied subjectivities and triggering different emotions in spectators.

Finally, by using photo elicitation (Harper, 2002) my methodology also underlines that the photograph 'is a record of what had been present' (Brown & Phu, 2014: p. 15). Besides the existence of the operator and spectator in photography, Barthes named the person or thing photographed as the Spectrum: the 'spectacle', something that is present in every photograph, 'the return of the dead' (1981: p. 9). With this definition, Barthes highpoints the phenomenological feature of photography, and allows us to think and feel how certain photographs could function as narratives of past/present/future or conscious/unconscious events. Besides enabling women to create photographs to narrate their emotional-embodied-experiences, my research reveals several gains of opening spaces for elaborating a narrative of the after-image of these photographs. Talking about the photographs they take, or photographs they keep (from past events), women could be animated by these images, as a result of the wound created by the 'prick' of the *punctum*. This animation represents the emotional meaning that keeps haunting the present, even when the photograph is always about something in the past. In this sense, if the *punctum* appears in this space, 'the photograph and its reference come alive' (Gordon, 2008: p. 107) and allows us to feel what is still present and unresolved. Barthes named this *punctum* a 'stigmatum', and affirmed that it 'is no longer of form but of intensity, is Time ('*that-has-been*')' (p. 96) creating a 'bleeding wound in the views who witness the resurrection of the photographed subject' (or object I will add) (Smith, 2014: p. 38).

Awakening memories and feelings of emotional-embodied-experiences of violence and displacement to life is not an attempt to reaffirm the existence of past, present and future temporalities, but instead it is a dismissal of rigid linear temporalities in 'grand narratives' (Bhabha, 2004). In this sense, my research seeks to expose the 'time of migrants', as Homi Bhabha describes it, as 'divided into multitudinous and multidimensional pasts, presents and futures with newness to be found in the space in between' (Pitt, 2015). Displaced women's photographs, as 'artwork of people living on the borders' displays how the past is creatively refigured as a new third space, and the past and present are productively and ceaselessly entwined (Bhabha, 2004).

Resisting Displacement: situated knowledges of war

'Life is about that; if I fall I stand up again'
(Angy).

By placing women's experiences at the core of knowledge building, my research contributes to deepening Colombia's understanding regarding the complexities of violence and war. In particular, by placing women's life stories inside national forced displacement narratives this analysis aims to 'repair the historical trend of women's misrepresentation and exclusion from the dominant knowledge canons' (Brooks, 2007: p. 56), Furthermore, displaced women's life stories represent 'new lenses to examine' Colombian 'society as a whole', as they can be used as means to drawn attention to the inequalities and injustices that characterize this society (Jaggar, 1997; Hill Collins, 1990). In addition, examining violence and forced displacement dynamics through the lens of women and their emotional 'double consciousness' represents an opportunity to reveal unexplored aspects of analysis.

The research report *La verdad de las Mujeres* (Women's Truth) (2013) published by La Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres (the largest feminist pacifist group in Colombia) revealed that due to gendered dynamics in times of war, women commonly provide emotional support for their families (while men have more physical duties). In this sense, while undergoing different experiences in these contexts (social and physical isolation, threats, and sexual and psychological abuse), women have developed strategies to deal with their own emotional issues as well as those of their families and communities. Women's 'emotional double consciousness' of war is a source of knowledge not only for historical and political analyses of war, but also for analysis within the social sciences that seeks to explore transformative ways in which to cope with violence and trauma.

Moreover, the variety of feminist standpoints emerging from displaced women's experiences could offer us a deep understanding of the 'mechanisms of domination' and simultaneously help us to 'envision freer ways to live' (Jaggar, 1997; p. 193). Highlighting emotional resistances developed by displaced women, this research aims to raise awareness, among women and others, about the particular vulnerabilities faced by diverse women by also inspiring movement towards change. As a researcher, I seek to share some feminist standpoints of forced displacement with the objective of finding

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answers to promote a more fair and peaceful society, but also to inspire women across the country, and beyond, to resist and advocate for their own social transformation.

Nevertheless, I find it necessary to clarify that I'm not trying to reduce all displaced women to a single group sharing 'one' experience or 'one' single standpoint. On the contrary, this research acknowledges the risks of a possible double form of essentialism occurring when suggesting objectivity through oppressed women's experiences (Brooks, 2007). Confronting commonly raised questionings, regarding the lack of objectivity or presumed 'relativism' of feminist studies, my research follows Donna Haraway's call for a objectivity about 'particular and specific embodiment' suggesting that 'only partial perspective promises objective vision' (p. 582-3). Instead of suggesting the existence of one single experience of forced displacement, this research seeks to find a *feminist objectivity* through an epistemology of 'location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims' (Haraway, 1988: p. 589).

Moreover, my own 'instruments of vision', as an emotional embodied researcher, are constantly mediating the interpretation and translation of these experiences (Haraway, 1988). In other words, my view comes from a body, 'always a complex, and contradictory, structuring, and structured body' (p. 589) that is situated and positioned in a specific time and space. My previous and present experiences as a urban, privileged, upper-middle class, highly educated Colombian woman are present in every translation or interpretation of this project, which offers objectivity in terms of my critical position as a researcher, but not from the view 'from above, from nowhere, from simplicity' (p. 589). Divided across socio-economic stratums, Colombian society embodies social difference as a politics of everyday life. Class, race and gender are constantly overlapping, characterizing social and economic inequalities in the country. Health and educational gaps between 'high class' citizens and 'the rest' (middle-class, middle-low-class, low-class, and *poor* people) are definitive markers for opportunities in the future, rendering it almost impossible for the majority of the population to escape from poverty traps. I grew up in the 10% of Colombian society that has access to high levels of health-care, education and entertainment. After going trough several deconstruction processes of my own privileged position (Gregorio, 2000) I certainly could trace the roots of several tools of oppression that work through Colombian socio-political discourses and practices, but my privileged situation undoubtedly prohibits a

complete embodied understanding of the gendered experiences involved in violence and forced displacement.

In conclusion, neither women's standpoints, nor my translation or interpretation of their experiences are free from mediations. This research can only strive for objectivity while pursuing a critical positioning. Therefore my research does not aim to represent the life stories of displaced women as a 'single group', but instead explores emotional experiences as local and embodied knowledge that illustrates power relations merging from gendered and unequal characteristics of Colombian society. Acknowledging that 'translation is always interpretative, critical and partial' (Haraway, 1988: p.589), this research highlights the need for promoting more research efforts on this topic. Achieving additional situated knowledges could enrich critical understandings of women's experiences within violence and forced displacement in Colombia, and could open new spaces for feminist activism and resistance.

CHAPTER 3

GOING BACK: BUILDING KNOWLEDGES FROM EMOTIONAL ENCOUNTERS IN BOGOTÁ

Photograph 1. Taken by Rafael. Starting from the left-up corner. Luisa, Yorlenis, Yeny, Paola, Leidy, Nasly, Melissa, Angy.

Eight nomadic bodies have been in constant *movement* during their entire lives. Running away from violence, but also moving towards freedom, they have spent hours, days and months, in constant displacement. Angy, Paola, Nasly, Leidy, Rosita, Luisa, Yorlenis and Yeny, met in Bogotá, their current city, as participants in ACDI/VOCA and GE's educational program. Although they come from different regions of the country and have different life stories, they are all united under one socio-political category: they are 'displaced women'. After receiving death threats from armed forces (FARC, paramilitary), these young women were forced to leave their '*social, material, psychological, and moral stability*' (Leidy), to start a new life in Bogotá some years

ago. Searching for better opportunities while escaping the brutality of war, most of their *mothers* decided to start a journey across the country without hope of returning. Some of them arrived in Bogotá as children of single mothers, while others (older) arrived alone or with their partners (boyfriend, husband). Ranging between 18 and 29 years old, these women represent what could be called the second generation of displacement.

Where displacement is placed: Bogotá

Located in the center of the country, Bogotá, my home city, is the capital of Colombia. With around 8 million habitants it is one of the most populated cities in South America. Located '2.600 meters closer to the stars'[16] Bogotá is the third highest capital in the region (after La Paz and Quito). Characterized by cold weather and convoluted traffic, Bogotá is commonly described as a 'jungle' city. Long distances and insufficient public transport are daily challenges for the majority of its population. With much social diversity the architecture of Bogotá can change from one block to the next. Apartments valued at more than 1 million dollars can be found next to illegal settlements conformed by cardboard or metal houses. The financial sector is populated with suited men and tall buildings, yet one can also find homeless people reclining on the streets and displaced persons trying to sell garbage bags at traffic lights. We all cohabit the same space; we walk the same streets, but experience life from entirely *diverse standpoints*.

Bogotá is located in the center of the country but it has a large variety of peripheral influences. In recent years the city's urbanization and population have increased dramatically due to financial and industrial growth. People from other regions of the country have migrated to the capital looking for economic opportunities and improved living conditions. Displaced persons and migrant workers constitute a great part of this peripheral presence in the capital representing the majority of its *floating population*[17] (4 million persons). As every other capital in the world, Bogotá is characterized by a large list of deficiencies, while at the same time represents an alternative for economic and social progress.

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[16] Bogotá's slogan used in 2009 as part of a campaign run by Enrique Peñalosa (Bogotá's mayor) with the objective of increasing the capital's tourism.
[17] This population is not considered in the official census of the city.

Given this representation of IDPs living in Bogotá, this demographic is often the focus of social and governmental studies in the country. However, establishing contact with IDP's for research purposes has become more challenging in recent years due to security and privacy demands. IDPs are constantly the targets of multiple forms of violence and threats, even when they have relocated to urban areas[18], making it more difficult for NGOs or governmental organizations to ensure the security of their beneficiaries.

Photography 2: Taken by Nasly

For these and other reasons, establishing contact with participants of this research was a challenge that required several attempts to contact different organizations and institutions (via telephone calls, emails and meetings)[19]. After an initial meeting I finally arranged to work in collaboration with ACDI/VOCA a North American non-profit organization working on economic development 'fostering broad-base economic

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[18] *National Report of Forced Displacement in Colombia 1985 to 2012.* Unidad para la atención y reparación integral a las víctimas (2013).
[19] I contacted UNWOMEN in Colombia, Sisma Mujer, Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres, Unidad de atencion para las victimas, La Casa de la Mujer.

growth, raising living standards and creating vibrant communities around the world'[20]. This organization has developed several economic projects in Colombia, supporting initiatives for economic development programs and activities. In particular, they are currently working in a specific program focused on increasing the income of Afro-Colombian and Indigenous peoples to improve their social status as they constitute the most marginalized groups in Colombia. As part of this program ACDI/VOCA is working in alliance with Gente Estratégica (GE), a Colombian NGO, offering an educational program directed towards young minorities that are 'classified' as victims of Colombia's armed conflict. The objective of the program is to offer an education, training[21] and a paid internship to boost the inclusion of young ethnic minorities' in Bogotá's job market.

After a number of meetings with Sonia Suarez, the program's gender coordinator at ACDI/VOCA, in which the objectives and methodology of the research were discussed, she agreed to give me access to talk with young displaced women participating in the educational program[22]. With clearance from ACDI/VOCA, I met Giselle Cervantes, the program coordinator at GE, to give her more details about my research objectives and the scheduled activities taking place ahead. The fieldwork agenda was composed of four research encounters with different methodological objectives. The first encounter was dedicated to meeting the potential participants of the project, explaining the objectives of the project, and extending an invitation for participation. The objective of the second encounter was to hold individual in-depth interviews with each participant to explore their life stories and emotional-embodied-experiences of forced displacement. The third encounter was dedicated to a group workshop on basic concepts of photography practice as a communication tool, made up of theoretical and practical components. During the fourth encounter we were to discuss

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[20] Taken from www.acdivoca.org

[21] The program offers education in different areas such as: accounting, telemarketing, commercial logistics, baking, and computers systems. The program comprises of theoretical and practical phases of a total of 1.320 hours and offers funding possibilities of almost 50% of a basic income in Colombia per month to cover transportation and maintenance.

[22] Although the program produces positive results by giving young people the opportunity to increase their incomes and their job possibilities, Sonia highlighted the need to understanding the psychosocial well being of their students. Interested in the theoretical focus of the research, she found it relevant to explore displaced women's emotional experiences from an alternative approach. Although I did not assume any responsibility within this organization (in terms of theoretical or methodological aspects of the research), we agreed to have a final meeting in which I could give her some feedback with general ideas regarding fieldwork findings. Nonetheless, I previously notified Sonia about privacy agreements in which this information could only be communicated after having participants' signed consent.

the pictures created by participants in individual sessions with each participant or in a focus group (depending on participants preferences). In the following section I will give detailed information about these research encounters, placing particular emphasis in methodological reflections that emerged during my fieldwork in order to contribute to methodological debates regarding knowledge building from and about emotions.

First Encounter: embodying emotional rapport

Located in the city center of Bogotá, GE's offices are comprised of administrative spaces and educational formation classrooms. On the first day Giselle allowed me to use the conference room to meet some of the program students (all of them categorized as 'victims of forced displacement'). With timid body language but curious eyes, seven young women (between 18 and 29 years old) filled the room. Trying to create a safe space for all of us, I started by asking their names, the region where they were born, and some family details. I also introduced myself under the same sketch, giving personal information and trying to position myself as an equal in the room. Instead of presenting myself as a researcher trying to collect information for theoretical analysis, I told them that the purpose of my visit was to invite them to be part of a project[23]. Drawing on some general concepts of feminist theory I explained to them the theoretical and methodological perspective from which I was working (feminist standpoint theory, situated knowledges, feminist participatory action research), and I gave details about the activities of the project (in-depth interview and photography workshop). Although most of them seemed confused, it was impossible not to notice some amusement on their faces. As some of them told me after, it was the first time that somebody was suggesting that their *experiences could be knowledges* and that they could be part of a *collaborative project*.

Building a safe space and a trusting relationship between research members (participants and me) was one of the main priorities of this project. Aware of the risks and possible difficulties of working with emotional experiences and traumatic events, I was eager to find different research practices to build trust and familiarity in a very short period of time. This first encounter was a decisive point in which creating an

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[23] I decided to use the word *project (proyecto)* because it sounds more familiar and closer than *research (investigación)*.

emotional rapport was my principal objective. Disclosing personal information and using colloquial language helped me to interact with them from a position of familiarity.

Although my age and my appearance (I look younger than my age) helped me to establish an immediate rapport with them, some aspects of my privileged position were exposed in the conversation (Gregorio, 2000). After finishing the explanation of the project objectives there was time for questions or clarifications. Curiously all the questions that emerged were related to my personal life, rather than details about the project. Leidy, who is the same age as me (29 years-old), asked me if I had children. After hearing my negative response she replied: *'that is why you look younger, you made good decisions in life and also had better opportunities, studying and living in another country'*. Leidy, mother of three, entered motherhood at the age of 15. Her age perception (she said she was '*an old woman'*) was mediated by her disadvantaged social position and my privileged opportunities. Although her statement was accurate, and my privilege position was embodied in my physical appearance, I answered by emphasizing on the consequences of living far from my family and having moments of solitude because of my '*good decisions'*. Mentioning 'negative' aspects of my privileged position eased our interaction as different women and revealed different forms of oppression that are placed on women as a gendered group.

Yeny (24 years-old) asked me how it is to live abroad and was particular curious about the language that I speak in the Netherlands. In order to create an image of my present life I showed them where the Netherlands is located on a map and gave them information regarding Dutch lifestyle (language, food, transport, customs, weather). I also talked about my experience as a Colombian living abroad and highlighted positive as well as negative aspects of the experience. This interaction helped me to create a connection with them, disclosing my own experiences while also living far from my hometown. Although the causes behind our displacement are entirely different, there were common points of discussion which allowed us to relate and created some moments of laughter and empathy.

After discussing the final details of the fieldwork I asked them if they were willing to participate in the project. Although some looked more enthusiastic than others, all of them agreed to participate in the activities. We proceeded to exchange telephone numbers and we scheduled our next meeting based on their time availability. Just minutes after our meeting they started sending messages to my cellphone number,

using Whatsapp, establishing a *new* connection. This was a relevant communication channel throughout the research given the practical qualities of this medium of communication[24]. In particular Whatsapp created an alternative space through which participants were able to reach me any time of the day with the purpose of communicating schedule changes or personal/private information[25]. The use of this technology allowed me to feel closer to the participants by creating a sensation of proximity, despite the short period of time I spent in Bogotá, and represented a *digital save space* throughout my fieldwork.

Second Encounter:
feeling life stories of forced displacement

A second meeting was set up with each of the participants to carry out individual in-depth interviews that lasted between one of two hours (depending of the flow of the conversation). With the purpose of creating a safe space for my participants before starting these interviews I set out some clear ethical guidelines for the research process. First, I reminded them of their freedom to answer only the questions they wanted, discussing only the information that they felt comfortable sharing. Second, I asked consent to record our voices during the interview, (remembering that I could also stop the recording at any point during the interview), and also to use their real names on this or other written reports. They all agreed to be recorded and the use of their real names. And finally, we chose a comfortable space, within the GE offices where they could feel at ease, away from other people.

The first part of the interview was dedicated to exploring their life stories, making special emphasis on the characteristics of 'displacement experiences'[26]. During the first two interviews I tried to follow some semi-structured questions that I had prepared. However, I started noticing that in some cases this structure was disrupting the fluidity of the interview mainly because life stories are not linear or organized narratives. As a consequence, for the rest of the interviews I decided to leave this part

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[24] Using Whatsapp facilitated our communication for economical and practical reasons. Sending a message trough this app is free and allows an immediate communication.
[25] e.g. Personal reasons for changing appointments, like family or health inconveniences.
[26] e.g. Physical characteristics of their houses, cities and regions; causes of the displacement; family structure characteristics at the moment; experiences of violence.

free to the spontaneous narrative of the participants, only interrupting them in certain moments of the conversation to delve into specific details relevant to the objectives of this research.

The second part of the interview was dedicated to gathering information about their experiences after arriving and resettling in Bogotá. Exploring physical, economic and psychological characteristics of this resettlement, this section delved into emotional experiences while adapting to the new city. Similar to the first part of the interview, this section was left open to their own narrative fluency.

Finally, the last part of the interview explored the participant's own definition of emotional concepts or emotional states. Using an open question I enquired about their own definition to the word 'emotions'. After some attempts, I observed some confusion regarding this word, noticing that the word *emoción* (emotion) in Colombia has different meanings when used out of psychological or medical scenarios. For almost all of my participants this word was associated with a positive feeling of being aroused by something. Although I will explore this definition in more detail in the following chapter, I wanted to point out that this misunderstanding prompted me to incorporate another question in which I tried to use their own vocabulary to explore their own definition of emotions. Following this question, I used some cards with different emotions written on to evoke spontaneous answers while asking a personal definition of each one of the emotions presented on the cards[27]. After collecting their definitions, I explored which emotions were relevant on each one of their 'life stages'[28]. This exercise allowed me to track different definitions, experiences and consequences of the emotions discussed, and also helped me to identify the various forms of emotions at different times, in different spaces, and across different relations within their life stories.

As a consequence of the characteristics of the experiences that were discussed (traumatic, violent, and emotional experiences) almost all participants cried or had body language expressions associated with sadness and anger. The use of body language and body proximity was a recurrent strategy that I used to provide some comfort and support during those expressions. Maintaining eye contact and physical proximity was

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[27] I left open the possibility to incorporate more emotions, according to their opinions and experiences. I began with 7 emotions (anger, hate, happiness, sadness, disgust, shame, love) and I ended up with 3 more (faith, resentment, pride).

[28] Although I left free their narrative's structure, they tended to be arranged around moments of transition or displacements in their lives, mostly marked by the places they inhabited (different cities, regions, houses).

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crucial to overcome emotional moments during these encounters. After finishing the interviews some participants explicitly thanked me for my open and attentive listening, highlighting the particular way in which they had been truly heard and understood during the interview.

Third Encounter: enabling visual narratives

The aim of the third encounter was to develop the first part of the participatory photography method: the theoretical and practical photography workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce participants to photography practice, as a communicative tool, in order to enable participants to answer some research questions through photography. This workshop was designed and executed collaboratively between a professional Colombian photographer Rafael Manosalva and me, as the principal researcher. Before moving to detailed information regarding the purpose, logistics and reflections of this activity I want to stress the collaborative nature of this part of the project.

Photography 3: Taken by Angy. Rafael in the reflection.

Facing a lack of resources for the development of this research I decided to start a fundraising project to collect the cameras needed to run the workshop. Using Facebook and word of mouth communication I asked people in Bogotá to borrow or donate digital cameras for the project. Once again this communication was expressed as an invitation to be part of a collaborative project, in which young people (like them) could use their cameras to communicate their experiences as displaced persons. Thanks to the powers of information dissemination offered by platforms like Facebook, several people started *interacting* with the project and its goals. Aside from providing eight donated cameras for the workshop, this fundraising created a space in people's minds and conversations for discussing the consequences of forced displacement in Colombia.

Photograph 3: Taken by Luisa. Me from behind.

Although it is hard to 'quantify' the impact of these conversations, it clearly showed that placing displaced persons as active subjects taking photographs of their reality was a subversive representation of this population. Although I think that this donation process was motivated by my emotional affiliations with the people (friends) donating

the cameras, it also represented an emotional connection with the project and its participants. In addition, Rafael also donated his time and work to this project offering his knowledge and abilities as a current photography professor.

The workshop was divided into three sections. The first one had the objective of exploring basic concepts of symbolism, representation and photography rules, in order to offer participants an introductory knowledge of photography. The second section was a session of photography practice carried out in the streets surrounding the GE offices. During this session the participants got the opportunity to interact with the cameras and take photographs with supervision and feedback from Rafael and me. This practice was intended to give an initial interaction between participants and their cameras, trying to establish a sense of familiarity and confidence with photography practice. The third section of the workshop was used to introduce the research questions that were supposed to be answered through photographs taken by them in the following days. These questions were developed based on the information gathered through the initial interviews. The objective was to further investigate specific matters regarding the experiences of the participants as victims of gender violence and displacement. Trying to establish a connection between emotional experiences of the past and emotional experiences of the present, I drew up the following seven research questions:

1. What constitutes your actual stability or instability?
2. In which places/spaces do you feel secure or insecure?
3. Which emotion is the emotion most important in your life right now?
4. Is there any particular material object that is emotionally important to you?
5. What does you mother represent for you?
6. What is your favorite feature (in terms of physicality or personality) about yourself?
7. Is there any place in Bogotá that makes you feel how you felt when you were at the river/sea in your hometown?[29]

Because these questions were related to different experiences of all eight women, I gave them the opportunity to choose only five to be answered through a photograph for each.

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[29] The river/sea were the *places* in their hometowns that represented the deepest emotional meaning for the majority of the participants.

While presenting these research questions to the participants I took time to have a group discussion of the concepts that were introduced by each question (stability, instability, security, insecurity, emotion, emotional objects, personal features, river/sea sensation)[30]. This was intended to establish consensual agreement on the definition of the concepts that were supposed to be communicated trough pictures, and opened a space for questions regarding their assignment. After this debate I discussed ethical matters when working with photographs and I gave them several copies of informed consent sheets in case they photographed others. They were given three free days to take five photographs, one for each research question selected.

Fourth Encounter: wounded by the *punctum*

The fourth encounter was dedicated to discussing the photographs taken and selected by my interviewees. Although I suggested making a focus group for this discussion, some participants expressed to me (through Whatsapp) that they felt more comfortable having private discussions of the photographs. As a result I arranged separate encounters with each individual in which we discussed the photographs taken and I asked some follow up questions to further explore certain aspects of their narrative. Although most of them took pictures with the provided camera, some of them used cellphone pictures or old photographs in order to answer some of the research questions. The discussion around the photographs delved into issues discussed in the previous interview, but also introduced new emotional-embodied-experiences of their current situation.

The interaction with the camera within their homes also produced an emotional response for other members of the family, working together in the project. In particular, Paola (22 years-old) who has been dealing with a violent relationship with her partner in recent years had an emotional experience while taking photographs in her house. Paola mentioned that this photograph (*Photograph 4*) showed some proof of the new stage in their relationship in which they are trying to improve the situation for her three-year-old son. Looking at a photograph she started crying and said: *'since long time ago he was not like this, like this happy, I know he was waiting for this moment of peace'*. In this

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[30] I designed a workshop guide, in which they were able to write down the definition of these concepts to have the information in their homes or at work while taking the photographs.

case this photograph affectively attracted and animate Paola. Seeing her son's watery eyes created a *punctum* that freed all the emotions that she is experiencing in her family's new 'peaceful' stage. The interaction with the camera created a moment of family union and this photograph brought to life all what is out of it (past painful memories, doubts about his momentary change, happiness for seeing her son smiling, among others).

Photograph 4: Taken by Paola

At the end of this last interview I told the participants that the camera they used for the project was a donation from someone else and that they were able to keep it. All of them were excited by this news and were especially surprised to know that there were more people collaborating for the development of the project. They asked several questions about the people who donate the cameras and sent messages of gratitude to them. They also expressed the excitement that the camera would invoke in their families and I reminded them how the practice of photography can be used as a communication tool in their lives. This was also a moment of closure for the project in which I articulated once again the relevance of their participation and I expressed gratitude for their willingness and emotional disclosure during all our research encounters. They also had the opportunity to express their gratitude and recount their experiences taking part in the project.

Displaced identities

Although my initial purpose was to interview 'displaced women', I was confronted with the need to adjust my research analysis after meeting my participants. Their age characteristics represented different experiences, memories, and perceptions of forced displacement, requiring changes to the focus of my methodology. As a result this research not only explores displaced women's experiences, but also serves to investigate different standpoints of those who experienced forced displacement as children. This variety of experiences augments the challenges of analysis, but also enriches current comprehensions of forced displacement in Colombia, which are in most of the cases focused on adult populations. After living some years in Bogotá these young women have developed different interpretations and significations of their past, present and future experiences, challenging fixed categories within forced displacement studies.

In addition, the life stories of these eight young women revealed that forced displacement has been a recurrent form of violence affecting their lives. Although they were displaced from their regions by Colombian armed conflict, these women have faced several displacements as a result of experiences of gender violence. Running away from sexual, physical, and psychological abuse, most of them left their family houses at a very young age (after or before their experiences of forced displacement within war scenarios). This finding constitutes a central argument in this research showing that these young women's emotional-embodied-experiences should be understood within a wider framework of gender violence analysis. It also opens new research questions, highlighting the existence of different types of forced displacement, which are not mentioned within political discourses, yet are affecting the lives of thousands of women across the country. This argument will be further elaborated in the following chapter, placing particular emphasis on how emotions are 'working' within these different types of forced displacement.

With the aim of avoiding fixed categories to 'describe' or 'define' my research participants, I explored their personal definitions of identity categories such as: *victim, forced displacement, displaced women*. According to Halleh Ghorashi (2007), working with life stories is an effective way in which to grasp the concept of *identity* not as a static idea, but rather as a constantly changing process. Following her definition this

research suggests that identity 'is not a complete whole but is in fact unsettled, ambiguous, mostly elusive and subject to change in a new context' (p. 119). Although I received a diverse selection of responses here I present some of the most common definitions. In most of the cases definitions changed according to the age and characteristics of their experiences of violence or displacement.

Victim

The category of victim was associated with a person that has been the target of any kind of violence (physical, psychological, material) without *'deserving'* that treatment: *'it should not happened, it should not be like that'* (Yeny). Words like *'damaged'*, *'maltreatment'*, *'suffering'* were used to describe the concept of victim and they all mentioned that this category was the result of *external forces* affecting people's lives: *'that someone was damaged by other person, that she/he was affected by someone else's actions'* (Leidy).

Photograph 5: Taken by Luisa

When I asked them if they considered themselves victims most of their answers were affirmative, with the exception of Luisa (19 years-old) who experienced forced displacement at age of four. She argues that she does not consider herself a victim because she doesn't have *memories* of the displacement experience nor of her absent father (who was killed by guerrillas while they were sleeping in her old house in Antioquia): I *'was too young when I experienced that situation', 'I don't remember my father, I could say that I never met my father'* (Luisa). This revealed that the embodied memory of violence is a determining characteristic of the definition of this category. In the case of the rest of the participants their identity as victims was associated with the experience of loss, but they mentioned different degrees of loss. Although material, economical and psychological violence was associated with their category as victims, some of them expressed that losing a family member or being raped implied a higher degree of victimization: *'I am a victim because they took my father and my sister away'* (Yeny), *'I am a victim because I've lived a lot of experiences, but it is not so traumatic because there are other people who have lost their families or have been forced to watch tortures'* (Rosita), *'I was lucky having only been punched or having lost everything, but I remain here, intact, I was never raped'* (Angy). These statements show how the place of the body (theirs and others) is crucial in their embodied experience as victims, and these narratives reveal the different challenges faced by those who have bodily affectations.

Displaced Person

This category was associated with words like *'loss', 'vulnerability', 'humiliation', 'running', 'abuse', 'strip',* and was associated more with its consequences rather than with its causes: *'to arrive in a place where you don't have anything, to have difficulties and experience humiliations'* (Rosita), *'they took everything away from us'* (Luisa). They also put emphasis on the violent characteristics of this kind of displacement or migration: *'it is to run to be alive'* (Rosita), *'it is violence, because it is very different to leave a place because you want to'* (Angy). When I asked them if they considered themselves victims of forced displacement, once again, only Luisa answered that she did not feel like a victim of forced displacement.

Photograph 6: Taken by Leidy

The other participants mentioned that they perceive themselves as displaced persons and some mentioned that the legal procedures they had to undergo upon arrival in Bogotá confirmed their political identity as displaced women: *'I am a displaced person because I have the letter to get health and economical assistance'* (Leidy), *'my mother got the displacement letter so I am a displaced person, but I don't feel like one'* (Luisa). In addition they mentioned the irreversible consequences of forced displacement highlighting how their life and identity changed after being displaced: *'it is to ruin your origins, the stability that the person had, their families, friends, people around. You have to leave everything just because they say'* (Yeny), *'I am a victim of displacement because they destroyed my economic, social, psychological, and moral stability and when you are a displaced person you don't feel like before, I don't feel like a normal person anymore'* (Leidy). Exploring how comfortable they felt being labeled as displaced persons in their daily lives, some mentioned that it was a social category enabling them to get some governmental assistance, but other mentioned situations of

discrimination making them uncomfortable with this category (this will be detailed in the following chapter).

Displaced Woman

Exploring gender differences I asked them if they perceived differences in the experiences of women and men while facing forced displacement. They all agreed when identifying particular gendered situations of forced displacement and war dynamics. On one hand they mentioned the physical vulnerabilities faced by women (sexual and physical abuse) during forced displacement experiences: *'men are very machistas (sexist) in those situations, they rape women, or hit them'* (Paola). They also mentioned a particular 'sensibility' in women while facing difficult situations, emphasizing the way in which women experience emotional processes *'we are more sensible towards things, I normally remember all that happened, all that we lost'* (Leidy), *'for women is more difficult to handle, we are weaker than men'* (Yorlenis), *'men are more attached to material things, but women remember'* (Leidy). These gendered perceptions will be explored in the following chapters, representing the focus of analysis of this research, but I wanted to highlight the weight of these perceptions in their own association with the category of displaced woman. Finally some of them argue that forced displacement was a different experience for men and women because women are directly responsible for their children: *'it is much harder for me, having my children and being responsible for them'* (Leidy). As I mentioned before in every life story of these women, they or their mothers were responsible of the care and economical survival of their children while experiencing forced displacement. Although these perceptions are depicting the gendered situation of forced displacement in Colombia (discussed in the first chapter), I found it necessary to open a space for my participants' perceptions and definitions regarding this social categorization.

CHAPTER 4

DISCLOSING *AFFECTIVE ECONOMIES* OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN COLOMBIA

'Con nuestras historias podemos contribuir a la recuperación de experiencias que tuvieron utilidad diferente en cada momento y que podemos recuperar no solo para rescatar del pasado la autoridad de las mujeres, sino para construir genealogías colectivas de resistencias en espacios de intimidad emocional'.
Rosa Medina Doménech (2012: p. 194)

One of the most challenging aspects of my research was to give a structure to my analysis. Acknowledging the multiple and entwined ways in which emotions function, any attempt to give my analysis a linear temporality, a rational or causal structure, or fixed or universalized interpretation, was not an alternative. Consequently, and based on my theoretical approach of emotional embodied subjectivities, I decided to cluster my analysis by emotional-embodied-experiences lived by women within war, violence and forced displacement settings. Based on oral and visual narratives of my interviewees, these experiences are defined and characterized by four aspects: (1) they all originate in the emphasis of Spinoza and Ahmed in the active and reactive aspect of emotions. They can be traced within the experience of one (or more) emotion, and are characterized by generating a movement away or towards certain objects of affect, (2) they are effects produced out of feelings of fear experienced by the mothers of my interviewees, but evolved across time and space generating the same or different emotions in my interviewees, (3) this evolution is not linear, but a constant entanglement between different spaces, temporalities, and conscious and unconscious levels, and (4) their power grows through repetition, reinforcing embodied subjectivities of vulnerability, but also of resistance.

Although I found several emotional-embodied-experiences in the narratives of my interviewees, I decided to focus on three of them: *isolation, silence*, and *displacement*. These were the most recurrent and elaborated experiences around the emotionality of forced displacement narrated by my participants. These experiences are present in the scholarship focused on war, violence, and displacement studies in

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Colombia[31], but my analysis revealed different interpretations and findings, contributing to deepening our understanding of these common experiences within war settings. While some of my interviewees mentioned these words (isolation, silence, displacement), these are tittles I selected as categories of analysis in order to trace not only that 'life is complicated', but also that working with 'complex personhoods' is about 'conferring the respect on others that comes from presuming that life and people's lives are simultaneously straightforward and full of enormously subtle meaning' (Gordon, 2008: p.5). Although all three refer to literal experiences of isolation, silence, and displacement, they are charged with multiple and subtle meanings, interpretations, sensations, and consequences. They all have developed from the effects produced by fear, but have evolved in diverse and complex emotional embodiments fueled by different emotions like shame, disgust, and love. They all were born in situated time and spaces, but have traveled with my interviewees on their multiple displacements. In the end, as I mentioned before, emotional-embodied-experiences are about movement, and the transformational potential that comes with it.

In addition, during interviews I explored my participants' own definition of each of the emotions mentioned in their narratives. These definitions echoed some theorizations elaborated by different scholars and writers within affect and emotions studies, but sometimes they also revealed new areas of analysis. While I will explore these definitions of shame, disgust, and love, within the analysis of these experiences, I begin this chapter by defining what fear looks and feels like because it was the emotion narrated as one of the origins of all theses emotional-embodied-experiences, reminding us that above all Colombian armed conflict has always been a war based on terror.

According to my interviewees fear involves an external threat (Fischer 1970; Rachman 1998; Ahmed, 2004): *'to be afraid of someone or something'* (Luisa), but most important it is defined in terms of its temporality. Fear 'projects us from the present into a future' (Ahmed, 2004; p. 65), as an anticipation of (1) potential suffering: *'It is to be afraid of the future, I'm afraid of something happening, that I know it's going to happen'* (Rosita), *'I'm afraid about my children's suffering, like them living the same situations that I've lived'* (Leidy); (2) potential loss: *'fear of losing my daughter or my family'* (Yorlenis), *'it's to be afraid of something, to lose something that*

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[31] See Chapter 1.

one loves' (Rosita); or, (3) potential recurrence of past events: *'I'm afraid that my mom could change and go back being how she was in the past'* (Angy), *'it's to be afraid of being hurt again, to be hurt even more'* (Paola).

In addition fear is narrated through gendered perceptions, in which fear appears to be more frequently associated with women and it is constantly described as a 'negative' feeling denoting weakness in those who experience it. According to some participants, many of the 'passive' reactions of women in situations of war, violence and forced displacement, are produced by fear: *'we never tried to find more information because we were afraid, men are more active, they have more impulse for revenge, but women no, we are always afraid'* (Yeny). I put emphasis on 'passive' because the narratives of my interviewees, joint with my analysis, revealed that there is no such passiveness or weakness in women's reactions to fear. Although I will explore this argument in more detail, I want to highlight that all these three emotional-embodied-experiences fueled by fear are evidence of how emotional consequences of war keep harmfully shaping women's embodied subjectivities across time, but also are evidence of women's active and reactive capacity to live and overcome settings of war, violence, and displacement.

In the following I will describe how fear worked in each one of these experiences, generating different emotions through the circulation of objects around my interviewees while shaping and re-shaping their embodied subjectivities.

Isolation: fear and shame in the shrinking and expansion of women's bodies

The emotional-embodied-experience of isolation is present in every life story of my interviewees. They have all experienced periods of physical isolation in different moments of their lives and, although the triggers for the experience differed, they all converged in narrating isolation as a gendered experience caused by fear. At first glance this isolation refers to a delimitation of private and public spaces, but my analysis reveals how it is embodied at different levels, constituting the very surfaces of the bodies of my interviewees. In addition, isolation is not an experience situated in the past, but instead, it keeps re-creating its power (across time and space) through different

embodiments, fueled by the experience of other emotions. In particular, the narratives of some of my interviewees demonstrated that shame endorses the experience of isolation (at different levels), extending the affective economy created by fear. In this sense, my analysis reveals that the emotional-embodied-experience of isolation is not a closed system, but rather a constantly occurring process. This finding posits great emphasis on disclosing different forms in which the emotional power of violence and war continue to haunt the life of its victims, re-creating sites of vulnerability. Nevertheless, my analysis also underlines the possibility of interpreting certain actions of my interviewees as sites of resistance when isolation is recreated throughout the experience of shame, showing that, as Elspeth Probyn argues, 'shame does more than attune us to the vast variety of sensations that inform life; it also proposes a sensibility at once practical, ethical and necessary: the appropriate reaction to one's own shame is a type of self-transformation' (Wilson, 2002, cited by Probyn, 2005: p. 63).

Fear and isolation*: building invisible walls*

The narratives of my participants revealed three different moments in which they experienced physical isolation: before leaving their hometowns, after arriving in Bogotá, and in the present moment. Although they are differentiated in a temporal description, the consequences and effects of this experience are constantly erasing borders between past, present and future temporalities.

Some of my interviewees narrated periods of time during their childhood in which they were forced to stay inside their houses in total isolation. In this and other studies[32], victims of Colombian armed conflict describe how armed groups generally take control of towns and cities intimidating its residents with violence and threats, constantly establishing violent norms of mobility in social spaces. In this study, these periods of isolation are narrated as 'consequences' of war dynamics, but also as actions motivated by feelings of fear experienced by the mothers of my participants. In line with Riaño (2008), the narratives described how the performance of violence 'has turned fear into a powerful language by which the various armed actors communicate with society, reconfigure the landscape and regulate everyday life' (p. 5):

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[32] Denov & Marchand, 2014; Riaño, 2008; *Basta Ya Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad* (2013) (CNMH).

> *'My mom never let us to go outside, nowhere, we were always inside our house, doing nothing, we spent one year out of school'* (Yeny).

> *'When they arrived (armed groups) we were not able to go out to play in the streets'* (Nasly).

In addition, my interviewees affirmed that after being displaced they were exposed to further kinds of isolation while settling in urban areas. Because most of their mothers were single parents upon arrival in Bogotá, they were obliged to leave their children inside their houses while they were working during the day. These periods of isolation are also described as consequences of dangers experienced in new urban areas and are described (again) as actions motivated by feelings of fear experienced by their mothers:

> *'Because my mom was alone, she was normally out to work so she left us alone, locked in the room all day long, without food or anything, just with a chamber pot in case we wanted to pee'* (Paola).

> *'I didn't have freedom, my mom never let me go out of the house like I used to do in my town, because in the town everyone knows you, but if you get lost in Bogotá, you are lost forever, she was afraid'* (Luisa).

The third type of isolation narrated by my interviewees is situated in the present. Some of these young women are facing violent relationships with their partners and are experiencing what I would call: *gendered isolation*. They reported situations of physical, psychological and economic violence exerted by their partners, and described how their freedom to move is restricted by feelings of fear:

> *'I want to leave, I don't want to be there anymore but I can't talk with him, he is very explosive, I'm afraid'* (Yeny).

> *'It is confinement, this man wants to have me just in the house, I cannot go out, he wants to have me like an object, just there'* (Leidy).

> *'He is not aggressive but if I don't obey him he kicks me out of the house. I feel insecure of being trapped, just doing what another person wants, I do it for my kids, I have to'* (Leidy).

In these three cases, isolation is an emotional-embodied-experience in which fear creates 'the very effect of the surface of bodies' while it works 'to align bodily space with social space' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 68-9). Within war environments, the presence of

armed groups disrupted dynamics of mobility in social space showing that 'fear works to restrict some bodies through the movement or expansion of others' (p. 69). In this sense isolation could be interpreted as an emotional-embodied-experience in which fearful objects are shaping borders (while women move away from the object of fear), demarking the social and private spaces inhabited by women and their children. Unable to inhabit social and public spaces (streets, schools, public transport, etc.) these bodies are forced to shrink occupying less space, confirming that, as Doreen Massey (2005) argues, spaces are not only material boundaries, but also social spaces where relationships of power and resistance are practiced.

Experiences of isolation within urban settings also exemplify Ahmed's conceptualizations of the spatial politics of fear. Away from violent armed groups, but confronted with the unknown city and its potential dangers, the mothers of my participants decided to isolate their children in order to protect them from potential injuries. In Ahmed words, 'the loss of the object of fear' (armed groups) 'renders the world itself a space of potential danger' (unknown city), 'a space that is anticipated as pain or injury on the surface of the body that fears' (p.69). Although this movement was intended to protect their children, my interviewees not only moved away from objects of potential danger, but also from possibilities of self-fulfillment: education, health care, and psychological and physical care. In this sense, women's bodies became territories of war, carrying and embodying consequences of violence in their very constitution. Following Merleau-Ponty's conceptualization of intercorporeality, in which we are constituted by the contact with other bodies, the consequences of isolation could be interpreted as a restriction to even make sense of ones body, dramatically altering processes of embodying a subjectivity (or becoming as a subject).

In cases of gendered isolation, the object of fear takes the shape of potential injuries in the future (losing their house, losing economical support, violent encounters), and this object prevents women from moving from private to public spaces. Similar to the latter example, losing the opportunity of getting education or having a job inhibits women from embodying new capacities to become economically independent. In this sense, threats from men not only negate public spaces for women, but also alter women's capacities in the future. As Ahmed suggests, fear 'works to contain some bodies such that they take less space' (2004: p. 69), in this case in the present, but also

in the future. This intercorporeality allows for a reproduction of women's bodies as vulnerable, inferior, and dependent.

Shame and isolation: shrinking and expansion of the self

Paola, who experienced intense physical isolation during two phases of her life (before and after forced displacement), exhibits one of the most explicit embodiments of isolation consequences. One of the photographs she produced to describe a feeling of instability in her present life displays an open book, as shown below:
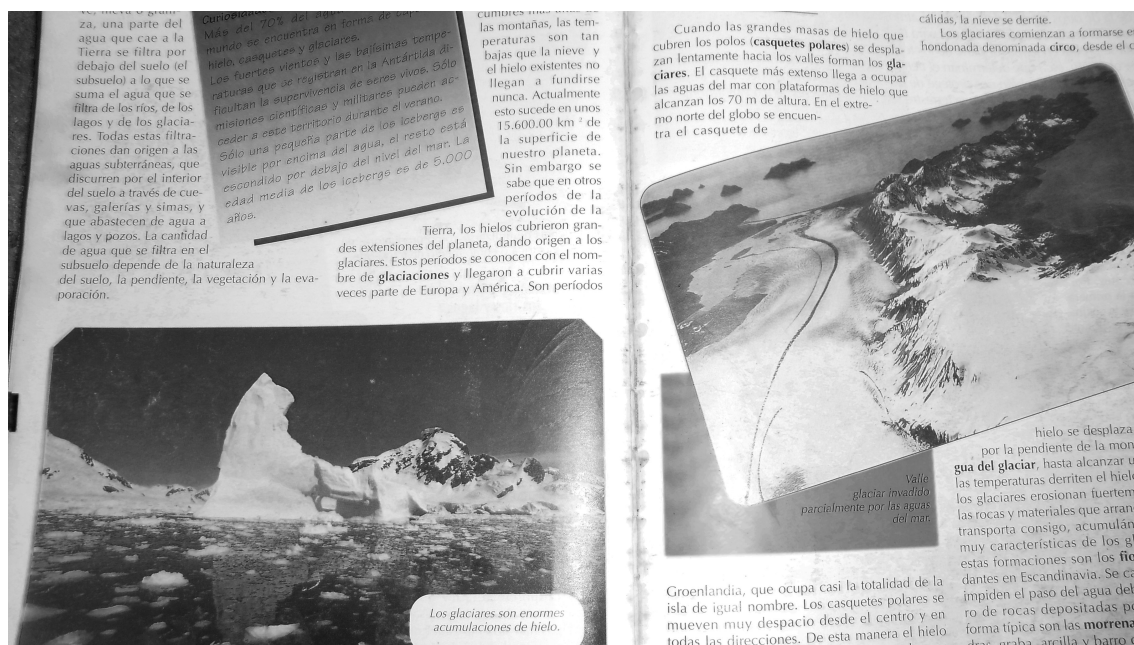
Photograph 8. Taken by Paola.

The first association that Paola made while describing her picture was: *'I chose it because it is instability, because I don't like to read'.* Trying to further investigate[33] her use of *'I don't like'* I found that it was not a matter or like or dislike, but a matter of ability. Paola didn't go to school because of her long periods of isolation. This year she got the opportunity of finishing her high school studies as a part of GE's program, and although she is able to read texts, it is still hard for her to have a full comprehension: *'when I read it is because I have too. Sometimes I don't understand what books mean'.*

---

[33] In this case, as in the subsequent analyses, it was required to ask several questions before arriving to the meaning or message intended with each one of the photographs.

Not having access to education changed Paola's future opportunities to overcome socio-economic vulnerabilities. Isolation shaped the surface of Paola's body not only in the past, but also in her future, displaying how disadvantaged bodies are not born but socially constructed:

> *Do you believe that reading is important?*
>
> *'Yes, because you can learn more, but I read and read and I don't understand, that is why I don't feel stable reading'*

Now, that the subject and object of fear have disappeared (her mother and the violent environment), a different circulation of objects are changing the affective economy of this emotional-embodied-experience. Paola's shortcomings in reading have charged new and different objects with affective meaning, reproducing a different kind of isolation. Paola has been living with her partner since she was 16-years-old (6 years ago). She has been a victim of physical and psychological violence during these years but she noted that currently she is facing a new 'positive' phase of her relationship (after joining a Christian church). As part of the new dynamics of the family, they are reading the bible together every night. Although Paola perceives this 'family moment' as a positive outcome of their religious involvement, her deficiencies while reading represent a site of vulnerability that is still used by her violent partner to exert violence over her:

> *'The only thing that I read is the bible, and I read it very fast because the father of my child tells me, Hey read that well!'*
>
> *'When I read it out loud I get tongue-tied, my voice breaks, I don't like it, I feel ashamed'*

This narrative represents a new form of isolation experienced by Paola, but in this case it is not fear but shame that is triggering this emotional-embodied-experience. Shame was defined by my interviewees in relation to others: *'that somebody sees me doing something I shouldn't, and me noticing that they are looking at me'* (Yeny), and it was related to actions, first as a result of the performance of an action: *'it is doing something I feel very ashamed of, like dancing'* (Paola) or second as 'moving away' becoming isolated from others: *'shame takes a lot of things from you, meeting people, learning*

*new things' (*Angy). In addition, shame referred to 'some quality of the self' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 105): *'sometimes you feel ashamed of what you are (displaced)'* (Leidy), *'something that I did wrong, like a crime or a mistake'* (Rosita), *'I will be ashamed of being seen with another person, because I'm a married woman'* (Yeny). Finally according to my participants' definition, the experience of shame causes immediate embodiment: *'its like talking in front of unknown people, I turn red, like really, really red (blush)'* (Luisa).

I interpret Paola's shame of reading as an emotional-embodied-experience of isolation as 'shame feels like an exposure –another sees what I have done that is bad and hence shameful –but it also involves an attempt to hide, a hiding that requires the subject turn away from the other and towards itself' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 103). Her feelings of shame are shaping current experiences of isolation in her own home, trying to move away from her violent partner, and shaping her bodily presence in this space. Her embodied experience of shame '*I get tongue-tied, my voice breaks'* makes one feel the intense fight her body is experiencing trying to occupy a physical space. As Probyn argues, 'most experiences of shame make you want to disappear…but the disjuncture of place, self, and interest can produce a particular visceral sensation of shame. It is felt in the rupture when bodies can't or won't fit the place' (2005: p. 39). It is almost as if she were to disappear from the scene. This (almost) disappearance is what Ahmed calls the physicality of shame insofar as it 'involves the de-forming and re-forming of bodily and social spaces, as bodies 'turn away' from the others who witness the shame' (p.103). This turning way from the other's gaze is what I conceptualized as a new form of the emotional-embodied-experience of isolation.

Furthermore, according to Ahmed this 'turning of shame is painful, but it involves a specific kind of pain' (p. 103), in shame the subject, 'in turning away from another and back to itself, is consumed by a feeling of badness that cannot simply be given away or attribute to another' (p. 104). In this sense, shame is 'about the self': 'I feel myself to be bad, and hence to expel the badness, I have to expel myself from my self' (p. 104). This 'awayness' orientation of this emotion could represent isolation from the gaze of others, but also from oneself, having repercussions in Paola's sense of herself ('traditional' self steam). In Probyn words 'shame is deeply related not only to how others think about us but also to how we think about ourselves, (2005: p. 45). Remembering that the cultural structure of shame varies greatly (Biddle, 1997), I want

to highlight that this is particularly important in Colombia society as education is related to the 'quality' of a person. The expression *'ser alguien en la vida'* (Luisa) (being someone in life) is traditionally used to describe ones motivations for getting education. In this sense, not having education is a devaluation of the self and consequently provokes feelings of shame, causing those bodies, that are not fully 'someone in life', to move away from spaces and objects that could improve their situation, regressing into isolation. This reveals as Silvan Tomkins argues, that 'shame is an effect of indignity, or defeat, of transgression, and of alienation' (1995: p. 133), and that 'we need to think through shame's passage from a physiological level to the sphere in which it becomes political (Probyn, 2005: p. 78).

These findings are evidence of the power of emotions in the shaping and re-shaping of vulnerable/segregated bodies. However, as I mention before, women's reactions to emotional interpellations are not only characterized by social difference re-formation. Women's reactions towards emotional-embodied-experiences also exhibit resistances that are constantly subverting emotional violence. Following Paola's interview, after asking her if she had any kind of reading or book that she enjoyed, she took out of her wallet a piece of paper (*Photograph 9*) and said: *'Well, there is something, I always carry this reading', 'When we were going through some troubles the father of my son wrote me a letter'.*

This letter entered into the affective economy of Paola's isolation, but constitutes an object of affect producing different emotions in its circulation. On one hand this letter reminds Paola about past histories of violence and humiliation evoking feelings of fear: *'I don't read it because it is when he was treating me badly, so it's better to leave that in the past'.* On the other hand it also represents an anticipation of potential injury in the future generating both fear of the potential repetition of violent experiences of the past: *'It is like the insecurity of him treating me badly again'*, but also embodying a certain kind of protection:

Why do you carry it?

'I believe for insecurity of coming back to those troubles, so the day that he comes back to that I will tell him, what is all this that you wrote to me here?'

'It is like to compare what he is writing there and whatever he can do in a certain moment'

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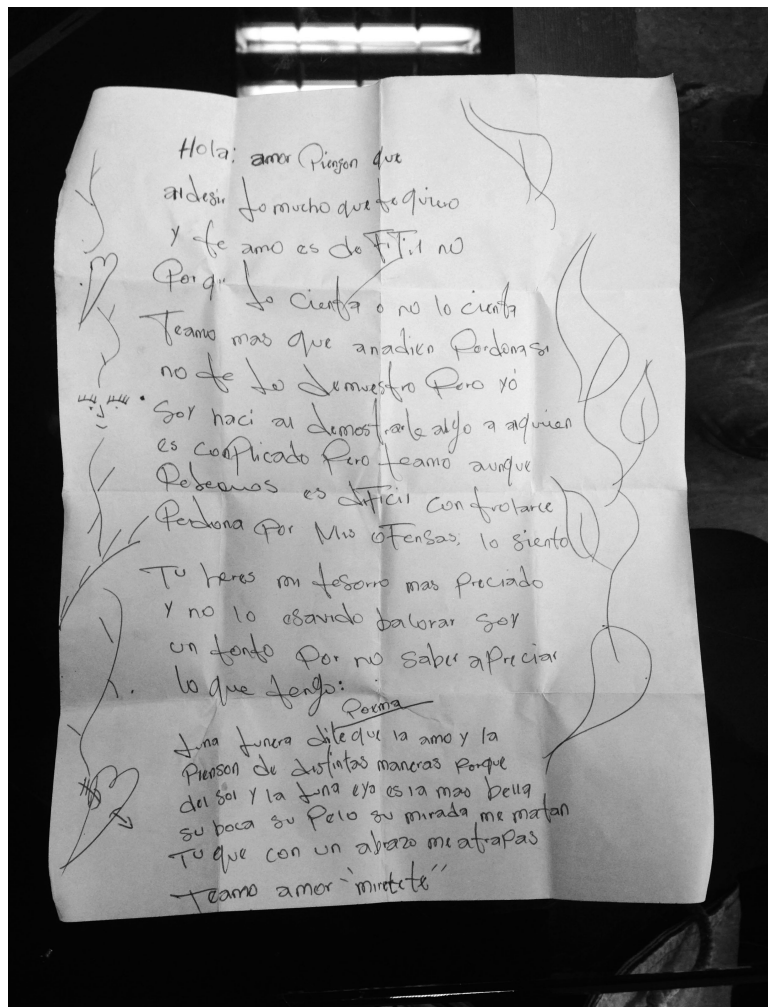
Photograph 9. Taken by Melissa

This object, which is not bad or good in its nature but read by Paola as both 'beneficial' and 'harmful' (Ahmed, 2004), comes to life through Paola's attribution of significance. Paola's experience of fear activates an anticipation to respond to 'what is approaching rather than already here' (Ahmed: 2004; p.65). In this sense, with the purpose of avoiding further violence against her, Paola's fear works as protection and resistance. Although this protection could be assumed as 'passive' while she remains in isolation ('doing nothing'), Margareta Hyden reminds us that women's resistance sometimes surpasses traditional associations between resistance and action (1999). Hyde suggests that 'fear is an expression of resistance not in that it includes action, but rather in that it constitutes a power which makes the woman notice that what may happen is something she doesn't want to see happen' (1999: p. 462). Paola is actually 'not doing nothing'

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with this letter, but at the same time is holding it, close to her body, as a protective strategy revealing that fear could also be perceived as 'the resistance offered by those who are presumed to be powerless' (1999: p. 462).

In addition, even when reading represents an object of Paola's shame, I want to highlight, as Tomkins argues, that 'shame is activated by an incomplete reduction of interest or joy' (Sedgwick & Frank, 1995: p. 134). In these sense, Paola is exposed to the experience of shame only because she has gained the power to draw attention and interest by her new ability to read. In other words, although shame 'makes our bodies horribly sensitive' (Probyn, 2005: p. 126), this sensibility and exposure is highly related to our capacity to attract interest and joy, confirming as Spinoza argued that the higher our power to be affected, the higher our power to affect the world around us (and vice versa) (2002). Following this argument, Paola's vulnerability (reading difficulties) could also become a site of resistance in which despite the painful experience of shame, this feeling 'also produces a somatic temporality, where the potential of again being interested is felt in the present pain of rejection. It is a strange hope but a powerful one' (Probyn, 2005: p. 63).

In conclusion, this analysis demonstrates that connections between fear and shame must be considered and theorized as this relation 'recognizes the ways in which these emotions 'strike deep into our bodies' (p.47). In addition it is necessary to explore how women's resistance is materialized and mobilized (even when it appears to be 'passive') in order to conceive subversive ways in which women's subjectivity is embodied. Isolation is an emotional-embodied-experience of war and violence which keeps re-shaping vulnerable bodies, but it is also an 'active' movement of protection and mobilization, even when this mobilization is oriented towards the self.

Silence: the lived presence of the past in the present

Although the definition of the word silence denotes 'stillness, absence, omission', I will argue in this section for the existence of certain active material consequences of the performativity of the emotional-embodied-experience of silence within and outside war settings. This argument is based on two assumptions: (1) empirically speaking silence

does not exist as a material absence as 'empirical "silence" is neither acoustically nor psychoacoustically silent, but a continuum or plenum of local environmental noise, then its effect, phenomenological speaking, is not one of silence, nor negatively of sound, but of present noise and the body's relationship with it (Brown, 2009: p. 204), and (2) in relation with others, silence is also 'an act of non-verbal communication that transmits many kinds of meaning, depending on cultural norms of interpretation' (Bonvillain, 1993: p. 47). These two assumptions have the objective of exploring different forms of embodiments shaped by silence, bringing the intangible consequences of war back into flesh.

I appeal to the concept of performativity, which is a 'discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names' (Austin, 1975) to argue that silence is a discursive type that could also have material consequences through its repetition. Following Judith Butler's definition, 'performativity is thus not a singular act, for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition' (1997: p. xxi), I analyze how silence creates embodiments while leaving no traces as it is even easier to conceal through reiteration (performativity).   In particular, this section is dedicated to revealing which emotions endorse this performativity of silence. As I mentioned previously, this experience of silence originated in feelings of fear, lived by the mothers of my interviewees, but now continues to haunt them in different forms and shapes. My analysis suggests that pain and love are two forces activated through the performativity of silence, re-creating, but also resisting, the oppression exerted by war settings and violent individuals.

While this analysis refutes the idea that silence is a negative absence, which is traditionally problematic 'because it deviates form the Eurocentric psychosocial norm of voice' (Kidron, 2009: p.6), it underlines the necessity of studying the possible diverse forms of silence related to violence and trauma. The connection between traumatic memory and silence is discursively framed as 'the burial or repression of speech, resulting not from personal volition but rather from the unspeakable nature of an experience that is beyond narrative' (Caruth, 1995; cited by Kidron, 2009: p. 7). The narratives of my interviewees revealed that this 'unspeakable nature' of violence experiences is directly related to the embodied emotionality that they convey. However, contrary to this psychologized notion of silence, my analysis explores different types of

silence, which also includes those emerging from women's volition. In this sense, my analysis supports the idea that trauma survivors experience a rupture, which later evolves into different sites of psychological distress (Kirmayer, Lemelson, & Barad, 2007), but my findings also explore women's re-signification of the consequences of silence as sites of resistance.

Silence and fear: the uncanny open wound of violence

According to my interviewees, silence is a common practice amongst community members living in areas affected by Colombian armed conflict. In response to terror threats, people avoid talking about acts of violence (murderers, disappearances, rapes, kidnappings), in an attempt to protect their families from similar or potential attacks. This practice is narrated as a re-action produced by feelings of fear, and, similar to isolation, it represents a strategy of anticipation of potential injury. When Yeny (24) was 10 years old, her father disappeared and was assassinated presumably by guerrillas. Some years later, the oldest of her sisters disappeared and was assassinated in unknown circumstances by the same group. After these occurrences Yeny's mother decided to leave their hometown and travel to another city with her daughters. Yeny described the practice of silence within her community and inside her own family, and affirmed that her mother explicitly avoided any conversation regarding these violent events:

> *'Nobody said anything (family), people knew what happened, but people didn't talk. They remained silent because they (guerrillas) are terrible, maybe because of fear'* (Yeny).

> *'She (mother) cried a lot, but she never talked about anything, she just remained silent* (Yeny).

Some of my interviewees' narratives revealed that after experiencing forced displacement, many of their mothers never talked about these experiences again, and explicitly requested not to be interrogated about these events. Silence, that was initiated as a practice derived from feelings of fear caused by threats of violence (before being displaced), evolved as a family practice (after being displaced) in which none of the members talks about the past, sealing any conversation regarding their lived violent experiences. Fear produced the practice of silence and, similar as seen in the previous

section, it shaped the borders of public and private spaces, not only between their family and community members, but also between family members inside their houses:

> *'She never tells us anything, she is very reserved, doesn't speak about this subject, she doesn't like to talk about that'* (Yeny).

> *'When I ask her she normally responds: I don't want to talk about that, and she turns very serious, she doesn't like it'* (Luisa).

Prolonged silence through time is analyzed as an emotional-embodied-experience as it shaped distant and recent memories of my interviewees' violent experiences. In some cases silence was embodied as a total absence of memories, while in others it remained as an embodied *emotional-shell* operating as a 'shrinking of the self' (Ahmed, 2004). In the first case, some of them reported not having any memories about their fathers (disappeared or killed by armed groups), or violent experiences within forced displacement, mainly because their mothers refused to talk about these incidents:

> *'When that happened (her father was killed while they were sleeping at their house) my mom grabbed my brother and me and she was crying and we asked, mommy what's happening? And she answered: nothing'* (Luisa).

> *'I don't remember my father, I could say that I never met my father'* (Luisa).

> *'No, I don't remember him (her father), we never talk about that'* (Nasly).

In this scenario, fear is drawing borders across the psychic and social through the embodiment of silence: my interviewees' memories are mediated by past feelings of fear experienced by their mothers. It is not that 'the social' (discourses, practices, relations) is influencing individual perceptions about the past, but instead, it is shaping these psychic borders within the individual's memory, and silence is embodied as an absence of reminiscences, images or thoughts. As Ahmed suggests 'emotions are crucial to the very constitution of the psychic and the social as objects, a process which suggests that the 'objectivity' of the psychic and social is an effect rather than a cause' (2004, p.10). This analysis shows that silence is an embodiment creating a link between my interviewees and their mothers, building bridges of emotional meaning across time and space.

This embodiment revealed to have implications in my interviewees' self-perception as victims of violence or displacement. As I mentioned in the third chapter, the embodied memory of violence is a determinant characteristic in defining this social category. Luisa, in particular, expressed not feeling like a victim mainly because she doesn't have memories of her violent past. Her mother's silence shaped her absence of memories and produced a different embodiment of the 'victim' category. In this example, fear worked as a protection of potential injury, which was performed in the past, but persists in the present. Luisa's narrative revealed that this memory: *we asked, mommy what's happening? And she answered: nothing'* (Luisa), actually came to exist as an absence of memory, becoming an embodied *nothing*.

> *'I don't consider myself a victim or a displaced person. Maybe my mom, because she lived everything, but I don't remember anything'* (Luisa).

Although in Luisa's narrative this absence of memories is described as a positive outcome, I also observed certain distress (tears, silences, facial and corporeal expressions of sadness) experienced by some of my other interviewees while talking about these 'silenced' violent events. In these accounts, fear, materialized through the emotional-embodied-experience of silence, traveled across time and space generating a different outcome: an *emotional shell*. However, in this case, both the subject and the object of fear have changed. While silence worked in the past, as the mother's anticipation of potential injury, where the object of fear was violence or death, and every object related to war, now, fear is experienced in my interviewees' bodies (daughters), and is materialized in the 'moving away' from 'violent memories' (the new object of affect). This moving away is what produces the emotional shell, which is materialized while the subject avoids pain produced by these violent memories. I named it 'shell' because while my interviewees described it as a protection practice *'it was long time ago, so it's better not to talk about that'* (Yeny) rather it works as an emotional facade providing insufficient protection and easily becoming fractured by encounters with different objects:

> *Do you feel uncomfortable by being called a victim of displacement?*
>
> *'Sometimes, because it reminds me of everything that happened, I prefer to be called by my name, because it has been a long time since I talked*

about this, I never talk to anybody about this, I have it just for me' (Yeny).

These fractures allow external objects to come in contact with the 'hypothetical past', and this encounter causes pain. In Ahmed's words, pain shows that 'the past lives in the very wounds that remain open in the present' (2004: p. 33). According to Riaño (2008) fear 'accompanies the entire journey of forced displacement and border crossing and it is expressed as embodied memory; a sensory awareness of the past that is actualized in the forced migrants' interactions with others and in their direct or indirect interactions with the forced migration regime' (p. 2). This example reveals how emotions (fear) get stuck in different objects, in this case words (victim, displacement) re-creating painful moments, experiences and meanings. As Eric Lister argues 'this forced silence *necessarily* shapes subsequent relation to the trauma. It constitutes a secondary trauma of enormous importance' (1982: p. 874).

In addition, I will suggest that this 'open wound' hasn't been able to heal because, as I mentioned before, this emotional shell works as a shrinking of the self. In this sense, when the subject moves away from its 'own' violent memories, this movement could be read as a turning away from the self. According to Ahmed 'bodily surfaces become reformed not only in instances when we might move away from objects that causes injuries, but also in the process of *moving towards the body and seeking to move away from the pain*' (p. 26). From biology we know that wounds disappear when our skin merges and closes in healing, but what happens when our own skin is moving away from itself? Following these arguments I suggest that our fear of experiencing pain produces a shrinking of the self while we move away from our own past memories shaping our own bodily surfaces (keeping the wound open). In this sense, Yeny's emotional shell represents an open wound that never healed because fear continues operating through silence's performativity (her mother's silence prolonged through time, and sealed by Yeny's performative utterances (Austin, 1975): *'it was long time ago, so it's better not to talk about that')*. This example reveals the affective economy of fear while working through silence's performativity: 'it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition' (Butler, 2011: p. xxi). This analysis reveals how guerrilla and violence' threats keeps haunting my subjects trough the shaping power of emotions, forming, and

re-forming vulnerable bodies through time and space. This is an embodiment of silence, but also a silent embodiment.

The photograph below was taken by Yeny to represent an object with emotional value for her (*Photograph 10*). This is a photograph she took of an old photograph of her father, and was later edited with her cellphone. Yeny stole this photograph from the family album of one of her aunts some years ago. Within Yeny's family not only did they avoid talking about their violent past experiences, but even physical objects, like the family album, were concealed:

> *'This photograph is from my aunt, because my mom doesn't even have pictures from the past'* (Yeny).

> *'I never look at this picture, but from that day I carry it with me, its a memory of him, it is the only thing I have of him, I can't remember his face, I carry it to make him present'* (Yeny).
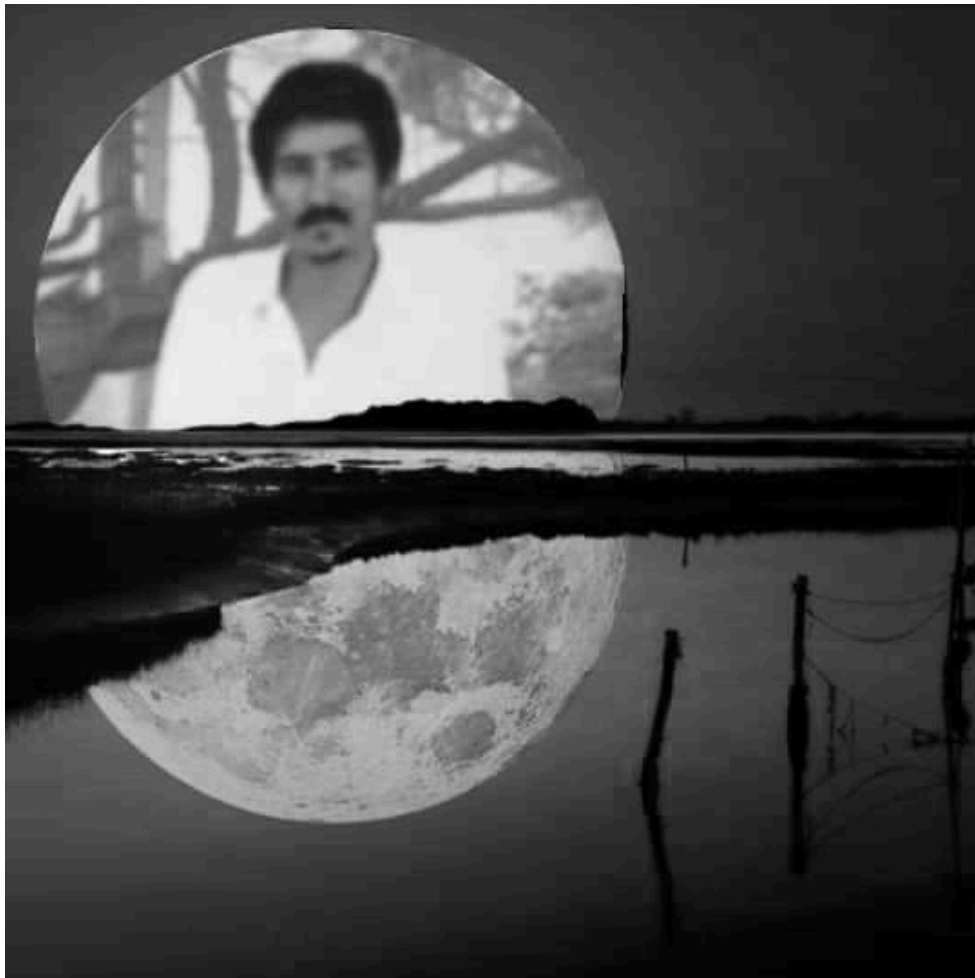
Photograph 10. Taken by Yeny.

Trying to grasp scattered memories of her father, Yeny holds this photograph as 'believed to be a record of what had been present' (Brown & Phu, 2014; p. 15). Even if she claims never to look at the photograph, she keeps it next to her, next to her body. This demonstrates how the affective speaks through the image and how this 'touching' is 'one of the most compelling engagements with the medium (photography), particularly since this act is often accompanied by a sensation that the subjects pictured on this surface can somehow touch back' (p. 14). In addition, when I asked about her motivations for using this layout (dark night with moonlight) when editing the photograph she explained:

> *'It is like the sky, it is night, and it is the darkness'*
>
> *'When you are in the countryside you go out at night to see your moon, your sky'*
>
> *'You know people say that when people die they go to heaven, maybe because of that'*

Yeny's explication is a conjunction of different emotional meanings. She located the photo of her father in the very environment that she lost him: the countryside. Although Yeny in some parts of the interview affirmed that she preferred living in Bogotá, the words she used to describe this scene carry a feeling of melancholy and desire, as if that place were still part of her: '*you go out at night to see **your moon, your sky**'*. As Edward Said noted exile is an 'un-healable rift forced between a human being and a native place' (2000: p. 173), and 'through memory –conscious or unconscious, psychic or somatic –we all carry traces of past geographies, in ways that are always emotionally coloured in hues ranging from pale to vivid' (Bondi, et.al, 2005: p. 13). In addition, she referred to the darkness of night, which could be interpreted as the blindness she carries as a result of silence surrounding her family story and the absence of her father. However, by placing her father's face in the moon, where the light comes from, she transfers the immaterial presence of her father into the sky, to represent the omnipresence of those who are dead but go to heaven.

Furthermore, while describing this photograph Yeny's arguments displayed numerous contradictions, giving evidence of her constant 'turning away' from painful memories:

'I would like to know who he was, or what happened, but it is something that occurred so long ago, like 18 years, so I don't care, well sometimes I feel… but no, now it is something normal, it is in the past, well it is always going to be present, but no…'

Although Yeny expresses a desire to keep her father's memory alive, she constantly pulls herself back through a repetitive negation of her own feelings. This exemplifies how her emotional shell keeps drawing its borders and her mother's silence continues to haunt her relationship with her past. When I asked Yeny what she would say to her father if she had the chance, her emotional shell finally broke and the ghost entered the room, after my invocation (Gordon, 2008). Yeny looked at the picture for some minutes and started crying. As Gordon suggests, 'photographs provide the evidence that a disappearance is real only when it is apparitional, only when the missing or the lost or the not there shines through, there where it might not have been expected, there in that moment of affective recognition that is distinctive of haunting' (2008: p. 102). Yeny's father shone through that moon and became apparitional in the room:

'I don't know… I would like to have him here just for one minute... I would like to see him, but I know that it is not going to happen…'

Do you talk with him?

'No, well now that I'm talking with you about this topics these days, I've dreamt about with him, but it is not a very clear dream, I just see his face'

'With my thoughts sometimes I try to talk with him, like when you are in a moment that you need your father, but no, not anymore'

The *punctum* of the photograph, her father's face as the shining moonlight, is what 'breaks' Yeny's emotional shell. This emotional embodied encounter, between Yeny and the photograph, is produced by the 'wound' (*punctum*) of the photo and the unhealed 'wound' produced by her emotional-embodied-experience of silence. Her silenced memories keep chasing her dreams, and the past and present are merged in the meaning making process she faces while talking to me (Chorodow, 1999).

Although remembering is painful, and talking about trauma requires high affective investments, tracing the origin of Yeny's distress in her emotional-embodied-experience of silence (endorsed by fear) is a reminder that 'forgetting would be a

repetition of the violence or injury'. As Ahmed suggests 'our task might instead be to remember how the surfaces of the bodies came to be wounded in the first place' (2004: p. 33) and talking about the silenced violence exerted by war is a debt that Colombia's society has with our victims:

> *Do you think it's important to be named as a victim?*
>
> *'Yes, because there is a lot of people that try to forget, and they don't remember'* (Paola).
>
> *'When I remember? It takes you to moments that you lived that you try to forget but you cant, there would always be someone remembering what happened to you'* (Paola).
>
> *'I was talking yesterday with Yeny and she told me that it was good to come here (to the interview) because there are people who try to forget, but at any moment you could always be forced to remember. So she said it was good to remember because nothing is left behind, that sooner or later you will have to remember even if you don't want to'* (Paola).

Silence and forgiveness: resisting gender violence

Finally, I want to highlight that even when my interviewees' mothers enacted this emotional-embodied-experience of silence, causing emotional distress in their lives, there is a practice of *forgiveness* that resists separation or resentment between women. Leidy left her house at 14 after been sexually abused by her father for several years. Before leaving Leidy sought protection from her mother but didn't succeed: *'I told her but she didn't believe me, she said that I was lying'.* Some years later Leidy came back to her parents' home and restarted her relationship with her mother. When trying to answer the question *what does your mother mean for you?* Leidy took the photograph below.

Using symbolism Leidy captured these three porcelain angels that were hanging in her children's bedroom and said: *'After so many years I think she is like my guardian, like an angel, she helps me, she protects me, she gives me advice'.* Although Leidy cannot forget that her mother remained silent, hiding her father's abuse: *'She never did anything to kick that guy out of the house, I don't like that she is so blinded by him',* she forgave her as an understanding of her gender position: *'Because she was the one*

working to maintain our house she left us with my father', 'I admire that she always paid for everything for us, our school, our clothes, and that guy was always doing nothing'. Leidy now understands her mother's silence as a result of feelings of fear coming from a rigid violent gender structure operating at her house: *'He was abusing us (her and her sister), playing porn videos, and we said no! But he told us he was going to kill my mom'.*

Photograph 11. Taken by Leidy.

Now that Leidy is facing a similar situation with a violent partner she has taken action to resist this violence, and instead of replicating her mother's performativity of silence, she is trying to promote paths of communication between her children:

> *'I left my kids in my mother's house while I was working, but my daughter told me that her grandfather was touching her, so I decided to never take them into that house again'* (Leidy).

'They always tell me everything, they are growing and it's getting harder, but I try to talk with them everyday to know what is happening' (Leidy).

Although the emotional-embodied-experience of silence caused material consequences on Leidy's body, and represented a constant fight to resist and cope with the trauma that this sexual abuse caused to her subjectivity (long periods of therapy), she empathizes with her mother's behavior, having been another woman under oppressive gender violence: *'she is worst than me, doing everything for other people, she is very noble'* *'she represents that support that you always need'*. Leidy's forgiveness represents a site of emotional resistance in which women's alliances could diminish the negative consequences of the emotional-embodied-experience of silence within violent structures. Although 'memory wounds' remain open as the effect of silence's performativity, my interviewees comprehension of the structural and gendered violence affecting their mothers lives gives them the capacity to perceive their current lives from a more subversive and feminist point of view.

In addition, this photograph destabilizes visual tropes commonly associated with abandonment or sexual abuse, creating a new *studium* to understand the forgiveness of mothers and daughters as a site of emotional resistance. While it is hard to determine causality, it is also relevant to consider the location of these angels (the bedroom of her children) as an entanglement of emotional meaning. In this photograph, everything collides in the stickiness of emotions relationality: the 'lack' of protection from her mother, her protection towards her children, and mother and daughter forgiveness.

Displacement: the constant and unfinished movement within embodiment

This section is dedicated to conceptualizing the gendered and racialized emotional-embodied-experience of *displacement*. This analysis is based on the literal definition of this word, which refers to 'the act of displacing' or 'the state of being displaced'. I want to highlight three aspects of this definition: (1) it refers to literal 'movement' across spaces, (2) this is an 'unfinished movement' (displacing: it is still happening), and (3) it suggests a binary opposition of active (the act of displacing) and passive (being

displaced). I underline these aspects with the purpose of analyzing three different forms in which displacement is emotionally embodied in my interviewees.

Related to the first and third aspect, the narratives of my participants revealed that they have experienced diverse types of displacement, in which displacement has been an active (voluntary, even in cases of forced displacement) movement that has merged (in some cases) as a particular embodiment of fear: *premonition*. This analysis draws on Spinoza's definition of emotion as 'the affections of the body by which the body's power of activity is increased or diminished' (2002: p. 278), and argues the central role of emotions in this active displacement. In second place, this unfinished movement was present in some narratives of my participants in two different levels. First, the initial experience of displacement (incited by fear) caused a permanent and an unfinished movement within my participants embodied subjectivities (displaced subjectivities), provoked by different emotions like shame and disgust, displaying sites of vulnerability, but also of resistance. Second, this unfinished movement was also present in how displacement, as an embodied-emotional-experience, provokes movements of emotional meaning among different objects of affect. Some of my interviewees described how emotions like disgust and love are displaced from one object of affect to an-other, carrying all their transformative potential with them.

Displacing bodies: embodied fear and *premonition*

My interviewees' narratives displayed three different situations in which they moved across different physical spaces. The first was narrated as a forced displacement in response to violence and threats coming from armed groups in their hometowns. In these cases women left their homes and traveled between cities during days trying to find a safe place for their families. This displacement was described as movement produced by feelings of fear, mostly in situations in which their lives were under extreme danger:

> *'When they (paramilitary) knew we were in the area we received a message saying that we had to leave the town before midnight, so we left everything and just took our clothes'* (Leidy).

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> *'Less than a week after of my father's death my mom took some savings she had and we came to Bogotá because my mom was very scared'* (Luisa).

These findings illustrate how 'fear is concerned with the preservation not simply of 'me', but also 'us'... or even life itself' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 64). These women decided to turn away from the object of fear, even when this movement involved leaving their entire lives behind. The second situation of displacement narrated by my interviewees was motivated by feelings of fear experienced when arriving in new spaces in Bogotá. The rooms/apartments occupied by these families, during their first months, were not perceived as safe or reliable places[34]. Fleeing gender violence, or the general risks of these places, women decided once again to move:

> *'Because the landlord was a pervert, very abusive with her, so she (mother) preferred to leave'* (Paola).

The third displacement narrated was related to situations of gender violence, but was located outside of conditions of war or armed conflict. Running away from sexual, physical, and psychological abuse, most of them left their family homes at a very young age. One of the most representative of these cases is Leidy's life story who decided to leave her house at the age of 14 after being sexually abused by her father for several years:

> *'When I was 11 years old I escaped from by home, we were like 10 kids, we started walking for 15 days but we had to comeback because one of them was sick, I was also with my sister. We all had troubles at home, we were scared'* (Leidy).

> *'When I was 14 I met this guy, the father of my kids, so I left my house to live with him'* (Leidy).

According to my interviewees these displacements/movements were provoked by feelings of fear, turning away from (or avoiding the passing by of) the object of fear (Ahmed, 2004). However, although Leidy's narrative pointed explicitly to the object of her fear: her father, I found other narratives in which the whole situation of a 'gendered life' represented a complex object of fear. Rosita left her town at the age of 14 and

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[34] These spaces were located in dangerous areas of the city and were characterized by very precarious conditions.

traveled to a bigger city, Quibdó, to work as a babysitter. When I asked her about her motivations for leaving at such a young age she said:

> *'I was afraid to stay there (in her hometown) 'I was very afraid of ending up like my sister, she has children and just stays at home cooking all day, so I tried to find another way for me'*

> *'When you have kids you don't study and you have to depend on your husband's money, and I said I don't want that, nobody is giving me money, I wanted to have my own things so nobody could humiliate me'*

At the end of our interview Rosita told me she was a lesbian and that nobody in her hometown knew about it. This narrative elucidates how fear motivated a movement trying to expand Rosita's possibilities in different social spaces. Her fear was produced not by one particular object of affect but by a gendered structure operating in her cultural space. However, the experience of feelings of fear activated her movement and she made a displacement towards a different kind of life.

In these narratives, displacement is described as an emotional-embodied-experience activated by feelings of fear. Similar to isolation, displacement is lived as a new delimitation of the space allowed to be occupied. Nonetheless, instead of being an inward movement inwards, in which bodies were trying to shrink in isolation, this was a movement outwards trying to find alternative spaces for these bodies to expand. Fear, in these cases, didn't involve the defense of borders that already exist. Instead, 'fear makes those borders, by establishing objects from which the subject, is fearing, can flee' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 67). In this sense, displacement as an outwards movement creates new borders in which women shape themselves, and this expansion of the body enlarges the social space that they inhabit.

Ahmed's analysis on the relationship between fear and the alignment of the body and social space is focused in how 'fear shrinks bodily space and this shrinkage involves the restriction of the bodily mobility in social space' (p. 64). However, the emotional-embodied-experience of displacement in these narratives revealed how women's re-action to feelings of fear could also expand bodily space, and this expansion involves alternative forms of bodily mobility in social space. Although this

expansion involved difficult, precarious, and further fearful situations, this displacement allowed them to preserve life and offered new possibilities for them and their children.

In addition, I would like to highlight that the narratives of my interviewees described a 'particular form of anticipation' in women's reactions when experiencing feelings of fear. This form of anticipation was described in terms of bodily sensations: *'I feel it (fear) in my feet, yes definitely in my feet'* (Paola), *'I feel it in my heart, like bumping very fast'* (Yorlenis), denoting a 'physical anticipation of movement'. Moreover, some of them referred to the word *premonition* to describe how this anticipation of potential injury was felt on their bodies provoking their physical displacement. Rosita (24) was seven-years-old when violence arrived to her hometown located in Chocó. After several years of witnessing assassinations, tortures, and countless forms of violence, Rosita's mother decided to leave their hometown taking all her children with her: *'My mom had the courage to take a boat from a man that was coming to sell things in my hometown, guerrillas didn't notice, I don't remember it well, but we traveled to Quibdó'* (Rosita). When I asked her why her father didn't traveled with them she replied: *'my mom had a premonition that something was coming, she told my grandmother and father to leave but they didn't listen to her'* (Rosita).

Likewise, Paola also referred to this bodily premonition which have alerted her several times that a potential danger was approaching: *'that day (Wednesday) I was here (GE offices) I started feeling that, like that premonition that something is going to happen'*. That night, Paola had one of her most violent confrontations with her partner, and two days later she decided to leave home after once again experiencing the presence of this embodiment of anticipation: *'that day (Friday) I arrived here and I was very distracted, and I felt that little thing you feel in the stomach and I was wondering –what is going to happen? –I don't know if I'm traumatized but you can feel it, and it is awful'*. That day Paola decided to leave her job early and went back to her house to pack her bags to make her displacement. However, as this was the first time that Paola was totally determined to leave her partner, he agreed to start going to the church in order to improve their relationship.

Although these findings need to be studied in more detail, it seems as if the emotional-embodied-experience of displacement could also work as an embodiment of a powerful form of anticipation, making this turning away from the object of fear a more accurate movement. Following Spinoza's conceptualization, women's embodied

premonition could be a proof of how *'the greater our power to be affected, he posits, the greater our power to act'* (Hardt, 2007). In addition, this finding resonates with Hyde's invitation to envision different ways in which fear can be read as women's resistance to settings of violence insofar as 'it constitutes a power which makes the woman notice that what may happen is something she doesn't want to see happen'. In this sense fear 'contains an unarticulated knowledge of what she wants and does not want' (1999: p. 462).

Displacing subjectivities: encountering racism and disgust

Displacement is an unfinished movement in the lives of my interviewees, which haunts their bodies in every encounter they have with new objects. One of the most notorious unfinished movements in my interviewees' narratives is associated with the consequences of leaving and changing their cultural background. What started as a reaction towards fear (displacement from the countryside), evolved as a consonant movement away and towards racism in the city. Confronting discrimination, my interviewees have experienced (and sometimes have been the object of) emotions like fear, shame, and disgust, which have caused a constant re-shaping of their embodied subjectivities while living in urban areas.

The narratives of Afro-Colombian participants exhibited the presence of experiences of discrimination while living in Bogotá: '*People are very racist here*' (Nasly), *'when I was a kid they were called me negro or told me that my mom was displaced'.* (Luisa). These narratives described different situations in which they have felt discriminated when interacting with 'white' people:

> '*People watch us very oddly, they think that because one is black one doesn't take a shower, or that one doesn't feel, or that one doesn't want to fight for one's dreams*' (Angy)

> '*I was scared about using Transmilenio[35], because I didn't know how to use it, or taking the bus was very difficult*' (Rosita).

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[35] The public transport system in Bogotá.

'I feel ashamed to ask someone directions, like an address in the street'
(Nasly).

Although these situations were associated with three different emotions: shame, fear and disgust, I will pur special emphasis on the relation between racism and disgust because this emotion was perceived both as an emotional power that creates segregation, as well as an emotional power that could be displaced and re-appropriated by the Other, by the *abject* ('is that which opposes the I') (Kristeva 1982: p.3).

According to my interviewees disgust is related to repugnance: *'what is dirty, like repugnant'* (Rosita), *'feeling repugnancy for something or someone, something you can't tolerate'* (Paola), putting special emphasis on the distance between their bodies and the object of disgust: *'like repugnant things you want to hold meters away from you'* (Angy), *'its like someone annoying, like something you don't even want to look at'* (Paola). Ahmed's (2004) analysis of disgust departs form Darwin's (1904)[36] accounts of his encounters with the native body of 'the' colonized, and highlights the associations between what is bad ('tastes bad') and what is strange-or-other. According to Ahmed, in these encounters (with the unknown) anything that is read as different-than-me is related with 'badness', and 'the proximity of the bodies of others is read as the cause of 'our sickness' (p. 83). Both conceptualizations, my interviewees' definitions and Ahmed analysis, highlight the relationality of disgust and reveal that the 'sickness' caused by the proximity of the other-who-is-strange is always mediated by past histories/impressions/meanings that come before the subject. Angy's narrative shows how different meanings (past histories of afro-Colombians' slavery) are tied to her body, dirtiness: '*they think that because one is black one doesn't take a shower*, objectification: '*that one doesn't feel'*, and laziness: *that one doesn't want to fight for ones dreams'*.

In addition, the orientation that is established in the encounter reflects that this 'white' body is moving away from this 'other': 'disgust is manifested as a distancing from some object, event or situation, and can be characterized as a rejection' (Rozin et al; 1993: p. 577; cited by Ahmed, 2004: p. 85):

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[36] 'In Tierra del Fuego a native touched with his finger some cold preserved meat which I was eating… and plainly showed utter disgust at its softness; whilst I felt utter disgust at my food being touched by a naked savage, though his hands did not appear dirty' (Darwin, 1904: p. 269, cited by Ahmed, 2004: p. 82).

> *'One day my mom asked a lady in the street for directions and she sent us in the wrong direction and she looked at us very nastly.* (Nasly)

Following these narratives, racism is materialized in the attribution of meaning that occurs when, within the encounter, one makes the reading of the black body as 'the other/strange', immediately activating the historic legacy that comes before this subject (any black body). This reading provokes one's feelings of disgust, and a displacement occurs when trying to 'move away' from what is bad, as if it were going to be 'taken into' the body (Ahmed, 2004).

These narratives exemplified which are some of the effects of the emotional-embodied-experience of displacement. When these bodies are dislocated from their cultural and geopolitical space, they are constantly re-shaped by the sociality of emotions (disgust) embodying the 'other-stranger-unfamiliar'. As Ahmed suggests, 'the relation between disgust and power is evident when we consider the spatiality of disgust reactions, and their role in the hierarchizing of space as well as bodies' (p. 88). Trying to move or locate themselves within this urban spatiality, women are permanently vulnerable to 'the re-shaping' of their surfaces in every new encounter they have with the 'local', showing that displacement is an unfinished movement of their embodied subjectivity.

Angy shared the photograph below in order to answer the question of what was her favorite thing about her self. She described that this photo was taken five months ago when she didn't have enough money to 'fix her hair' (with her fake hair braiding). At the beginning she affirmed that this 'look' was her favorite thing about her: *'My roots, without any of this (fake hair)', 'Without all of these things (fake braiding) you can feel more free, more relax, more like me'.* However, when Angy started describing the picture she struggled to decide whether she liked her roots or not, displaying a disassociation (displacement) between her own self:

> *'When I decided to leave my real hair I was thinking about what people were going to say'*

> *'But before going out on the streets I first uploaded my photo to Facebook and in one hour I had like 50 likes, so I felt better and I went out on the streets'*

> *'Like this I feel weird like as if it is not me (with her real hair)'*

'But you know, this is like something borrowed (fake braiding), instead that is my real hair'

'One does it for vanity, to have long hair, but it is not like something that you like. Because if it was not for vanity I think we would wear our real hair'

Photograph 12. Taken by Angy.

Angy's struggle in deciding whether she liked her real hair or not, is an embodiment of her constant displacement. The long hair, historically associated with white women's hair (Hooks, 2013), is an object of affect that helps her to situate herself in her new environment (avoiding disgust from others, or her own feelings of shame). But at the same time it is described as a burden, and a displacement from her *roots*. This struggle represents the resistance of the material body to be changed, but also exemplifies how the social permeates this material shaping of the body's surfaces. In addition, her desire to gain the approval of her Facebook friends displays how she is negotiating her space in a place that she doesn't belong. As Probyn suggests: 'the shame of the cultural

outsider is fed by a deep desire to fit in and an abiding interest in being able to do so –to belong where you don't belong" (2005: p. 39).

Besides presenting a culturally recognized *studium*, a portrait, this photograph disrupts traditional tropes, not only by allowing Angy to decide how she wants to be seen, but also in Angy's selection between her 'image-repertories' (Barthes, 1981). According to Barthes, 'in front of the lens, I am at the same time: the one I think I am, the one I want others to think I am, the one the photographer thinks I am, and the one he makes use of to exhibit his art' (1981: p. 13). In this sense, Angy's photograph battles with what she thinks she is and what she wants others to think of her. In this photograph it is Angy's hair (*punctum*), which comes alive and brings back the life outside of the photograph, displaying how shame and disgust provoke displacements within her embodied subjectivity.

Displacing emotional meaning: disgust and love while resisting marginalization

The narratives of my interviewees also revealed situations in which they deliberately decided to move away from these 'others' who seem to be strangers and dangerous for them (returning the gaze). In particular, I want to underline that not only is it possible to move away from that privileged body that enacts power over specific bodies, but also, that subjects can employ emotions as sites of resistance, displacing emotional meaning (ideas) from one object to an-other.

This analysis puts special emphasis in Ahmed's conceptualization of affective economies based on the concept of displacement within psychoanalytic theory. Ahmed argues that emotions involve a series of displacements that do not reside positively in a sign or figure. If emotions do not originate within an individual psyche, Ahmed suggests that they do not reside positively in consciousness (Ahmed, 2004). Using Freud's concept of 'unconscious emotions' 'whereby an affective impulse is perceived but misconstrued, and which becomes attached to another idea' (Freud 1964: p. 177), Ahmed suggests that it is not the feeling that is repressed from consciousness, 'but the idea to which the feeling may have been first (but provisionally) connected' (2004, p: 44). In conclusion, Ahmed argues that psychoanalysis allows us to reveal how emotions involve a movement or association, 'whereby feelings take us across different levels of

signification, not all of which can be admitted in the present' (p.44). Through this process Ahmed argues for a 'theory of emotion as economy' where emotions work as a form of capital value: 'affect does not reside positively in the sign or commodity, but it is produced as an effect of its circulation' (p. 45). In the following analysis I describe two of these displacements, revealing alternative and subversive affective economies generated by women to resist violence and discrimination.

When I asked Angy what could be an object of her disgust she answered:

'It could be people, or words, for example the word inequality, that word disgusts me, because you know, for having this cinnamon colored skin I've suffer a lot of discrimination, so yes, that word is like when you wash the dishes and something is left there in the sink, that word is like disgust in touching that' (Angy).

After exploring more about Angy's association between *inequality* and disgust she started narrating an incident of racism she had experienced in her school in Bogotá. Her teacher proposed a group activity and she was assigned to work with two girls and one boy:

'He started saying, I don't want to work with her, you Negros disgust me, don't touch me! So I sat down next to him and he pulled away my notebook and threw it to the floor. So I took a chair and I threw it at his face. He was all covered in blood' (Angy).

'I never thought I could do something like that, I'm not going to say it was good what I did, but because I have a different skin color that to him means that I have a different heart or that I don't feel' (Angy).

Angy's experience discloses an active mechanism of emotional re-appropriation that is working through the displacement of emotional meanings from conscious to unconscious levels. Angy who has been the object of disgust on several encounters has re-appropriated this emotion, changing the direction of this abjection, turning it into the 'white' body oppressing her. Nonetheless, in this movement it was not the 'white' body that was named the new abject, but the word inequality. The stickiness of disgust tied all that is around it (subject, object, histories and language). According to Angy's narrative the word inequality represents the relationship (border) that she has with this

'white' body, and following Julia Kristeva's arguments, in abjections 'it is the border that is transformed into an object' (1982: 4). This displacement of the attribution of meaning displays that 'emotions do not positively inhabit anybody or anything, meaning that 'the subject' is simply the nodal point in the economy, rather than its origin and destination' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 47). In this sense, the word inequality enters into the affective economy of disgust carrying all the 'unconscious' histories of racism and discrimination that Angy has encountered. In addition, the aggressive reaction of Angy illustrates that 'what constitutes an affective response is hugely complex, and is in part the result of an embodied history to which and with which the body reacts' (Probyn, 2004: p. 29).

Ahmed's conceptualizations of disgust are focused on how some bodies move away from the abject, creating rejection and displaying power relations in their movement. Nonetheless, my analysis reveals that the abject is not only a passive object that is rejected, but instead displays how disgust's sociality continues when the abject re-acts and responds to this relationality. I am not suggesting that Ahmed's theorizations are neglecting agency in the vulnerable body of the one who has been rejected, but most of her accounts are made in a passive tone in which bodies are being shaped by power relations, as if it were a completed movement or displacement.

Angy finished her story by saying: *'el que esta quiero se deja quieto'* (*'if it is not broken don't fix it'[37]*). This Colombian proverb refers to movement, and works as a warning of the body's capacity to re-act to external provocations. In a widely colloquial way this phrase is expressing Spinoza's main statement, *'the greater our power to be affected, he posits, the greater our power to act'* (Hardt, 2007), reminding us that even when violence materializes in vulnerable bodies, these bodies are always resisting and subverting these embodiments.

A second example of displacement of emotional meaning between objects also revealed that 'emotions are not only about movement, they are also about attachments or about what connects us to this or to that' (Ahmed, 2004: p. 11). Although the emotional-embodied-experience of displacement refers to several movements, it also displayed how my interviewees have developed alternative attachments and have built dwelling places within their permanent displacement.

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[37] This is the closest translation in English, although it does not convey the complete meaning it holds in Colombian slang.

Angy, who was abandoned at the age of three, grew up in an orphanage run by the Catholic Church in Bogotá. Her acceptance was not easy due to the minimum age for placement was being seven years old, but Sor Raquel, one of the working nuns in the orphanage, intervened and made herself accountable for Angy's care. Angy took the photograph below in order to narrate an object with emotional meaning for her. The image displays Angy's body, and draws all our attention to her pregnant belly (she was seven months pregnant at the time the photograph was taken). On top of her naked stomach she placed a bracelet, one that has been with her since she met Sor Raquel: *'She gave it to me, she put it around my neck because it didn't fit me, I was too small. She told me that when I was older enough I could put it on my wrist'.* When I asked her about the meaning of this object she replied:

'Everything. Like force. Security' (Angy).

Photograph 13. Taken by Angy.

While Angy was facing a childhood full of emotional challenges after been abandoned, this bracelet came to embody all the emotional support that Sor Raquel offered her.

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With the absence of a 'protection figure' in her life (or at least a constant one) this object represents the only 'thing' that has been keeping her company through all these years:

> *'I don't believe in those things, but I think this is like a positive energy for my body. It is like faith, you believe in God but you don't see him'*

> *'Because when everything happened, the hole and everything[38], I lost everything but this, it got stuck in me, so I say it is like my good luck charm'*

> *'I know that an amulet cannot protect you from an earthquake, but emotionally it can make you feel many different things'*

In the absence of her protection figure (Sor Raquel or her parents) Angy displaced her emotional attachment to this object, which is read as 'beneficial' through the attribution of meaning that Sor Raquel created in the past, but that Angy continues re-creating in the present. This object is brought to life through this emotional displacement, and it embodies in its materiality a dwelling place to resist her emotional-embodied-experience of displacement and instability:

> *'When I'm sad I play with her, like pulling it up and down, because emotionally it transmits something to me, its like people that express their anxiety by biting their nails, everything I feel is related to my bracelet'*

> *'Yes because it reminds me of the good and bad things that I've been through, so it reminds me that people come and go, but my bracelet has been here always, she knows, (laughs) yes she knows what I've done good or bad, she has like the positive and negative in me, because she has been with me forever'*

Now that Angy is pregnant, she is planning on giving her baby girl this bracelet expecting to displace all the protection and love feelings to her: *'I think if I give it to her with love, the idea is to transfer all of those good feelings through the bracelet'*. Her love for her daughter does not reside in this bracelet, but this feeling is shaped by the

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[38] When Angy was seven years old her mother kidnapped her and took her to live in Buenaventura for four months, a conflict zone located on the west coast of Colombia. While living in these dangerous and precarious conditions she was almost killed twice due to guerrillas attacks.

contact that Angy has with this object (Ahmed, 2004). Furthermore, Angy affirms that giving this bracelet to her daughter could be an actual extension of her corporeality, which could transcend time and space, connecting them despite their movements: *'If I'm not with her, if she looks at the bracelet she could know and feel that I am with her, that little wind (laugh)', 'It would be my ideal, that she will think that this bracelet could help her'.*

The emotional-embodied-experience of displacement, with origin in Angy's abandonment, has created different emotional displacements and attachments across time and space. Angy has built her emotional stability through attachments to physical objects that have traveled with her while facing violent situations. Although the absence of her parents caused emotional distress, Angy developed strategies to cope with abandonment, and the circulation of certain objects have shaped Angy's body generating feelings of love and protection.

While being the Operator (photographer), and contradicting Barthes, Angy deliberately captured the *punctum* of the scene. Undoubtedly knowing the story behind the bracelet allows the viewer to get more (emotionally) attracted to the image. However the concept below, emitted by the jury of LOVA Photo Competition 2016, demonstrates that Angy succeed in generating an emotional connection (*punctum*) with the viewer, transmitting feelings of love and protection. It also demonstrates that enabling women to create their own visual narratives creates dislocated and unexpected *studiums* subverting traditional understandings of violence and displacement:

'Next to our first choice, we were touched by a belly button. A naked pregnant belly with a beaded necklace on top of it, a hand holding the t-shirt up, so that we can see the necklace. It made us curious and we wanted to know more about the story behind this. It has the obvious of being pregnant, but also the hope of maybe being able to protect. It's beautiful and does not push the message in the face of the beholder. It did not matter if the belly was black, white or yellow, the woman laying there could lay everywhere, America, Russia, Africa, Asia, Polynesia, Europe … it does not matter. The universal idea of wanting to be able to protect the offspring appeals to the viewer. The story behind it makes us curious and we would like to talk to her straight away. We do not know if she herself took the photo or anybody else, but the scene could easily be a pose for a researcher studying pregnancy as an intimate registration of personal hope and care. It does not matter; the transcending power of the picture doesn't need context' (Hanneke van Beek & Reinhilde Sotiria König, 2016).

This chapter has illustrated how emotional-embodied-experiences of violence are constantly shaping women's bodies, delimiting or expanding their surfaces (social, individual, private, public, psychic). It also emphasized the extended consequences of the embodiments of violence across time and space, deepening our comprehension of the 'immaterial', but always embodied, consequences of forced displacement and gender violence in Colombia. Finally this analysis revealed sites of resistance and subversion that are empowered by the relationality of women's emotions. Although it is still necessary to advocate for the recognition of women's particular vulnerability while facing violence in Colombia, this project elucidates that women's emotional vulnerability (their power to be affected) has also increased and enabled their power to affect and *transform* the world around them.

Photograph 14. Taken by Luisa. Nasly in the photograph.

Pain transforms you, even when it is not about your personal experience. Pain travels across the room opening doors of respect and comprehension. If someone who has suffered uncountable amounts of pain is still seated in front of you, talking and breathing, hope comes to life. It stops being a word, an ideal, or an abstract concept. It becomes a reality embodied in the person who is in front of you. Hope takes the shape of a body that has the power to transform you. It becomes present and undeniable.

CONCLUSIONS

In this research I explored some of the intangible consequences of war and forced displacement affecting Colombian women's lives. Arguing that subjectivities are emotionally embodied (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), constituting the very materiality of the existence of individuals, my approach analyzed how violence, gender violence, and war dynamics not only affect women's bodies, but are also at the core of their composition. Following the emphasis of Sara Ahmed in asking what emotions do rather than what emotions are (2004), my research explored how emotions work within violent settings, and also beyond them. This research offered a detailed analysis of how war practices such as isolation, silence, and displacement are produced and maintained through the relationality of emotions. In this sense, my analysis contributes to the understanding of how violence and power relations can achieve the status of intangible, invisible, and complex.

In general, the narratives of my interviewees confirmed that fear is situated at the center of the Colombian war of terror, but in addition they revealed how this emotion travels from one body to another, how it crosses geographic borders, and how it defies the linearity of time. In this sense, my analysis confirms that fear does not have to reside in specific objects, but rather has the ability to move between them, prolonging its damaging effects. As Ahmed argues, 'it is the possibility that fear is not contained by an object that makes fear all the more frightening' (2004: afterword). In addition, my analysis revealed that, although fear is described and perceived as a weakness characterizing women, the life stories of my interviewees, and their reactions in the face of fear, display several sites of resistance and transformation. This finding highlights the necessity to deconstruct and vindicate women's experiences of fear within situations of violence and war, as actions charged with situated and valuable knowledge.

Specifically, the narratives of my interviewees revealed that isolation is an emotional-embodied-experience that has consequences outside the material walls in which it took place. My analysis argues that the emotional-embodied-experience of isolation reinforces binary dualisms between public and private, isolating bodies from public spaces –when powered by fear –but also dualisms of psyche and social, as movements towards the self –when powered by shame. In both scenarios, movements of

isolation shape women's bodies, delimiting the spaces they occupy, but also, restricting future movements and expansion of their bodies (access to education, job market, self-fulfillment activities). This finding shows that shame is at the core of marginality (Probyn, 2005), and that experiences of isolation are prolonging economic and political vulnerabilities of displaced women.

Forced silence, which is one of the strategies of armed groups to exert oppression over civilian's bodies, is an emotional-embodied-experience that continues to haunt my interviewees in the present. This silence interferes with processes of social and individual mourning, prolonging the experience of suffering and pain (Lister, 1982). The (past) fear of losing their lives, evolved as a (present) fear of remembering those who were not lucky enough to survive, and continuous to move between objects of affect such as spaces (countryside), objects (photographs), or words (victim of displacement). This analysis revealed the stickiness of fear, and confirms, as Gordon argues, that power becomes invisible 'harming you without seeming ever to touch you' (2008: p. 3). In addition, silence, which is also described as a woman's practice (denoting weakness and passivity), also appeared to be used as a strategy to confront gender violence. In particular, in some cases, silence could be defeated (as an oppressive mechanism) across generations, through a feminist understanding of women's survival strategies, opening spaces of reconciliation and forgiveness between women.

Displacement was analyzed as a concept containing the meaning of forced displacement in Colombia, but also as a literal movement. This analysis revealed that forced displacement is not only about movements across geographic borders, but also about displacements of emotional meaning, and movements within embodied subjectivities. In particular, this emotional-embodied-experience revealed how embodied subjectivities are re-shaped while encountering new settings, through processes of discrimination and racism. In these cases, disgust appeared to be the emotion creating effects of movement and displacement, as women confront and resist relations of rejection (Ahmed, 2004). My analysis revealed the complexity of the relationship between disgust and racism, and demonstrated how women can also re-appropriate feelings of disgust in order to confront and reject discrimination dynamics and violent subjects. In addition, this displacement of emotional meaning also exposed how emotions are not only about movement, but also about attachments. Women have

transferred emotional meaning to different objects of their material culture, in order to embody their subjectivities from a stronger and subversive position.

Furthermore, this research revealed that forced displacement, caused by Colombian armed conflict is only one of the multiple forced displacements that Colombian women confront as victims of gender violence. This finding expanded the initial scope of this research, and exposed diverse ways in which war violence gets entangled with gender violence, and vice versa. This analysis supports previous studies dedicated to underlining particular vulnerabilities faced by women while living in conflict zones (Andrade, 2010; Meertens, 2004; Baud & Meertens, 2004; USAID, 2005; Ibañez & Moya, 2006; Britto, 2010), but also revealed how women's embodied subjectivities are sites of constant displacement. This finding destabilizes fixed notions of corporeality and subjectivity, and shows how diverse this embodiment can be.

This research does not suggest that social or political accountability should focus on making women 'feel better' about their situation. On the contrary, arguing that what is more important is to accept 'the bad feelings long enough to make a personal sense on them' (Orbach, 1999: p.52) I underline the value and the necessity of opening spaces to hear women's life stories. My embodied experience as a researcher in this project, and the messages of gratitude from my interviewees, confirmed that sharing life experiences has a transformative power that occurs within the encounter (storytelling or interview) and can also re-shape past memories or future interpretations (Chorodow, 1999).

In addition, my research revealed that using photographs as visual narratives expands oral narratives, allowing both the interviewee and the researcher to have a more sentient understanding of the subtle meanings of human experience, and the complex ways in which some memories live beyond words. Besides enabling women to create photographs to narrate their emotional-embodied-experiences, my research reveals several advantages to allowing space for the elaboration of the afterimage of these photographs. The images produced by my participants destabilize traditional visual tropes utilized by photojournalism and documentary photography of forced displacement in Colombia. This is extremely important because it allows women to speak for themselves, but also because it changes the spectrum of emotions evoked and triggered in those who view the photographs as spectators (Zarzycka & Kleppe, 2013),

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enlarging our knowledge and feeling about how war, violence, and forced displacement lives in women's embodied subjectivities.

In addition, while exploring experiences of daughters of displaced women, my project contributes to an almost unexplored area of research, which opens questions for further investigations. Acknowledging that more than half of the displaced population living in Bogotá is made up of children and adolescents highlights the social and academic responsibility of investing forces to understand the complexities and needs of this population. This research highlights in particular that the mother-daughter relationship is one of the areas that could be explored as a site at which the relationality of emotions plays a major role in the production and reproduction of power relations and social difference (gender, race, and class). In addition, the narratives of the participants of this research revealed that fixed notions and concepts of displacement studies as victims, displaced persons, and displaced women, must be expanded and deconstructed, in light of their specific experiences and interpretations.

Finally, my analyses revealed how different physical spaces, material objects, and individuals (Bondi, Davidson, Smith, 2005), become objects of affect constituting affective economies of violence, displacement, and gender violence in Colombia. In this sense, these should not be assumed as neutral objects, but as sites of emotional saturation, in which the stickiness of emotions can be more clearly shown. In addition, when working simultaneously, these affective economies produce emotional-embodied-experiences displaying how emotions 'bind' subjects and figures together (by adherence) (Ahmed, 2004), sealing the process of social discrimination. Nevertheless, my analysis goes one step beyond Ahmed's 'binding' by exploring the active and reactive embodiments of my interviewees and by showing how these emotional-embodied-experiences are not finished processes but rather convoluted sites of possibilities.

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