A historical, cultural, and political analysis of oppression and resistance: The case of the Emberá Chamí community in Colombia

by

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Abstract

Designing and conducting studies on Indigenous resistance within conflict contexts necessitates a comprehensive and participatory endeavor that incorporates diverse perspectives and viewpoints. This undertaking is intricate due to the multifaceted nature of the actors involved in power dynamics and control strategies, as well as the complex dynamics of Indigenous communities and the array of resistance tactics employed for their survival. Further, studying resistance entails overcoming the binary approach often found in academic literature, which typically dichotomizes resistance into violent and nonviolent categories.

This thesis research employed a qualitative and Indigenous research methodology to explore the mechanisms of resistance among the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community, their evolution over time, the contextual factors influencing the Indigenous group, and the power strategies they have encountered. Thus, the study comprised of semi-structured interviews as well as a documentary and participatory historical analysis of resistance tactics, focusing on the Tatamá region and the present-day Unified Chamí Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River in Colombia. Data generation was conducted in 2023.

The study organizes the data analysis into four historical periods: the conquest, the colonial era, the emergence of republicanism, and the Colombian armed conflict. The conquest period delves into the ideological underpinnings of imperial Spain that shaped its domination strategies and elicited resistance from the Emberá Chamí's ancestors. The colonial era evidenced changes in power dynamics and the persistence of resistance tactics, along with the incorporation of the Emberá Chamí's new survival elements. The republican period examines political and migratory phenomena as forms of internal colonization that spurred novel resistance processes. Finally, the thesis

research explores the impact of the current Colombian armed conflict on the reservation and how the Emberá Chamí's communities and leaders have confronted it using legal and philosophical frameworks rooted in Indigenous rights and *sumac kawsay* (good living). This study underscores the significance of analyzing Indigenous people's resistance processes while embracing their diverse perspectives and navigating the complexities of social phenomena.

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My special thanks go to my parents and brothers, whose love has always been present in my life. Thank you to my friends in Colombia and Canada, who have always been loving and supportive.

I want to express my profound gratitude to the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community of the Unified Indigenous Reservation of the Rio San Juan in Colombia. Their trust in me to tell and care for their stories has been a cornerstone of this thesis.

Finally, I thank and acknowledge my wife, Celia, who has always been supportive, loving, and caring. This thesis is also yours.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the resilient people of Colombia who have endured the impact of the conflict. I also dedicate it to my thesis participants, whose courage in sharing their experiences has made this thesis a reality.

To Celia.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: A journey through the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people's resistance history

1.1 Introduction

On March 25, 2020, the Colombian government declared a state of preventive isolation or confinement in the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This measure weakened the social mobilizations that had been taking place there since November 2019. Since that time, different sectors of the political opposition and civil society mobilized to resist President Iván Duque's economic, social, and environmental policies. They opposed the escalation of violence in the country and the implementation of the peace agreement signed between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Forces - FARC (El Comercio, 2019; Oquendo, 2020). Later, in September 2020, the demonstrations were reactivated with the prelude to several massacres in different departments and the death of thirteen civilians allegedly at the hands of the police in Bogotá (Oquendo, 2020).

After twelve days of new demonstrations, Indigenous organizations expressed their support for social mobilization through the Indigenous *minga* (BBC, 2020). The term *minga* comes, according to the Real Academia Española (Royal Spanish Academy) (2022), from the Quechua *minkka*, which means "a gathering of friends and neighbours to do free work together, and collective, supportive and free agricultural work for the purposes of social utility." Thus, *minga* is a process whereby Indigenous people get together to do different things collectively. Politically, it also means that various groups meet to organize and make their needs and demands visible and support each other with food, Indigenous guards, and music. Among the Indigenous regional

organizations that participated in the 2020 *minga* were the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca – the CRIC[1] of the Nasa Indigenous people; the Senior Advisor of the Regional Indigenous Council of Caldas – the CRIDEC[2] of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people; the Regional Indigenous Council of Huila – the CRIHU[3], which brings together the Nasa, Misak, and Yanacona Indigenous peoples; and the regional Indigenous organization from Valle del Cauca – the ORIVAC[4], which includes the Nasa, Emberá, Wounaan, Inga, Yanacona, Kofán, and Quichua Indigenous people (Colombia Informa, 2020).

In this context, I made first contacts with the Nasa Indigenous communities in the north of the Department of Cauca to develop the study that would lead to my doctoral thesis, taking advantage of the fact that I had already worked with them on peacebuilding projects to create a culture of nonviolence and human rights. However, at the same time, I was developing a research project on health issues with the University of Andes in Colombia. Among the technical team devoted to this project was a nurse from the Emberá Chamí community of the Department of Caldas who had been the first female governor of their Indigenous reservation. We began to talk about common interests, and I explained to her my idea of doing a doctoral thesis that would contribute to understanding the struggles of Colombian Indigenous communities related to their survival as well as understanding their construction of peace. The conversation became sensitive since Indigenous communities, including groups from the Emberá Chamí people, were supporting and beginning to lead social mobilizations against the Colombian government at the national level.

[1] Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca
[2] Consejo Regional Indígena de Caldas
[3] Consejo Regional Indígena del Huila
[4] Organización Regional Indígena del Valle del Cauca

After a few weeks of sharing our stories and experiences with one another, the Emberá Chamí nurse and I became friends. She told me stories of her political struggles as a woman and leader and the atrocities that her community had experienced due to the armed conflict in Colombia. At the same time, I shared with her what I had learned from my work with the Nasa Indigenous communities and my concern that these struggles seemed insufficient, complex and without much support from the community in general. We agree that Indigenous communities have had a long history of resistance, and that this resistance has oscillated between using violent and nonviolent methods, as well as the return to and consolidation of Indigenous culture, and the use of modern legal and cultural instruments in their struggle. During our dialogue, it emerged that it would be interesting to carry out my study in her community and help make visible and understand the Emberá Chamí's historical resistance processes. She offered to accompany me in the dialogue with the reservation governments and evaluate the possibility of developing the research with them.

Therefore, I began to travel to the Emberá Chamí's territory in the Department of Caldas and I talked to leaders from four Emberá Chamí Indigenous reservations. However, this process did not generate the expected results since one of the communities believed the project was an academic exercise that did not benefit the community and was just another example of academics taking the community's knowledge and ideas for their own purposes and never returning. Another community wanted me to carry out an infrastructure project in exchange for letting me do the research. The other two reservations were interested in the research project because they thought it could contribute to their historical memory and teach subsequent generations about the community's struggles. However, it wasn't easy to arrange new meetings with the leaders because one had health problems, and the other did not attend my

appointment due to his political agenda. Meanwhile, I had informative conversations with some community members who shared part of their stories with me. I began to realize that they had a common origin as many community members and their relatives or ancestors had migrated from the region known as Alto San Juan and from towns like Purembará, San Antonio del Chamí, Pueblo Rico, and Mistrató in the Department of Risaralda.

This discovery began to guide my reading of the history of the Emberá Chamí community located in the Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan (Unified Chamí Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River) as a starting point which was close to Alto San Juan and can be accessed through the town of Mistrató. After a few months of exploration in the field and the reading of pertinent literature, my friend from the Emberá Chamí community and I decided that we should seek to enter the said territory and evaluate the possibility of working with the community.

This seemed like an ideal territory for research since the region had been affected by violence as it included part of the history of the Emberá Chamí's colonization, and the community currently displays its organizational strength in the continuing struggle with the Colombian government. However, at this point, I felt a little burned out and disillusioned as I was investing resources and my time, yet I could not nail down a solid research topic and a community willing to partner with me to do the research.

We contacted the Emberá Chamí's Indigenous government through some schoolteachers to explain the research process and to request permission from local authorities for its development. Finally, the community leaders supported the process and granted us access. We agreed that the project would focus on the history of the resistance of the Emberá Chamí since the Spanish conquest, with a particular emphasis

on their territory. Additionally, a booklet with a summary of the results would be delivered to the research participants and the community once the research was completed to be used as a training document for future generations to preserve the memory and history of the region and the community that were related to their struggles and resistance. Finally, the door opened up for me to get closer to the Emberá Chamí community and hear from their voices their stories of resistance in the context of historical conflicts and colonial projects that have affected them and have consolidated them as a community that survives and persists in the modern era.

They told me many stories full of pain, fear, hope, learning, setbacks and advances. Additionally, the meetings with the people displayed their openness to relate these stories from the gentle rhythms of the Indigenous people, who, in turn, expressed their concern to get to know me and know why I was in that place in the mountains trying to learn about their part of the world, their memory, and their struggles. Their voices and encounters emerged later in the bibliographic analysis. When I read a historical document from the conquest, colonization or the republic's actions toward the Emberá Chamí, I was transported to those mountains in Western Colombia, to see the faces of the villagers, and I could not help but think that we are all products of our stories, of how we narrate them, how we experience and how we assume them. The documents reviewed in the thesis include a collection of unpublished documents relating to the "discovery, conquest and organization of the Spanish empire's overseas possessions," "Jean-Baptiste Boussingault's memories," "the report from Chocó" made by José María Lozano y Peralta in 1801, "the documentary history of Chocó," "reports of some apostolic excursions in the Chocó Mission," and secondary sources like social science dissertations related to Chocó history and the Emberá Chamí people. These sources are thoroughly described in the methodology section.

Thus, the thesis research is about the Emberá Chamí and the complexity of their struggles. Nevertheless, it is also with the Emberá Chamí, as they are the main actors in this document and who found in this researcher a vehicle for their voices to resonate in other spaces. This study seeks to illustrate the changes, ruptures, and complexity of their forms of resistance. Still, at the same time, it aims to highlight the power structures in during different time periods of Emberá Chamí territory and the Spanish colonizers and the Colombian government's strategies of domination, exclusion, and appropriation. This study is about the Emberá Chamí's resistance that never fully reaches their goal and the state's domination that is never completed with the people trapped in a liminal peace.

1.2 Statement of purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the resistance tactics developed by the Indigenous Emberá Chamí against the power and oppressive and exclusive social structures that emanated from the Spanish conquest to the present day. Specifically, this analysis is undertaken by examining historical documents and scrutinizing relevant ethnographic, anthropological, sociological, historical, and political studies. In addition, it includes the stories, voices, knowledge, and experiences of community members and leaders living in the Unified Chamí Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River who continue to challenge the power structure within the modern Colombian conflict. This research also provides an opportunity to consolidate in a document, the Emberá Chamí community's historical experience and perspective, and their struggle against powerful actors performed in multiple conflict contexts.

1.2.1 Guiding questions and objectives

In this thesis, I explore the historical conflicts and oppression undergone by the Indigenous Emberá Chamí group that is located at the upper part of the San Juan River since the Spanish conquest and colonial period and what is currently known as the Emberá Chami Unified Reservation on the San Juan River in the Risaralda Department in Colombia. In addition, the thesis aims to describe the historical resistance processes carried out by this Indigenous group, looking at changes in their resistance methods and the elements involved in the resistance process.

Although this research extracts information from documents, it also addresses Indigenous people's views about conflict, peace, and resistance. Participants were given the freedom and encouragement to discuss and address topics and experiences that held personal significance for them in semi-structured interviews. This qualitative and Indigenous methodology aligns with the goal of prioritizing Indigenous communities' unique perspectives, providing contributors with the chance to be more than just research subjects and to be authentic partners in the dialogue and investigation of their organizational process. The study aims to work as an inclusive community peacebuilding instrument to facilitate their voices, history, and memory.

1.2.2 General research question

What were the primary forms of subjugation the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people resisted, and how did the resistance methods they implemented addressing conflict and oppression from the Spanish conquest to the present work out?

1.2.3 Specific research question

1. What were the oppression characteristics experienced by the Emberá Chamí people and their ancestors during different historical periods like the Spanish conquest and colonization, the birth of the Colombian Republic, and the illegal armed-state conflict?
2. What resistance tactics have the Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups implemented throughout their history?
3. What are the characteristic elements of the resistance tactics implemented by Emberá Chamí groups from the Spanish conquest to the present day?
4. What changes have the Emberá Chamí made to their resistance tactics throughout their history?

1.3 Significance of the study

Within the context of Indigenous conflicts and their peacebuilding systems, the enduring ramifications of imperialism and the ongoing violent dispossession of Indigenous people of their lands for economic exploitation have a historical and contemporary impact on Indigenous people globally. Understanding these impacts necessitates an examination not only of the present world order but also of the organization of traditional societal and community structures. Therefore, our attention should be directed to the spaces between systemic levels and the interfaces of societal organizations to discern patterns of change over time (Cormier, 2020). These interfaces are crucial because they represent points of interdependence between the colonized and the colonizer, where negotiations of cultural identity take place. An exemplification of this dynamic is evident in the colonizer and the colonized's different perspectives about

the land—its meaning for the colonizer (within the European cultural context), the colonized (Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples), and the legal justifications underlying the appropriation of land for resource exploitation (Cormier, 2020).

Most Latin American countries have tremendous ethnic diversity, and this diversity took on a problematic relationship between modern institutional and cultural projects carried out since the Spanish and Portuguese colonial period in the fifteenth century between settlers and Indigenous groups. Historically, Indigenous peoples have a tradition of struggle and cultural resistance to Spanish and Portuguese settlers. Despite the penetration of the Western world on their cultures since that time, Indigenous peoples have preserved or have reconstituted their own social, legal, ethnic, cultural, and political systems of organization that are different from those of the state (Sandoval, 2016).

Since 1970, Colombia's researchers' interest has focused on the Indigenous resistance experiences in the region of the Department of Cauca (Boza, 2013; Troyan, 2008) and the armed self-defense movement, resulting from local dynamics over several years (Peñaranda, 2015). Later, most researchers focused on the nonviolent resistance process that Indigenous communities underwent (Martinez Bernal, 2016; Hernández Delgado, 2006). In the case of the Emberá Chamí's Indigenous people, studies emphasize the effect of forced displacement by the Colombian conflict on them (Ruiz Eslava et al., 2019) and the role of Emberá Chamí women in the Indigenous people's struggle and survival (González Henao, 2013).

In addition, Emberá Indigenous reservations like La Mirla, La María, Cristianía and Hermeregildo Chakiama, in the southwestern part of the Antioquia Department; San Lorenzo, Nuestra Señora Candelaria de la Montaña, Escopetera and Pirza, Cañamomo Lomaprieta and La Albania in the Caldas Department; and the Suratena and

Altomira reservations in the Risaralda Department have strengthened the Indigenous people's collective memory, culture, knowledge and their contribution to peace (González Henao, 2013). Finally, some studies from the social science focus on the history of the Emberá Chamí, including their components and actions related to resistance (Hansen, 1991; Williams, 1999). Yet, this history has not been the central focus of most studies of the Emberá Chamí.

Despite the breadth of studies to move further along in our quest for a better understanding of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's resistance processes, there is little literature associated with and focused on the resistance history of the Unified Chamí Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River that articulates different fluctuations, strategies and methods. Therefore, the thesis research contributes to filling in the gap in our understanding of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's struggles, conflicts, and ways of survival.

The outcome of this research expands the academic base linking Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) practices and knowledge to resistance, Indigenous peacebuilding perspectives, social movements and peacebuilding, and conflict analyses related to territory and land. Therefore, the research attempts to clarify how Indigenous communities faced and are facing territorial conflicts, structural violence, and the process of acculturation and discrimination. The research also gives this knowledge back to the community and makes it visible via several pedagogical tools. It focuses on the Emberá Chamí's historic social practice of resistance to add nuances to the intersection of PACS and resistance theory.

Finally, this study develops a mixed critical and emancipatory qualitative methodology that combines Indigenous and documentary inquiry methods based on the ethical principles proposed in Indigenous methodologies. The research process involves

active community participation, including two members from the Emberá community who participated in the field research as co-researchers. This study is also a vehicle for the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community to raise its voice, reflect on its collective resistance history, and analyze its present.

1.4 Chapter overviews

Chapter one serves as the introduction to the thesis aimed at investigating the historical resistance processes undertaken by the Emberá Chamí and their ancestors. This discussion is situated within the framework of PACS, emphasizing the significance of elucidating the strategies developed by communities to confront oppressive contexts, along with their complexities and limitations.

Chapter two delves into the historical and social context of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people and their predecessors. It encompasses their identity elements such as language and worldview, while also detailing aspects of Indigenous social organization in Colombia. The chapter concludes with a description of the unified Chamí Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River.

Chapter three outlines the theoretical framework employed to frame and comprehend the key findings of the study. Embracing an emancipatory stance within the social sciences, particularly within PACS, led to contrasts with other theoretical positions like liberalism and realism. Additionally, the chapter underscores the importance of integrating analytical elements from Southern theories, highlighting their critical component and the necessity of representing perspectives from the Global South in one's analysis. Further, the chapter explores the contributions of the local turn perspective in PACS as a notable and key element in conflict analysis and peacebuilding that includes local community perspectives.

Moreover, chapter three also incorporates reflective elements of Indigenous theories and Indigenous rights, emphasizing the significance of Indigenous knowledge derived from cultural traditions, values, beliefs, and worldviews. It also discusses the international visibility afforded to Indigenous issues through Indigenous rights. A central part of this chapter is the integration of Michel de Certeau's concept of resistance into the PACS discourse. Finally, the chapter introduces *sumac kawsay*, or good living, as a philosophy shaping modern Indigenous social organization.

Chapter four elucidates the qualitative methodology employed in the research study, emphasizing the importance of utilizing a mixed qualitative and Indigenous methodology. It privileges documentary analysis as a qualitative method used in the research as well as storytelling that is a typical element of Indigenous knowledge development. Additionally, the chapter reflects on the study's limitations, researcher's positionality, and the necessity of engaging co-researchers from the Emberá community. The recruitment strategy for participants is described, ethical considerations are deliberated upon, and the data analysis strategy is outlined.

Chapter five presents the research results pertaining to the domination strategies employed by the Spanish empire during the conquest and the Emberá Chamí ancestors' resistance methods. It also explores colonial and imperial ideological constructs in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that facilitated the domination and exclusion of Indigenous peoples. Further, it identifies domination strategies like the establishment of towns and villages and the perpetuation of negative images surrounding the Embera's ancestors, serving as tools of subjugation.

In chapter six, the focus shifts to the colonial and republican periods, highlighting the emergence of new images surrounding the Emberá's ancestors, including the "peasant" image. It explores the changing strategies of the Spanish empire

to consolidate its power in Emberá-inhabited territories and examines the impact of the mining industry on Indigenous communities, giving rise to both new and entrenched resistance. Finally, it discusses the Colombian Republic's strategies and the Emberá Chami's response to exclusion processes resulting from the implementation of the capitalist system in the region.

Chapter seven explores contemporary violence, primarily shaped by the Colombian armed conflict between rebel groups and the state, and the novel nonviolent resistance processes undertaken by the Emberá Chamí. The analysis of findings elucidates the ongoing struggle for land and the emergence of new narratives surrounding the Emberá that rationalize fresh strategies of domination. Moreover, the chapter delineates the repercussions of the armed conflict on the Indigenous reservation and the local people's resistance efforts within this milieu. It underscores Indigenous social and political mobilization as a pivotal component for their endurance and the emergence of new agencies and leaderships amidst the conflict.

Chapter eight provides an overall summary of the key findings of this study. The chapter also includes a discussion of specific recommendations for future research concerning resistance studies and resistance development, specifically by Indigenous people.

1.5 Conclusion

This introduction offers a summary of the study, its importance, the researcher's background, and delineates the subsequent sections of the study. It is important to explore how Indigenous communities confront and have confronted territorial conflicts, structural violence, as well as the processes of acculturation and discrimination. In this sense, this research invites us to study the violent strategies through which attempts

have been made by the state and the Spanish to subjugate different Indigenous groups. In this case, I refer to colonial and state structures deploying control, power, and subjugation mechanisms. Likewise, the research is a commitment to reveal, compile and analyze the different resistance tactics developed by Indigenous peoples so that they are not completely subjugated by power structures.

Chapter 2

Historical and social context, resistance, and identity

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two aims to provide a comprehensive contextual foundation for understanding the Emberá Chamí community by exploring their cultural, historical, and social dynamics. Chapter two presents an overview of the Emberá Chamí community's customs, worldview, and coexistence with mestizos. This chapter also delineates six key themes to establish a contextual framework for understanding the Embera Chamí people. First, it delves into Emberá's identity categorization through language, elucidating the Chocó linguistic family to clarify differences among the Emberá groups. Additionally, it briefly outlines the territorial control implemented by the Spaniards during the conquest of the Emberá Chamí during the colonial period and its impact on them.

Second, the chapter underscores harmful structural elements influencing Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups from Colombian independence to the present. Noteworthy are political and social singularities such as Laws, migrations, rebellions, social movements, and political organizations that have shaped and are shaping the ongoing struggle of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí.

Third, a concise examination of the Emberá Chamí worldview or Origin Law is also provided. Focusing on the Karagabi and Tutriaka gods as opposing forces, the chapter explores the conflict between both gods and how their conflict resolution determined the existence of the Emberá Chamí and their relationship with nature and other entities. Fourth, the importance of Jaibanism or the spiritual sphere within the Emberá culture aligned with the Emberá Chamí worldview is also described. The role of

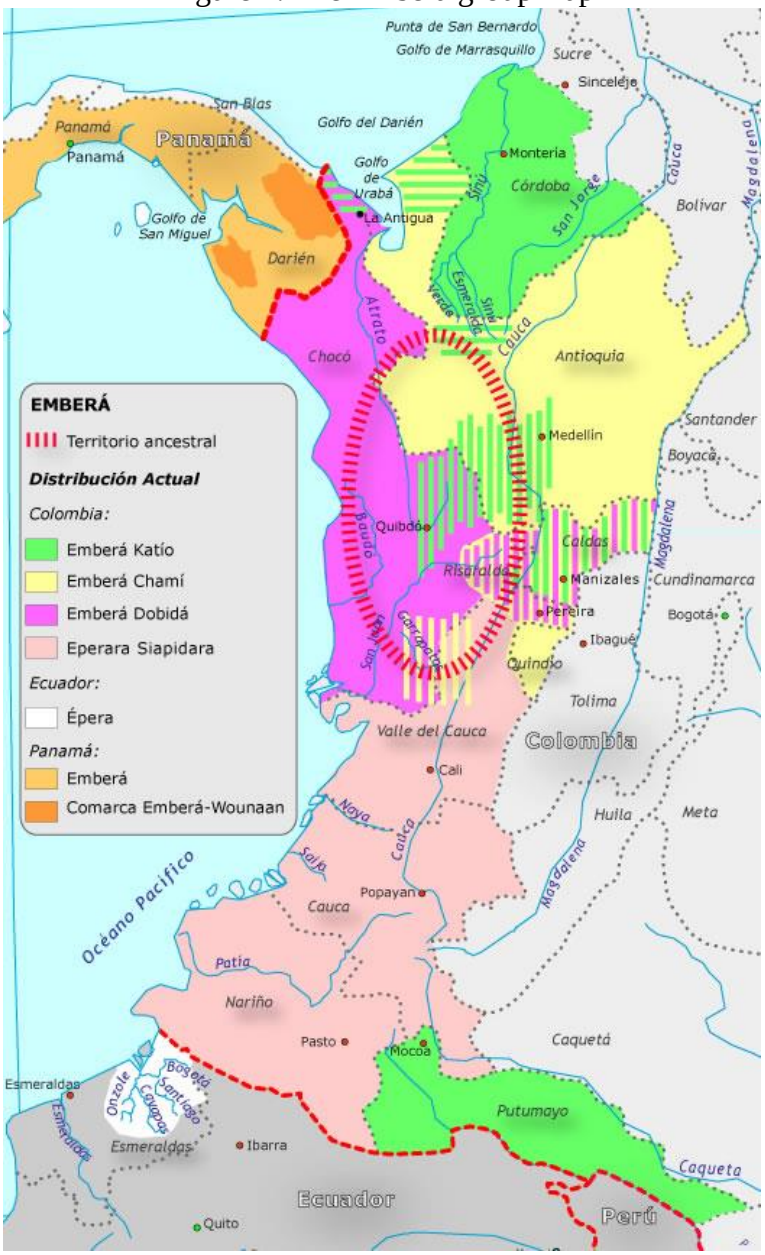
Jaibanas in the community is explained, delineating what a *Jai* is and its significance to the Emberá Chamí worldview.

Fifth, the chapter also details the social organization of the Emberá Chamí worldview, highlighting that land and family are the foundation of the community. Finally, it centers on the Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan (Chamí Unified Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River) as the focal point of this study. This final section emphasizes the importance of the Emberá Chamí's geographical location and political and economic systems and suggests the impact of the Colombian armed conflict on the reservation.

2.2 The Chocó, the Emberá, and the Emberá Chamí

The Emberá Indigenous people live in Panamá, Ecuador, and Colombia. In Colombia, they are dispersed throughout the country due to diverse causes, including the forced displacement by the Colombian conflict. Most live in the departments of Antioquia, Chocó, Risaralda, Valle del Cauca, Cauca, Córdoba, Putumayo, and Nariño. The Emberá group has four dialectal forms, namely Emberá Chamí, Emberá Katío, Emberá Dóbida, and Sía Pedeé. From the Emberá group, it is possible to distinguish three subgroups according to their territories: the Dóbida, which means people from the river; the Eyabida, which means people from the mountain; and the Oibida, which refers to people from the jungle. The Emberá Chamí and the Emberá Katío, despite some dialect variations, ways of life, production processes and clothing, make up the Eyabida group (Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Chocó-OREWA, n.d.).

Figure 1. The Emberá group map

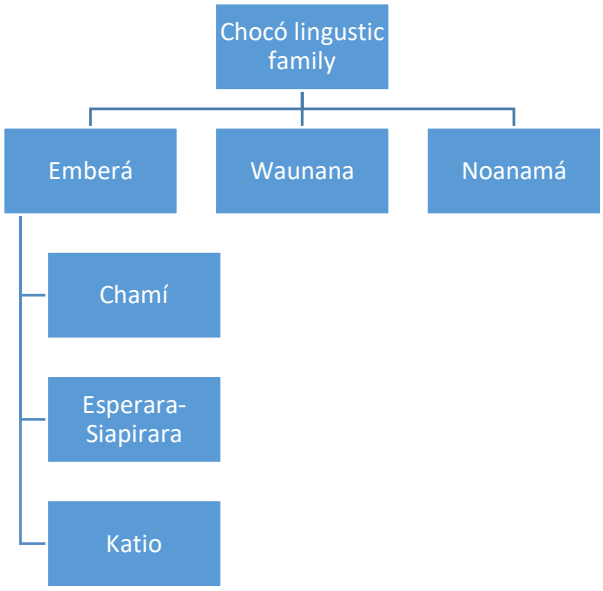


Note: Image retrieved from
https://pueblosoriginarios.com/sur/caribe/embera/embera.html

During the conquest, Spaniards identified Indigenous groups residing in the upper reaches of the San Juan River, including the Emberá, as referred to by the appellations “Chocó” or “Chocoes.” Then, Chocó encompassed various Indigenous groups, including the Emberá, Waunana, Noanamá, and Eperara. Additionally, the term Chocó holds significance in the Emberá language, signifying “people” (Machado

Caicedo, 2011). Further, Chocó is associated with a linguistic filiation, representing a language type within the Karib linguistic family.

Figure 2. Chocó Linguistic Family[5]



Presently, the Emberá Chamí, Emberá Katío, Emberá Esperara Siapidara, and Emberá Dobiba exhibit specific shared characteristics that persist from pre-Hispanic times, providing a foundation for their collective ethnic identity. These enduring traits include oral tradition, Jaibanism, social organization, dances, rituals, and recent engagement in social and regional organizations. Nevertheless, variations are evident in cultural facets, encompassing distinctions in attire, facial paint, crafting techniques, and language. Regarding the latter, disparities manifest in language phonetics and vocabulary.

Owing to the ramifications of the Spanish conquest and the resulting colonial period that included the introduction of evangelizing missions by missionaries and the

[5] The Chocó's cultural unity origin has a long controversial history. The classification of Mason in 1950 and Greenberg in 1960, for example, divided the Chocó language into Embera (with three variants), Katío (with fourteen variants), and Noanamá (with one variant). In contrast, Jacob Loewen, in 1960, considered that there were only two languages within the Chocó Family that are unintelligible to each other, yet related, namely Waunana and Emberá. And he proposed, under a phonological criterion, four large dialect areas, one Waunana and three Emberá, with lexical variations within the Emberá areas.

encroachment of settlers into their lands, several Emberá communities experienced dispersal and underwent diverse developmental trajectories contingent upon the distinct natural contexts in which they resided (Arango et al., 2004).

The accommodation and adaptation of these communities depended on their characteristics (Arango et al., 2004). For instance, as a response to Spanish colonization, the Emberá migrated northward, engaging in territorial conflicts with the Cuna Indigenous groups. This confrontation compelled the Emberá to apply pressure on Cuna territory, leading to the latter group's eastward and westward migration across the Tanela River, the Tuira River, the Atlantic Coast, the Sinú River, and San Blas (Panama) (Vargas, 1993).

On the other hand, we can find the Emberá Chamí's ancestors in the Tatamá province located in the upper part of the San Juan River. Initially, they established commercial alliances with the Spaniards, and later, they aligned, in some cases, with the Citará Indigenous groups to attack Spanish expeditions. The Spaniards' colonization of the territory provoked the Tatamá Indigenous people to flee to the mountain currently named Upper Chamí.

Once the Spanish besieged the Indigenous territories, the strategy to control them consisted of building Spanish towns to expand the conquistadores' borders. The new settlements meant that the Indigenous people had to pay tribute to the Spaniards, and they undertook to "take care of their spiritual and physical well-being" (González Henao, 2013, p. 104). In areas shrouded in gold, taxes were paid to the Spanish conquistadores with this mineral, while in other places, the Indigenous people also paid tribute with food like corn and plantains. The relationship with the Spaniards was disadvantageous for the Indigenous people. To control abuse and prevent it from disappearing from the Indigenous population and with it, the Spanish Empire appointed

oidores who were officials in charge of reviewing the colonial operation and resolving territorial conflicts as well as the Indigenous labour force that was needed to exploit the colonies resources (González Henao, 2013).

During the 1593 and 1637 colonial period, the Spanish Crown promoted a constitution for Indigenous reservations to stop the annihilation of the Indigenous people, to facilitate the acculturation process and to control their tax payments. During this period, the Spaniards created the San Antonio del Chamí reservation. After developing several resistance actions against the Spaniards, the Embera Chamí people were partially subjugated by colonists using strategies related to establishing towns and cities, evangelization, and the education and labour system until the advent of the Colombian independence revolution.

Three towns were created in the Embera Chamí region during this period to administer the gold industry: San Juan de Chamí, Guntras (the same Chamicito), and San Antonio de Tatamá (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a). The Spanish Catholic missions created the town of San Juan de Chamí in the eighteenth century, which was probably the region's most important administrative and ecclesiastical center. San Antonio de Tatamá was located on the right side of the San Juan River. However, its priest and Spanish *corregidor* (a person proposed by the viceroy appointed directly by the king and had power in the judicial, political and administrative spheres) used to live in San Juan de Chamí, and few people were living there. The town of Guntras was in the same place as the current town of Mistrató, and it was founded at the end of the sixteenth century as a Spanish base for a new expedition into the region (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a).

These three towns were the basis for the foundation of other towns with an intense concentration of Emberá Chamí communities, like the Andes, San Antonio de Chamí, Aguasal, and Villa Claret. The Andes is located in the current Department of

Antioquia and was founded by Indigenous migration. San Antonio de Chamí is at the periphery of the current town of Mistrató in the Department of Risaralda. Claretian missionaries founded Aguasal, and Villa Claret is situated in the current town of Pueblo Rico and Risaralda (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a). The territory assigned by the Spanish as a reservation included the current municipality of Mistrató, half of Pueblo Rico and a part of the current municipality of Bagadó in the department of Chocó (Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas de Risaralda [ACIR], 2012).

The territory occupied by the Emberá Chamí community of this study initially belonged to the Government of Cauca, then to the Department of Chocó, and later to the Department of Caldas. Today, it is part of the Department of Risaralda.

2.3 The land issue after Colombian independence

During the first part of the evolution of the Colombian Republic, Simón Bolivar tried to recover the rights of the Indigenous communities through the abolition of taxes and parochial rights as well as any civil contribution concerning Indigenous reservations (Vasco, 2008). The newly established Colombian state recognized the Indigenous communities' collective ownership over a portion of land known as a reservation and acknowledged by the Spanish Crown. After Colombia's independence, the government recognized the reservations and endorsed that they were not part of any commercial transaction between private owners or government institutions (Vasco, 2008, p. 373). This means the reservations were the land belonging to the collective community and did not have commercial value. In addition, Simón Bolivar also ordered his government to distribute reservation lands among the Indigenous families depending on the size of the territories and the number of families (Mayorga Garcia, 2016).

However, the rules to administer Indigenous land and to give rights to Indigenous people were changing and needed to be clarified. For example, the new government in 1820 and 1827 ordered the land to be returned to the Indigenous people. It established a law that Indigenous people were released from paying parish fees and civil contributions (Figueroa, 2014). Nonetheless, in 1828, the government ordered the Indigenous population to pay a personal contribution in taxes, and in 1832, the reservation lands were distributed to the general population (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a). Meanwhile, the newly broke Colombian state needed financial support to pay its external debt and to build an infrastructure to develop the country. Congress found a mechanism to finance the government by using unutilized land, and it issued bonds and territorial vouchers redeemable for vacant lots to support the national debt and pay veterans who fought for the country's independence. These bonds also subsidized the country's construction of roads and railways (LeGrand, 1988, p. 33).

In 1857, the country was divided into various states like Panama, Antioquia, Santander, Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Bolivar, Magdalena, and Cauca, each having a certain administrative independence. Cauca was made up of the provinces of Buenaventura, Cauca, Chocó, Pasto, Popayán and Caquetá where the Indigenous Embera Chamí settled. In 1859, Law 90 was issued in Cauca "about protecting the Indigenous people." This Law underlined the Cabildos (Indigenous Council) role, and it tried to reverse the idea that Indigenous people were alienated from the reservation land that was promoted in previous laws and instead created the image of the Indigenous people as protectors of the land among other measures (Mayorga Garcia, 2016).

Later, in 1873, Law 44 was issued in Cauca, which ordered the division of the reservations, and in 1875, Law 47 decreed that Indigenous properties were divisible, as were the rest of communal properties (Mayorga Garcia, 2016). The local historian, Victor

Zuluaga Gómez, indicated that these Laws that promoted land distribution needed the Indigenous people to hire lawyers and surveyors. If the Indigenous communities did not have money to pay the legal professionals for their services, they could receive land as payment. In many cases, they seized the best land from the reservations with the support of judges and mayors (Zuluaga Gómez, 2020). These laws promoted countless demands for land that some legal representatives of Indigenous people made to the state or to non-Indigenous individuals that were at very high costs for the Indigenous population. It led to territorial division with negative results regarding judicial rulings regarding the recovery of lands by Indigenous communities (Zuluaga Gómez, 2020).

By the second half of the nineteenth century, in the national sphere, Colombia increased its export economy, and it renegotiated its external debt to respond to the external demand for agricultural products as the government created a new political reform of unutilized land to stimulate rural production (Kalmanovitz, 2017). The political reform of the land issue encouraged people to move there to create productive industries, and it allowed groups of settlers who wanted to move to work the land to colonize rural land. The government stimulated the colonization process and the utilization of the Colombian territory by both large and small producers (LeGrand, 1988, p. 38).

In this context, the ruling class implemented strategies that sought to strip communities of their territories, promoting the idea that the existence of reservations was a feature of the colony and Spanish domination, which should be eradicated so that the Indigenous people could become “actual citizens.” In addition, this proposal concealed another intention, namely to undo collective property so that Indigenous people could sell their lands individually to the economic and political elites (González Henao, 2013).

The Indigenous communities that settled in the Emberá territories were among the most affected by the reforms introduced by the government in the middle of the nineteenth

century. The 1850 reformers tore down the protection of Indigenous reservations. They made it possible to sell and rent their lands to strangers to exploit, with the pretext that the income obtained by the Indigenous communities from land rental would help to finance Indigenous education (Zuluaga Gómez, 2020). In 1890, the national government issued Law 89, which in some way allowed the Indigenous people to maintain control of their lands. However, it was insufficient to prevent the land's appropriation by miners, ranchers, and farmers.

On the other hand, despite Colombia's independence, many of the subordination practices of Indigenous people continued unabated. For example, education remained in the hands of the Catholic clergy, and Indigenous cultural practices and traditions continued to be repressed. The government issued laws to "civilize" the Indigenous people and established Catholic religious missions in the communities' territories. These missions built boarding schools where the population was prevented from, among other things, speaking their native language (González Henao, 2013).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the auction of reservation lands encouraged by previous state laws opened up the intense white and mestizo colonization of the region known as "paisa colonization." It refers to the migration of people from Antioquia and Caldas to Emberá Chamí territory to acquire land they did not even know. Then, they sold it to hunters, guaqueros, and merchants who knew and valued the Embera Chamí lands and how they could develop their businesses (Vasco Uribe, 1986).

On the other hand, there was a boost in communication routes between the Pacific region and the country's central region to expand the nation's agricultural frontiers in the future. For example, around 1903, people from other regions became very interested in the area as they began to talk about the construction of an interoceanic canal in Chocó and a highway passing through the Chamí territory that would be the most important route

between the interior of the country and the Pacific coast (ACIR, 2012). This process ran parallel to the dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands since they lacked knowledge of the laws and their interpretation (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a).

In general, colonists' migration into Indigenous land and settlers' usurpation of land turned Indigenous people into day laborers on the landowner's haciendas. This created the figure of Indigenous terrajeros, a feudal servile relationship with the landowner in which an Indigenous person had to pay the landowner in free labor within the hacienda for the right to live and use a small plot of land located on the same landlord's estate.

Thus, the fragile Indigenous communities' situation exacerbated terrajeros rebellions against the landlord class mainly in areas like Cauca. The Indigenous Páez, Manuel Quintín Lame, who later became an influential leader of Indigenous communities, led most of these rebellions. Manuel Quintín Lame was born into a family of terrajeros. He served in the military, where he learned to read, write, and learn legislation policy and history. When Quntín Lamee reintegrated into society, he was elected representative and defender of the Indigenous Councils of Cauca. He began his self-taught training in studying laws, the civil code, legal procedure manuals and researching the historical archives (Gómez Cardona, 2012).

By 1920, Quintín Lame and other Indigenous leaders stimulated new social movements that burst onto the public scene, providing a dignified and optimistic picture of the Indigenous people. The Indigenous struggles had become firmly established in the Cauca Department and several neighbouring Departments like Huila and Tolima. It was a regional struggle that was felt at the national level, stimulating other Indigenous groups to resist. The movement's leaders presented their demands to the national debate, using the language of politics. These demands included: 1) to defend the reservation against

any attempt to divide it; 2) the consolidation of the Indigenous Council as a center of authority and political organization; 3) land recovery and the rejection of titles that were not based on royal decrees; 4) not paying land costs; and 5) the reaffirmation of Indigenous cultural values and the rejection of racial and cultural discrimination (Rappaport, 2000).

Meanwhile, in the Emberá Chamí region, colonist settler migration created a context where different ethnic groups like Indigenous peoples and mestizos share a geographical space and natural resources, and maintain constant social, economic, and cultural exchange (ACIR, 2012). Colonial settlers also created an area with permanent ethnic conflicts over the possession of land and dominance in the region. The presence of these conflicts provoked the intervention of the state via the INCORA (The Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform) in 1976. In this year, the Colombian government apportioned a special reserve of land for Embera Chamí communities of the Inamur, Canchivaré, Humacas, Puerto de Oro, Aqüita, Bequé, La Montaña, Purembará, Geté, and Mistrató River villas located in the Pueblo Rico and Mistrató towns. The extension of this portion of land includes an approximate area of 17,770 hectares (ACIR, 2012).

Later, in 1983, the Emberá Chamí Indigenous Council of Risaralda requested recognition of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous reservation to protect the community. Based on this request and the corresponding socioeconomic studies, on January 29, 1986, INCORA, through resolutions one and two, converted the Indigenous reserve land created in 1976 into a reservation and additionally constituted the reservation of the left bank of the San Juan River with an area of 7,569 hectares (ACIR, 2012). The difference between reserve and reservation is that the former is defined as a legal entity comprising a community identified as Indigenous, and having a property communal

land title, and an administrative social organization. In contrast, there is autonomy on the reservations to manage the distribution of the lands, something that does not occur when the Indigenous community is settled in a reserve area (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a).

In May 1995, through resolution 23, reservations from the left and right bank of the San Juan River were unified into a single reservation with an area of approximately 25,366 hectares (ACIR, 2012). The name of the current Emberá Chamí reservation where this study was developed is *Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan* (Chamí Unified Indigenous Reservation of the San Juan River). The community elects an Indigenous Council annually to represent the reservation's authority. The Council comprises a governor, a lieutenant governor, a secretary, a prosecutor, a treasurer, and an overseer. The Council distributes land to the community. In the Department of Risaralda, Indigenous Emberá reservations are situated in the municipalities of Marsella, Mistrató, Pueblo Rico, and Quinchía (Romero López & Muñoz, 2019.).

2.4 The emergency of Indigenous social movement in Colombia

During the 1960s and 1970s, Colombia underwent significant internal and external changes. The emergence of the first communist guerrilla groups, such as El Ejercito de Liberación Nacional (ELN), las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), and El Ejercito Popular de Liberación (EPL), was a profound manifestation of leftist ideological influences from the Cuban revolution, the Soviet Union, and China. This was a pivotal moment in Colombian history, marking a shift in socio-political dynamics. Simultaneously, there was a resurgence of social movements advocating for land and agricultural reforms, with a particular emphasis on redistributing land to peasants, Afro-descendants, and Indigenous communities (Luna & Byrne, 2019).

Amid concerns about the spread of communism in the region, the United States intervened in 1961 with The Alliance for Progress Plan. This intervention, primarily aimed at facilitating agrarian reform and preventing the spread of communism, had a significant impact on Colombia's socio-political landscape. As part of these changes, the Colombian government established the Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCORA) to acquire land from landowners for distribution to Indigenous communities. However, this approach resulted in designating part of the land as private property, eroding territorial autonomy and transforming Indigenous people into peasants (Galeano, 2006, p. 57). Peñaranda (2012) underscores the significance of the INCORA's misconceptions about communal land and the impact of pre-existing Indigenous organizations in laying the groundwork for the formation of the Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca)-CRIC.

Simultaneously, the peasants formed the Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos de Colombia (the National Association of Peasant Users of Colombia or ANUC) as a political space for peasants and Indigenous people. This included a strategic alliance between the CRIC and its sister organization the ANUC, but it placed peasant identity above ethnic identity. As a result, contradictions and tensions between the ANUC and the CRIC were inevitable. The CRIC's dissatisfaction was primarily due to the ANUC's desire to maintain direct control of the Indigenous movement, denying their autonomy and disregarding CRIC's work to empower Indigenous people (Castrillón Gómez, 2007). This tension was further exacerbated by the ANUC's refusal to include Indigenous people's ethnic identity in the peasant social organization, a move that was seen as a racist deviation and a cultural adornment (Castrillón Gómez, 2007, p.111). From this point on, the ANUC began to weaken and fragment, losing its influence on the

peasants. In contrast, the Indigenous movement advanced and strengthened, gaining more than just regional recognition.

In 1980, the CRIC and the Regional Indigenous Council of Tolima (CRIT) met and promoted the formation of an organization representing all the country's Indigenous communities. This led to several meetings leading to the First National Indigenous Congress 1982 in Bogotá. More than 200 delegations from all over the country attended this meeting. There were delegations from Antioquia, Córdoba, Santa Marta, Caldas, Risaralda, Chocó, Tolima, Valle del Cauca, Llanos Orientales, Cauca, Nariño, Casanare, Vaupés, Caquetá, and the Amazonas. In addition, 12 Indigenous delegations from other countries also attended as representatives of labour and peasant organizations. From this Congress emerged the Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (The National Indigenous Organization of Colombia or ONIC), whereby organized Indigenous people came to the collective defence and protection of their collective and cultural rights (Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia [ONIC], n.d.)

2.5 La Ley de Origen (law of origin)

The Law of Origin, or La Ley de Origen, is a guiding principle that the god Karagabi transmitted to the Emberá people, breathing life into their culture. This law bestows them with ancestral knowledge and traditional science to understand the management of everything material and spiritual in their territory (ACIR, 2012). It is a complex web of spirituality, order, balance, harmony, thought, and orality, as well as the relationship of the human being with nature. Each being has its place in relation to other beings and life forms, in rhythms and processes that must be recognized and respected to ensure the balance and harmony of everything created. This emphasis on balance and harmony

underscores the interconnectedness and mutual respect that form the backbone of Emberá Chamí culture, regulating the relationships between all living beings, from stones to human beings, and fostering unity, coexistence, and survival in the ancestral territory (ACIR, 2012).

The Law of Origin, the cornerstone of Indigenous Emberá Chamí culture, encompasses the principles of life (codes, laws), forms of organization, language, territory, rituals, clothing, sacred elements, myths, art, "kipará" paintings, traditional medicine, local foods, and ancestral knowledge among others. This rich tapestry of cultural principles is not just a static set of rules, but a living, breathing entity that is transmitted from generation to generation through the oral tradition, ensuring the continuity and resilience of the Emberá Chamí culture (ACIR, 2012).

That said, the Emberá Chamí has two pre-existing divinities, namely, Daehisesé and Tutriaka in their creation story. The first divinity (Daehisesé) is the beginning, it is an intention that created the god Karagabi considered a deity who, in turn, made everything that exists in the universe. In the myths of the Chamí, they talk about the fights Karagabi had against his father. At the end, Karagabi defeated his father. This is one of the reasons why, the Emberá Chamí oral tradition does not mention Daehisesé with the same reiteration as Karagabi. Karagabi is the founding god who created the universe, men, and animals. However, there is another god who had no beginning, who was not created, and appears as Karagabi's rival, namely Tutriaka. Karagabi has a significant weakness compared to Tutriaka since he frequently gets sick (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021b).

Karagabi's limitation discloses that the men and women he created to inhabit this world get sick and die, while in contrast the people created by Tutriaka are immortal (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021b). Above our world, there are four worlds, and below

it, there are also four worlds, the first of which is the world of Tutriaka. Each world has its own god. Karagabi and Tutriaka lived for a long time without knowing each other. In the beginning, Karagabi, the god of our world, which is a world above the earth, saw from his sky home placed high above the world, a dark thing, like a globe wrapped in shadows, and he wanted to see what this world was about. He came and saw that this land was in darkness because there was no light in it (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021b).

On earth, Karagabi met someone unknown to him as Tutriaka, the god of the world below, as he was passing through our world. He was the god of a world that was lower than ours. The two gods met and spoke together, telling each other about their origin with the question who are you? Karagabi asked. “I am Tutriaka, the god below,” he answered. “Are you born?” Karagabi asked. “No, I turned out alone; no one made me. And you, how were you born?” “I,” Karagabi replied, “was born from a spittle of Talzitzetze (Dachisesé), the first father, who had no beginning and created himself and that is why I am honored to have ancestors.” Tutriaka said proudly that he did not have any ancestors. “I created myself,” he said. Karagabi then proposed to Tutriaka “let us prove whether we are gods to each other.” Tutriaka said, “Well, let us try it.” Then, Karagabi replied, “and what do we do to prove it?” (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021b).

Tutriaka said, “I will work the clay.” And Karagabi noted that “I will do the same with the stone.” Karagabi made two fine stone dolls to turn them into the first man and woman. When they were animated, they opened their eyes and smiled but could not get up or speak. Tutriaka also made the first men out of clay, who were superior to those made by Karagabi since they spoke and walked. Karagabi asked Tutriaka to teach him how to make animated dolls out of himself, but Tutriaka insulted him for being a created god. This was the beginning of their rivalry. Despite the emerging rivalry, Tutriaka gave Karagabi a piece of clay. Therefore, Karagabi made a doll that could talk

and walk. Over the years, Karagabi wanted to provide his animated doll with a companion and told Tutriaka that his doll had been damaged, and he needed more clay, to which Tutriaka agreed. Seeing himself deceived, Tutriaka made the men and women of Karagabi mortal. After fighting to prove who was stronger, both gods realized they had equal power. That is why people are mortal in our world (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021b).

In general, Karagabi and Tutriaka have opposite forces (positive and negative) (Siagama Gutierrez, 2017). Karagabi defends individual and collective actions and behavior, the spiritual part, and teaches people to respect the components of Mother Nature, humanity, and communication. In contrast, Tutriaka spiritually guides evil forces towards all manifestations of life, where animals harm people. Moreover, abnormal people and diabolical monsters live in the world below (Siagama Gutierrez, 2017). Likewise, in this place is the force of the powerful spirits "Jais" composed of two energies, one positive and the other negative. The positive energy helps the earth to produce so that there is prosperity, while the other opposes so that the earth does not produce, and there is hunger and misery for humanity (Siagama Gutierrez, 2017).

To summarize, the Law of Origin guides the Emberá Chamí's spiritual and cultural elements and their production of knowledge. Two figures are central to the Law of Origin, Karagabi and Tutriaka, and both represent different energies that are manifested in the relationships of the Emberá Chamí with the world through the Jais. The following section highlights how the Jais and the Jaibanas are catalysts for the energies that affect the health of men and women and the nature and relationships between the Emberá.

2.6 *Jaibaná*

The ethnographer Luis Guillermo Vasco recorded the following response from the Emberá Chamí leader Misael Nengarabe when the ethnographer asked him about what is *Jaibaná*:

> He extends his right hand toward me and, joining the other fingers over his thumb, says to me, "*Jais* meeting." He defines them by stating that they are the spirits, the souls of men, animals, vegetables, and even natural phenomena, such as the rainbow and lightning; "everything has *Jai*" (Vasco, 1985, p. 9).

The Jaibaná is a kind of traditional doctor who performs the function of coexistence in harmony with nature and is the guardian of all living beings. The Jaibaná guarantees coexistence in communities and ensures the health and well-being of people and wild animals in the mountains. The Jaibaná is the caretaker of the earth and water and communicates closely with spirits. The Jaibaná preserves a special place where it protects its powers in a sacred place, especially in the mountains far from the population, ravines, and rivers. Also, the Jaibaná can prohibit people from entering these sites. The Jaibaná can also punish an individual with spiritual illnesses that can cause death for disobeying the Law of Origin and the community's spiritual norms. The sacred sites are subject to compliance with the divine law that the universal god left written through Karagabi in the mind and heart of each Emberá person to care for nature and mother earth (Siagama Gutierrez, 2017, p.23).

The Jaibaná is not an exclusive activity so that those individuals who perform this role must simultaneously carry out the other activities of typical adult men or women in the community. For example, men must cut down the forest, plant crops, hunt, work as salaried laborers, make blowguns and arrows and complete other tasks. The women who are Jaibanás, for their part, oversee cooking, take care of the children,

make pottery and basket weaving, and transport firewood, water, and other goods. Although an extensive apprenticeship is required for everyone to acquire this role, there is no specific requirement to become a Jaibaná. In contrast with the Siberian shaman, no exceptional quality or physical characteristic is needed to become Jaibaná (Vasco, 1985, p. 25).

According to the Embera-Chamí tradition, the Jaibaná is distinct from a sorcerer. They are considered as the preservers of the spiritual wisdom that the supreme god has transmitted to the people. The Jaibaná's primary role is to ensure the well-being of the community and to maintain the health and harmony of the environment. This emphasis on preserving spiritual wisdom underscores the cultural importance of the Jaibaná and the value of their knowledge (Siagama Gutierrez, 2017, p.23).

The Jaibaná is essential for the existence and continuation of the family group, ensuring the physical well-being of its members and is closely linked to kinship and the notion of "inheritance." This role is transmitted from one generation to another within the family group, typically from parents to children. However, no clear rule determines which of the children should receive this learning, although some cases suggest a tendency towards the youngest son succeeding his father (Vasco, 1985). Other stories indicate that the choice of Jaibaná falls on the one who "dreams of healing." In this context, there seems to be a kind of call or vocation external to the individual, not dependent on his/her will, guiding him/her towards a destiny s/he has not consciously chosen. Despite this call, the final decision remains personal since it is not established that the call must be compulsorily followed, and no sanctions are mentioned for those who choose not to do so (Vasco, 1985, p. 25).

2.7 Social organization

The land was the basis of the community's existence. There was no conception of ownership or economic value on the land, and different groups claimed the use of natural resources for the survival of their communities. The collective character of the land united the value of belonging to a community and working for it. The relationship with the land disintegrated with colonization, which reduced the availability of resources that the land offered and transformed the internal dynamics of the communities, incorporating the notion of non-collective property and a new group structure (Romero López & Muñoz, 2019).

Once settled in their new territories, family ownership arises over the land destined for agricultural production, and collective ownership is maintained over the hunting, fishing and fruit harvesting sectors of the forests and mountains. Although family property is the basic unit of social organization, community life reinforces resistance to losing territories (Romero López & Muñoz, 2019).

The social unit is the kin, made up of an adult man who serves as a point of blood belonging between grandparents, grandchildren, and first-line cousins (Stipek, 1976, cited in Díaz, 2020, p. 175). Pardo (1983 cited in Díaz, 2020, p. 175) mentions that the Emberá Chamí are exogamous people, linked together by an extensive network of marital exchanges in which the cultural condition for choosing a spouse is that they are situated beyond two degrees of consanguinity.

The relatives' residence does not depend on a territorial unit, so the set of relatives may be distributed in different locations, and their relationship generates dynamics of people circulation in a broad and open territory (Díaz, 2020, p. 175). On the other hand, the Emberá's social organization is segmental as groups of diverse sizes emerge in search of a new place to live when there is population growth, and there is a

depletion of resources available in its territory or due to internal conflicts (Vasco, 2011 as cited Díaz, 2020, p.175).

To sum up, land has a fundamental role in sustaining Indigenous communities. Before Spanish colonization, different groups shared natural resources, fostering a collective ethos that bound the community together. However, with the advent of colonization, the availability of resources diminished, leading to a transformation in community dynamics that introduced the notion of individual property. Despite the emergence of family ownership over agricultural land, communal ownership persisted in sectors like hunting and fishing. The social structure revolves around kinship, whereby exogamous practices and extensive marital exchanges beyond two degrees of consanguinity play a crucial role in the community's vitality.

Moreover, relatives' residence is not confined to a specific territorial unit, allowing for distribution across different locations. The Emberá's social organization is described as segmental, involving the emergence of new groups in response to factors like population growth, resource depletion, or internal conflicts as they seek alternative places to settle (Díaz, 2020). The following section focuses on Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan (Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River), its history, geographical characteristics and social and political dynamics.

2.8 Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan (Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River)

Figure 3. Resguardo Indígena Unificado Chamí del Rio San Juan (Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River)



The Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River is located to the east of the municipality of Mistrató and the northeast of the municipality of Pueblo Rico, in the department of Risaralda. It is limited to the north with the departments of Antioquia and Chocó (with which it is also limited to the west) and to the southwest with the Gitó Docabú reservation. Geographically, the Indigenous reservation is situated along the axis connecting the Chocó San Juan subregion through the municipalities of Bagadó, linked by the territory of the Tahamí reservation of Alto Andágueda, Tadó via the road connecting Pereira (Risaralda) with Quibdó (Chocó), and through the natural corridor of the San Juan River. It also encompasses the San José del Palmar municipality,

extending through the Tatamá National Park towards the Pacific platform for sea access and the capital cities of the coffee region, primarily Pereira. Pereira is a significant financial and commercial hub in the region, and there is potential for illicit financial activities, including money laundering, within the country (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2016).

The reservation's organization is based on family relationships, as extensive family groups represent the basic unit of the population (Azcárate et al., 2010). On the other hand, the reservation is organized politically through a Cabildo (Indigenous Council), which is democratically elected. Currently, the reservation has 32 villages, each with its Governor, grouped under the mayor-council. The reservation has around 7,800 people.

The Indigenous Council represents the reservation's authority, which is part of the organizational processes of the Council of Traditional Indigenous Authorities of Risaralda (CRIR), a regional organization based in Pereira, the capital of the Department of Risaralda. The CRIR emerged in 1999 to represent the Indigenous population of the Department of Risaralda at the regional and national levels, exercising organizational jurisdiction. On the other hand, it is essential to note that the reservation is part of the organizational processes that led to the consolidation of the Safeguard Plan for the Emberá Chamí people (ACIR, 2012). This document stands as the foundation for the defence of the Emberá Chamí people's rights, who, according to the constitutional court, are at serious risk of physical and cultural disappearance (Corte Constitutional, 2009). In addition, the Emberá Chamí's social organizations are under the umbrella of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia or ONIC (ACIR, 2012).

The control mechanism undergone by the Chamí Unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River implies a dual understanding of the cosmos: humans and nature.

The first sphere of control of life is magical-religious and managed by the Jaibanás. This sphere is preventive since it focuses on regulating the relationships between humans and the Jais or nature spirits so that the Jais favour humans. In this way, the community guarantees the survival of the natural environment and the abundance of resources (ONIC, 2022). The second sphere is strictly human, operating via the Indigenous Council. The members of the Indigenous Council are members of an

The Indigenous community, elected and recognized by it, has a traditional socio-political organization whose function is to legally represent the community, exercise its authority, and carry out the activities attributed to it by each community's laws, customs, and internal regulations (Decreto 2164, 1995).

The Indigenous Council oversees summoning community meetings to resolve conflicts, whereby the parties involved attend the gathering, and the community in general may also be invited to join in (ONIC, 2022). In these meetings, the Council compares and shows the results of the investigation that it carried out previously, and the Council members discuss the penalties to be imposed on the guilty party. If there is consensus, the Council applies the penalty depending on the seriousness of the case. Suppose the Council does not reach an agreement. In that case, the Governor of the Council chooses the penalty, which ranges from compensating the aggrieved party with property to sentencing the transgressor to spend time in the Cepo for several days (ONIC, 2022).

On the other hand, this territory has traditionally been used as a supply and strengthening area for armed structures, enabling the appropriation and management of legal and illegal economies to sustain their units and influence social movements. In addition, unilateral development projects and illegal economies fuel the actions of armed structures, which restrict the social and cultural projects of the communities

(Defensoría del Pueblo, 2016). Indigenous populations make use of their territories according to their cultural traditions. Still, they are transformed by the components of the environment, among them, any armed conflict that puts them at serious risk without managing or extinguishing the violence (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2016).

Indigenous authorities, namely the governors, members of the Mayor's Council and the traditional authorities, have been victims of systematic threats and attempted attacks by armed actors as a mechanism of their social control and to restrict the authority's actions to report human rights violations and impediments to the application of particular Indigenous jurisdiction (ONIC, 2018).

At the same time, however, the economy is based mainly on hunting, fishing, plant and animal collections, and the diversified agricultural production of corn, bananas and fruit trees, as well as breeding chickens, ducks and pigs (Consejo regional Indígena de Risaralda or CRIR, 2012). Some agricultural surpluses destined for commercialization, such as bananas, cassava, beans, corn, and fruit trees, are also combined with the production of coffee and cocoa for commercialization. This economic system was traditionally characterized by commercial exchange in other populations' local markets in the municipality into subsistence economies that were limited to the cultivation of bread products due to contact with the mestizos, who have been influencing the transformation of their economic, cultural, and social practices generating a deficit in food security (CRIR, 2012).

In addition, the mining economy has influenced this territory since the Spanish conquest period of the fifteenth century. The reservation community incorporated medium-scale extractive activity into their production processes through the mechanization of artisanal mining (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2016). Pueblo Rico town has 42 current mining concession applications, and four titles were granted to it by the

federal government. This projection by the mining companies as an area of exploitation of non-renewable natural resources increases the interest of armed groups to take control and exploit the areas to improve their finances through the extortion of small and medium-sized miners, control of areas of mining activity, and the collection of illegal taxes from mining companies that arrive in the municipality (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2016).

Finally, the reservation has undergone forced displacement due to economic factors and armed conflict. However, it is difficult to establish precisely the dynamics of this community's forced displacement. In addition, historically, there has been underreporting of forced displacement due to a lack of reports of violent acts, threats from armed groups, or the lack of credibility and legitimacy of the judicial or police institutions that deal with local people's complaints (Kienzl, 2006, p. 45).

To sum up, the thesis focuses on the Chamí Unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River, situated in Risaralda, Colombia, and the Emberá Chamí's ancestors. The reservation is strategically located, serving as a nexus between various municipalities and regions. Governed by familial structures and a democratically elected Cabildo, the reservation accommodates approximately 7,800 people across 32 villages. It is a significant participant in regional Indigenous organizational processes, contributing to initiatives like the Council of Traditional Indigenous Authorities of Risaralda (CRIR) and the Safeguard Plan for the Emberá Chamí people. The reservation operates under a dual control mechanism, blending magical-religious oversight by Jaibanás with human governance through the Indigenous Council. However, the region faces challenges from armed actors, who jeopardize the social and cultural projects of the Indigenous communities.

Economically, the reservation sustains itself through traditional practices like hunting, fishing, and agriculture while engaging in commercial activities like coffee and cocoa production. In addition, the community grapples with external influences, notably from mining activities dating back to the Spanish conquest. This economic pressure, coupled with the prevalence of armed conflict, has led to instances of forced displacement. However, these incidents are often under-reported due to fear of reprisal or distrust in institutional support. Despite these challenges, the reservation persists in preserving its cultural heritage and ecological integrity amidst evolving socio-economic dynamics and external threats.

2.9 Conclusion

Chapter two has outlined the significant historical, social, and cultural context of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community, focusing on the Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River. This chapter is far from an exhaustive exploration of the complex social and cultural dynamics that Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups have navigated to survive and coexist peacefully. However, this chapter is an effort to introduce some key elements of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups to reveal this complexity.

The chapter also explored the Spanish conquest and the colonization of the region that directly affected the Indigenous communities. In addition, it describes essential components from the birth of the new Colombian republican state to the present day, underlining changes in laws, the migration process and Indigenous social organizations. The chapter also focused on the cultural epistemology and practices belonging to the Emberá Chamí, like Jaibanism and the Embera Chamí worldview. Finally, this section provides an overview of the Chamí unified Indigenous reservation

of the San Juan River. It points out some relevant points to demonstrate how the Indigenous people's territory has been in permanent disputes that include different actors, including armed groups.

Chapter 3

Literature review: A dialogue among different perspectives

3.1 Introduction

The thesis mainly focuses on Indigenous resistance as an element of local people's emancipation they have experienced since the colonial period while passing through Colombian independence, the creation of the modern Colombian state and the contemporary conflicts engulfing Colombian society. The central idea of resistance is informed by Michel de Certeau's (1996) concepts of strategy and tactic. In addition, the chapter builds on the relationship between domination and power in resistance and peacebuilding proposed by Martha Iñiguez de Heredia (2017). Iñiguez de Heredia grounds her work in Michel de Certeau and James Scott's resistance theory, suggesting that examining resistance in the context of power structures like colonialism and state-building is essential.

The thesis is also rooted in colonialism, critical and emancipatory peacebuilding (CEP) theory, and the local turn, including Southern theory. It also incorporates Indigenous theory within a PACS scaffolding architecture. These theories collectively form the theoretical structure that is crucial for understanding Colombia's Indigenous communities, which have been deeply affected by colonialism and violent conflict. The central premise is that a dialogue among these theories can provide a clear understanding of Indigenous peacebuilding and the emergence of conflict from a situated and emancipatory perspective. From Southern critical theory, the idea of challenging peacebuilding practices and paradigms that are often imposed on excluded communities by liberal hegemonic ideologies is highlighted. The local turn underscores the importance of implementing bottom-up procedures and perspectives, ensuring the

active participation of local people in resolving their conflicts. Moreover, Indigenous theory and the rights of Indigenous people play a significant role in shaping a holistic knowledge and operational system that equips these communities to face political, environmental, and socioeconomic challenges with resilience and strength.

Therefore, this section intertwines critical Southern theory with the local turn, Indigenous peacebuilding practices, and resistance theory as part of an emancipatory peacebuilding process that focuses on people's agency, considering their identity and cultural and historical differences.

3.2 Resistance

Since ancient times, human groups and societies have experienced disobedience, defiance, rebellion, and resistance. These experiences are found in myths, mythology, biblical stories, and historical accounts from different periods and geographical settings. Therefore, challenging power structures, resisting domination, disobeying unjust norms, protesting inequalities and arbitrariness, and transgressing the social order that stimulates discrimination and exclusion are part of human action and progress. For example, López (2013) underlines that people's dissident feelings are the stimuli for social change instead of violence. Disobedience and dissidence could derive from tensions, conflicts, or violent conflict. Thus, culture and society change due to people challenging the establishment and the established order.

On the other hand, resistance also relates to the idea of preservation. In this sense, Vitale (2012) defines resistance as:

> When we refer to the opposition of those who, despite being on the margins or outside the law, nevertheless seek the conservation of institutions and

> regulations that are in danger of being modified, subverted, or that have already been, thus violating norms considered fundamental or of superior rank concerning the authority and competence available to those who act in this sense; norms whose abolition or modification is considered unjustified because they are attributed to divinity, nature or ancestral customs (p. 19).

Therefore, we have two assumptions about resistance. One idea highlights the social change element, and the other underlines the struggle for conservation. Despite these differences, the common component grounds the possibility of creating tension, provocation, and defiance against power structures that stimulate inequality, injustice, deprivation, power imbalance, and violations (López, 2013; Vitale, 2012). Thus, people create those tensions to change a social order that oppresses them or preserves a social order essential for survival. Both elements are central to understanding Indigenous communities' resistance dynamic since conserving institutions, identity, and cultural foundations are central to challenging exclusion, oppression, and colonialism. In addition, Indigenous communities participate in activities to change the social structures that promote repression and norms that are used against their rights and survival.

Alternatively, Michel de Certeau is a pivotal analyst in studying resistance. As articulated in his seminal work The Practice of Everyday Life (1996), his perspective is situated within the discourse of cultural studies but has permeated diverse disciplinary domains. De Certeau introduces two fundamental concepts, strategy and tactic, to elucidate his conception of resistance. In Certeau's framework, the strategy involves calculating power dynamics achievable when a subject possessing will and authority (like a corporation, military force, government body, urban entity, or scientific institution) can segregate itself from its surroundings. This strategy presupposes establishing a delineated space, serving as the locus for orchestrating interactions with

an external milieu. Political, economic, or scientific rationality is constructed within the confines of this strategic paradigm (p. XLIX).

On the contrary, the tactic operates in a manner that diverges from the structured confines of strategy. Consequently, individuals adopting a tactical stance lack a delineated territory that distinguishes them from others within a visible framework. In contrast to the strategy one uses, tactics do not possess a foundational platform for leveraging advantages, planning expansions, or ensuring autonomy about external circumstances (De Certeau, p. L). Given its amorphous nature, the tactic relies on temporal dynamics, strategically seizing opportunities for gain as they arise. As a result, those in positions of vulnerability (like oppressed individuals) must harness external forces to their advantage, opportunistically blending heterogeneous elements during decisive moments (De Certeau, p. L). However, their cognitive synthesis is not primarily shaped by discursive frameworks but rather by immediate action, characterized by pragmatic exploitation of circumstances (De Certeau, p. L).

Consequently, both concepts establish an opposition characterized by tension. At the same time, strategy refers to the power structure and tactics for the people's resistance to a disruptive power, which can be unexpected, foundational, and affirmative (Abal, 2007, p. 3). The strategy enables the resisters to utilize a variety of domination activities like mastery of time, space distribution, role administration, and circulating specific knowledge. The ability to isolate pushes the other into dependency and a lack of autonomy, while the strategy enables people with power to maintain and manage a physical and theoretical place, allowing control efficiency over the oppressed (Abal, 2007, p. 4).

Instead, the tactic derives its efficacy from the perceived lack and vulnerability of the oppressed, which paradoxically constitutes their source of strength that is

inherently characterized by weakness, as the tactic practitioner cannot fully dominate their adversary (Abal, 2007). Consequently, while the power structure may exert influence, it does not entirely subjugate the subject employing the tactic. Instead, their actions are confined to a form of subordinate resistance. In this context, tactics emerge as the means through which the weak assert their agency, epitomizing the strategic ingenuity of those with limited power. Abal (2007, p. 4) notes that resistance is exercised through the cunning and resourcefulness of the marginalized.

In addition, Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) locate classic resistance theory in the literature of Karl Polanyi, Antonio Gramsci, and James C. Scott. They underline Polanyi's conception of counter-movements, Gramsci's notion of "counter-hegemony," and Scott's concept of "infrapolitics" or the critique of powerful actors's "public transcripts" by marginalized people's "hidden transcripts." Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) point out that Gramsci and Polanyi focus on collective politics, and Scott focuses on individual everyday life. However, Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) believe that Scott's conceptualization creates a dichotomy between everyday and public resistance. Despite maintaining such a distinction, these scholars call for an analytical hybrid form that underlines that resistance, in reality, shows itself as mixed and in combined forms (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 27).

Grounded in the argument above, Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) also developed the concept of everyday resistance from James C. Scott and Michel de Certeau's theories. They noted that Scott, instead of searching for people's resistance motivation via the individual, proposes to "read the intentions from interpretations of the culture, in fact from the practices" (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 38). In addition, they reflected that "Scott views everyday resistance as evolving in opposition and relation to domination, particularly by placing limitations on what kind of resistance

becomes possible" (p. 38). On the other hand, de Certeau's framework invites us to approach "popular culture not as a domain of text or artifacts, but rather as a set of practices or usages of text and representations" (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 39). Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) stress that de Certeau's resistance idea implies "forms of adaption to the environment" through people's "disciplinary strategies" (p. 93). In this case, resistance occurs "at the micro level as temporary and creative manipulations of events, spaces, practices, symbols and materialities to turn them into opportunities" (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 93).

Following de Certeau's analysis, Alonso (2017), operating from a theological reflection, underlines that the exercise of space is central to understanding de Certeau's idea about strategy and tactics. A strategy adopts privileges and depends upon a defined place, while a tactic prevents such circumscription; therefore, it must create "within an imposed terrain, manipulating and diverting the space already created by the strategy" (Alonso, 2017, pp. 372-373). In addition, Alonso (2017) emphasizes that tactics not only light "the potential of individual agency but serve as a sign of that which is lacking," seeing the process of resistance as unveiling the structure's gaps and deficiencies (p. 392). People manipulate and operate power settings because they are users instead of consumers or passive subjects who ingeniously intervene in the power structure to reorganize it (Alonso, 2017).

In this sense, Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) affirm that the agency characteristic of the resistance act counts. They believe it is not the outcome of such actions that should be the focus; instead, it should focus on the potential to undermine power. Therefore, actors do not necessarily need a particular intention, consciousness, or recognition of the targets to detect resistance (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 47). People and communities have different motivations or reasons to resist a particular

power structure. For example, one person could have as many causes as possible simultaneously and in various combinations (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 47).

Consequently, Johansson and Vinthagen (2020) suggest that instead of focusing on resistance targets, the critical part of everyday resistance, as de Certeau indicates, is the agency itself. Finally, both authors assert that "it is through particular power discourses situated in certain contexts that resistance and power are framed and understood—in which actors understand themselves and their identities" (Johansson & Vinthagen, 2020, p. 47). It means that the level of consciousness varies, and what power relations influence depends on the context.

Thus, the resistance approach is essential in framing this research since Indigenous resistance fluctuates depending on the historical, social, political, and economic context. In addition, resistance focuses on Indigenous people as agents of their social realities who can galvanize collectively to oppose systems perceived as oppressive and unjust. Indigenous tactics to resist oppressive structures involve a series of creative acts that can be violent, nonviolent, symbolic, and discursive, including using their Indigenous identities, creating a sporadic and permanent alliance, and using resistance as a normative and cultural tool that the power structure can also use. In this regard, de Certeau (1996) highlights the following idea:

What was the mistake that internally undermined the "success" of the Spanish colonizers over the Indian ethnic groups: submissive and even acquiescent, these Indians often made ritual actions, representations or laws that were imposed on them something different from what the conqueror believed to be obtained with them; they subverted them not through rejection or change, but through their way of using them for purposes and based on references outside the system from which they could not escape.

> They were others within the interior of the colonization that "assimilated" them externally; their use of the dominant order deceived that power because they did not have the means to reject it; they escaped him without separating from it. The strength of their difference was maintained in the procedures of "consumption" (p. XLII).

Nonetheless, this thesis research acknowledges that the theoretical concept of resistance needs to be recalled for a more nuanced analysis of the Indigenous people in PACS. Traditionally, scholars fell into the dichotomous view of armed/unarmed or violent/nonviolent resistance (Dudouet, 2014). The problem with this binary vision is that, in reality, communities, social movements and organizations are or have been involved in various forms of resistance, including violent, nonviolent, and combined violent actions, so that the boundaries between forms of struggle are fluid (Dudouet, 2014, p. 5). Violent/nonviolent resistance includes coercive mechanisms reacting against the status quo, structural violence, oppression, and exclusionary systems. The differences lie in the use or absence of direct violence that implies physical damage to people or property (Dudouet, 2014, pp. 3-4). While violence relies on physical force, nonviolence uses mechanisms like protest, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, the creation of alternative institutions, and everyday cultural resistance, among others.

That said, the following discussion builds upon the intersection of resistance and peacebuilding, providing a nuanced analysis of resistance. The critical element in this analysis is the focus on domination and power relations proposed and developed by Martha Iñiguez de Heredia (2017) in her book titled Everyday Resistance, peacebuilding and State-making. Iñiguez de Heredia also builds her research on James Scott and Michel de Certeau's resistance theory. She also critically analyzes liberal peacebuilding and a hybrid approach to peacebuilding, examining resistance from a more fluid and confused pattern of acts grounded in social and political relations,

especially those looking at resistance linked to the exercise of power structures like state-building. From this perspective, resistance is scrutinized through diverse discursive, violent and survival practices.

3.2.1 Resistance and peacebuilding

PACS has approached resistance mainly by studying resistance in civil society and nonviolent actions. The role of civil society in peacebuilding has been understood to be an alternative to delivering services when societal institutions are too weak or conflictual to do it (Byrne, 2023). In addition, they can be a guarantor of democratic values related to human rights and peacebuilding through civic education, training, and advocacy (Paffenholz, 2010. p. 59). Similarly, Hovil and Okello (2011) acknowledge that civil society actors play a critical role in reviewing authoritarianism, rebuilding the state, and establishing solid democracies. However, they question the idea of neutrality linked to civil society. In contrast, civil society neutrality is essential to their internal functioning; in most instances, states define the parameters of civil society operation, diminishing claims to independence and impartiality. Therefore, following the civil society function in a peacebuilding process, civil resistance is defined as "the use of methods of nonviolent action by civil society actors engaged in asymmetric conflicts with authorities not averse to using violence to defend their interests" (Schock 2015, p. 29 cited in Hallward et al., 2017, p. 2).

Nevertheless, the "civil" condition is problematic for this study since it denotes the search for civic or civilizational ends grounded in the modern states' rights administration as the idea of civil society and resistance is attached to state-making (Iñiguez, 2017) and close to the liberal peacebuilding understanding, which advocates for state building, the democratic process, and economic liberalization (Paffenholz,

2010). Consequently, considering Indigenous people's resistance from a civil society resistance perspective hides historical, social, spiritual, and political elements endemic to Indigenous people's cultures, epistemologies, practices, and ways of life that lie in contrast to the Western culture's neoliberal constructs.

On the other hand, nonviolence is defined as "non-routine and extra-institutional political acts that do not involve violence or the threat of violence" (Schock 2015, p. 29 cited in Hallward et al., 2017, p. 2). Most scholars use Gene Sharp's pragmatic nonviolence ideas or Dr. Martin Luther King and Gandhi's experiences and his ideas of Satyagraha and Ahimsa as theoretical, practical sources for principled nonviolence. For example, Gandhi introduced ethics in politics when he showed that politics without violence is possible (López, 2006). Therefore, nonviolent actions require ethical and moral commitment from the activists. A difference between nonviolence and civil society resistance is that engaging in civil resistance does not require using the nonviolence moral element (Chenoweth & Cunningham, 2013). In addition, Gandhi promoted an awareness of individual and communal responsibility for actions that allow injustices. Creating this awareness led to resistance engagements found in non-cooperation, the primary legal means of nonviolence (Jahn, 2021).

Multiple studies of peacebuilding privilege the nonviolence resistance theoretical approach, focusing on the roots and consequences of nonviolent action, emphasizing the role "that unarmed and organized civilians can play in shaping the course of conflicts" (Chenoweth & Cunningham, 2013, p. 271). In Colombia, for example, many studies use a nonviolence theoretical framework to understand the Indigenous Nasa social movement (Clase Hagman, 2021; Chaves et al., 2020). However, it's important to note that Indigenous movements' objectives, strategies, and local contexts are diverse. Applying a single theory, such as nonviolence, may not

capture these movements' richness, nuance, and complexity. In addition, the Indigenous Emberá have used both violent and nonviolent methods to resist the Spanish conquest and colonization of their territory, the state-building process, internal colonialism, and the Colombian armed conflict. Therefore, this research acknowledges the significance of nonviolent methods during specific periods of Emberá's resistance history, shedding light on the diversity of resistance strategies.

Hence, the primary resistance framework considered for this study reflects on the significance of colonialism, bad governance, the rejection of national or international agendas that transform local cultures, and Emberá's experience of war, poverty, and exclusionary and oppressive structures. It means that "resistance needs to be seen as an expression of an experience that is historical and inseparable from global political and economic processes" (Iñiguez, 2017, p. 26). This holistic framework allows researchers to approach Indigenous community resistance as a historical process of challenging power structures without falling into the binary trap of violent/nonviolent resistance. In addition, it is possible to understand Indigenous resistance actions from the conquest period, which went through external colonialism, republicanism and state-making development, internal colonialism, and modern armed conflict. All these phenomena can be seen as oppressive expressions of national and international agendas and colonial powers responding to the political and economic interests of power structures, thereby connecting the audience to the historical roots of Indigenous resistance.

In this sense, Iñiguez (2017) focuses on the relationship of state-making and peacebuilding with resistance. She says that building peace via state building implies "asserting, consolidating, and exercising rule through the management of violence and wealth that has national and international elements" (p. 27). This idea also applies to the

same practice of extraction, oppression, and claims of legality carried out by colonial powers in the conquest of Indigenous peoples and their lands during the settler colonial periods. A historical analysis could disclose that the colonial powers and national states' attempts to centralize their power, as well as control and monopolize the use of violence to rule Indigenous people, are limited and contested (Iñiguez, 2017). Therefore, colonialism and state-building are challenged by Indigenous people since they behave as coercive and extractive organizations via force to control wealth and rights distribution, implement taxation, monopolize symbolism and discourses, shape spiritual practices, privilege some knowledge over others, control people's bodies, manage time and space, all of which are the object of Indigenous people's resistance.

The experience of Colombia's nation-state formation is determined by colonization, cultural, spiritual, economic, and social uniformity attempts, and slavery. Iñiguez (2017) builds upon Robert Holden's idea that modern state power in Central America was not mainly characterized by the concentration of coercive power practiced by the state but rather "its dispersal amongst the population" (p. 35). This point is articulated with Benno Teschke's (2003) notion of the control of violence as an oligopolistic form practiced by landlords instead of monopolized by a central power such as a state or colonial power (cited in Iñiguez, 2017, p. 35). This conception of power administration is helpful since, from the conquistadores' period in the fifteenth century, the Spanish colonial power had difficulties centralizing power in the current Colombian territory to make its settlers, and colonizers rule local Indigenous populations and territories under the Spanish Crown laws. Ultimately, the territorial and population control depended on the lords' interests, viewpoints, and experiences in the colonial journey.

In addition, Iñiguez (2017) builds upon the ideas of African state-making and peacebuilding theorists. She shows how the state-building process in countries like Congo is based on the concentration of power via the sharing of sovereignty between the state and Indigenous people. Consequently, population resistance to the state mainly consisted of fleeing from the authorities, creating a laxer power, which was forced to encourage alliances with dissidents to assure control. The Indigenous Emberá also had a resistance tactic of fleeing from the Spaniards' conquered territories, forcing them, in the beginning, to create a war against the native population, yet later, during the colonial period, the Spaniards changed their strategy using behavioural, spiritual, and language subjugation via education and transforming territory into towns and villas instead of into war. Alliances were a strategy used by the centralized power throughout the Indigenous Emberá's oppressive and resistant history.

Lined up with her early reflection, Iñiguez (2017) underlines Achille Mbembe's debate related to resistance. According to Iñiguez (2017), Mbembe (1991) understands resistance from the agency of subjugation, accommodation, and "entanglement" instead of approaching it from a conflict between resisters and dominants (p. 40). This idea emerges from his conflict analysis of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Following Iñiguez's (2017) discussion, the DRC conflict since 1996 has been characterized not as a conflict among armed groups but as a systematic population-subjugation process. The DRC population experiences different forms of domination carried out by various armed groups, and part of the population's resistance tactic includes fleeing the conflict zone. However, the population also participated in other activities that facilitated or challenged the violence. Therefore, when we refer to resistance, we must account that people could use their nonviolent agency to react to their subjugation, yet they could also utilize violent behaviour. Violence and

nonviolence are not the particular actions of a specific domain power or group; there is a “hybridization between domination and subjugation” (Iñiguez, 2017, p. 41).

Consequently, the relationship between resisters and dominators is not “necessarily a story of good and bad” (Iñiguez, 2017, p. 41). We embrace the idea of resistance from ambiguous relations with dominant structures. Resistance emerges within conquest, colonial, and post-colonial structures and materializes from peoples’ sources and elements created in an oppressive system.

3.3 Imperialism and colonialism

Creating sustainable peace requires establishing structures supported by the inclusion and empowerment of individuals and communities, recognition of their resilience, resistance to adverse contexts, and the deconstruction of unjust cultural, economic, political, and social institutions that address structural violence (Byrne et al., 2018). Imperialism and colonialism are forms of structural violence that seek to control others, extend mighty states’ power, and exploit people and resources.

This section sets out some differences and similarities between imperialism and colonialism. Imperialism and colonialism are global and state forms of structural violence that include different subjugation processes. According to the Quillet-Flammarion dictionary, imperialism is the “policy by which a large state seeks to extend its domination” (Bernand, 2005, para. 3). On the other hand, colonialism is a modern process that refers to the exploitation of resources for the primary and exclusive benefit of the colonizing country, the absence of political rights for Indigenous people, and their forced assimilation (Bernand, 2005, para. 5).

According to Matias Saba (2023), imperialism has different connotations. The first definition relates imperialism with the domination of one nation over another neighbouring nation to occupy and extend its territory (Matias Saba, 2023). A second meaning comes from a political and economic analysis that defines imperialism as a capitalist continuum. In this sense, empires developed to obtain the economic, strategic, and political advantages of expansion and development, together with a series of political, economic, and cultural measures (Matias Saba, 2023).

A third perspective on imperialism focuses on territorial expansion, which started with the powerful state conquering neighbouring and overseas territories. The primary goal of the dominant nation was to occupy territories and extend their domain, using the pretext of transmitting their culture to the colonies (Matias Saba, 2023). The empires were uniform due to their political, military, administrative, and legal systems based on the dominant nation's interests (Matias Saba, 2023).

A fourth perspective on imperialism is related to cultural studies. This view emphasizes the empire's ideology of "civilizing" people deemed "savage." The cultural viewpoint is interwoven with decolonial studies that analyze the binary forms that supported the sentiment of imperialism's superiority over other people (Matias Saba, 2023).

Imperialism within PACS refers to the direct and concrete cultural, economic, and political power relations that create disharmony between the center and the periphery (Galtung, 1980a, cited in Byrne et al., 2018, p. 2). The motivation behind imperialism is to control and exploit the periphery economically to protect privileges through communicative, cultural, political, military, and social means. Creating exploitative relationships makes identifying the exploiter and the exploited easy,

forming the essential element of a center-periphery theory (Galtung, 1980a, cited in Byrne et al., 2018, p. 2).

According to the PACS paradigm, imperialism involves a structure of dominance that consists of four components: (1) exploration – "an asymmetric pattern of a division of labour," (2) penetration – "a pattern whereby the dominant party controls the centre of the dominated," (3) fragmentation – "a pattern whereby the dominated are split and kept apart from each other," and (4) marginalization – "a pattern whereby the dominant establish their organizations, keeping the dominated outside" (Galtung, 1980b cited in Byrne et al., 2018, p. 2).

On the other hand, colonialism refers to a relationship where one collective holds power over another. The dominant group makes important decisions that dictate the way of life of the other group without considering their interests. The dominant group believes in its superiority and is not willing to compromise, creating a power dynamic that prioritizes the external interests of the dominant group over the interests of the other group (Osterhammel & Jansen, 2019, p. 24, cited in Matias Saba, 2023, p. 85).

Therefore, colonialism encompasses discourses of superiority intertwined with racism, social hierarchy, sexism, and the violent subjugation of Indigenous peoples (Matias Saba, 2023). It entails the deployment of ideological mechanisms, including a portrayal of colonized populations depicting them as uncivilized or inherently inferior, often labelled with terms like "savagery" (Matias Saba, 2023, p. 86). These ideological constructs serve to justify and perpetuate the domination and exploitation inherent in colonial enterprises, perpetuating systems of power and control over marginalized groups. In this sense, colonialism is a process that "makes" colonizers and colonized from an intricate web of relations (Comaroff, 1989, p.183). For example, Osterhammel and Jansen (2019) noted that colonial domination creates a "field of force" in which the

colonizers and the colonized interact and move forward or backward. These interactions generate hierarchies and polarization that differ depending on the historical context.

Within the PACS field, colonialism refers to direct, cultural, and structural violence (Galtung, 1988, cited in Byrne et al., 2018, p. 2). Colonialism usually denotes the phenomenon that occurred between the 16th and 20th centuries when people and territories were occupied and controlled by European powers, so it is essential to comprehend the similarities and differences between colonial Empires and their impact on Indigenous people (Byrne et al., 2018).

Finally, in some cases, colonialism can also occur within a society. For instance, in Latin America, the creation of nation-states led to a group of *mestizos* consolidating themselves as the dominant group. This group developed cultural, normative, material, and spiritual actions that discriminated against a significant population sector (Matias Saba, 2023). Therefore, understanding the phenomenon of internal colonialism requires analyzing past experiences that have been transformed over time and have laid the foundations for the political, economic, and cultural domination of one nation or political structure over another in various historical periods (Matias Saba, 2023).

Considering the previous conceptual discussion, this research understands imperialism mainly as an empire's process of expanding and conquering other territories to exploit the resources and cheap labour of the conquered territory. The economic and political expansion of imperialism is supported, in part, by the dichotomous idea of "civilizing" and "savage." On the other hand, the thesis understands colonialism to be a modern form of colonial state expansionism that helps us understand the consolidation process of superiority and domination discourses over different groups of people, which are usually Indigenous communities. These processes generate the acculturation and subjugation of Indigenous people.

To summarize, creating sustainable peace necessitates the establishment of inclusive and empowering structures that recognize and resist adverse contexts alongside deconstructing unjust cultural, economic, political, and social institutions. Imperialism and colonialism represent forms of structural violence aimed at controlling and exploiting others, with distinct subjugation processes. Colonialism encompasses discourses of superiority intertwined with racism, social hierarchy, sexism, and the violent subjugation of Indigenous peoples. It also involves ideological mechanisms that justify domination and exploitation, perpetuating systems of power and control over marginalized groups. In PACS, understanding the phenomena of imperialism and colonialism is crucial for comprehending complex historical and contemporary dynamics of oppression and resistance, both externally and internally, within societies like in Latin America.

3.4 Emancipation

Oliver P. Richmond (2022) evaluates the evolution of the emancipation perspective within PACS and International Relations (IR). He argues that emancipation used to mean a reaction against power structures such as "feudalism, slavery, imperialism, discrimination, patriarchy, a class system, nuclear weapons and racism," yet, in the context of contemporary conflicts, it is more unclear what emancipation means when scholars and practitioners use it as reference for their analysis and actions (Richmond, 2022, p. 126). On the other hand, Richmond analyzes emancipation from different IR theoretical schools like realist, social, liberal, post-colonial, post-liberal, post-structural, global justice, and Anthropocene perspectives.

The realist IR perspective highlights that emancipation aims "for justice and sustainability over imperialism, nationalism, and territoriality." However, it is seen as a

revolution aiming to overthrow power structures (Richmond, 2022, p. 129). At the same time, a counter-revolutionary reaction will restrain the insurrection to preserve the older order (Richmond, 2022, p. 129). A realist version emphasizes that states should find a balance of power where actors free themselves from oppression to claim autonomy, but without altering that balance (Richmond, 2022, p. 129). In this context, the balance of power means that power structures will build and deploy capabilities strong enough to restrict other possible dominant structures from preventing a single state from becoming hegemonic and having the ability to impose its will on other states. If a state accumulates too much power, the different states will band together to counteract it. States form alliances to balance the power of other states or coalitions. These alliances can be temporary and changing depending on circumstances, reflecting constantly evolving national interests. On the other hand, a social version sees emancipation as channelling politics, economy, and culture to work on society's shared needs, where states and the international community alleviate the predation of elites and limit the interests of authoritarian leaders (Richmond, 2022, p. 130).

In contrast, a liberal emancipation approach "focused upon human rights and democracy rather than society, with as little domination as plausible from power, religion and the state" (Rawls, 1971, cited in Richmond, 2022, p. 130). It aims to create a world community regulated by a standard normative, expanding solidarity and consolidating a welfare model within a liberal state. In comparison, a post-colonial version pays attention to the historical and contemporary context experienced by marginalized groups and characterized by colonialism and imperialism as forms of violence. Emancipation from an anti-colonialist view relates injustices with "Western state power, authoritarian domestic elites, global capital and former colonial practices and systems" (Richmond, 2022, p. 130). At the same time, post-liberalism promotes

egalitarianism and environmental reforms and explores ideas of class, identity, and gender. In addition, it suggests the importance of "locally legitimate forms of political authority" (Richmond, 2022, p. 133).

On the other hand, post-structuralism attempts to "abstract material equality" through a political and global order that redistributes resources to achieve relative equality, global justice, and sustainable ecology (Richmond, 2022, p. 133). Finally, global justice and the Anthropocene view of emancipation "attempts to mediate liberal, post-colonial and post-structural approaches" (Richmond, 2022, p. 133). It underlines the importance of the historical, political, economic, and social analysis of injustice and exclusion and acknowledges that civil society and international organizations must balance power (Richmond, 2022, p. 133). It also adds traditions and memory, trauma, reparations, reconciliation, sustainability, and rights into the emancipation debate (Richmond, 2022, p. 134).

Thus, emancipation in a peacebuilding process and conflict context is framed under the critical analysis of traditional perspectives like realism and liberal peace, as well as the communitarian character of emancipation (Byrne & Thiessen, 2019). The Peace Inc industry and its peacelander workers implement universal peacebuilding package that includes a market structure, democracy, elections, human rights, and security reform (Autesserre, 2022). In contrast, emancipatory peacebuilding requires an inductive attitude whereby resources come from local agents and community members instead of being imported and imposed by outsiders (Thiessen, 2012). It means that knowledge and processes emerge mainly from local dynamics. "The emancipatory peacebuilding project must engage in elicited negotiations with local communities where local voices are taken seriously, and conceptualize atomized societies as collectives" (Thiessen, 2012, p.121). It means that knowledge and processes emerge

mainly from local dynamics. On the other hand, the critical analysis re-thinks traditional liberal peacebuilding and peacekeeping practices, and it utilizes critical perspectives to deconstruct orthodox tradition and construct a more crucial agenda for peace operations (Thiessen, 2012, p. 124).

Consequently, peacebuilding projects from a critical and emancipatory perspective must engage in participatory dialogue with local communities, where local voices, ideas, knowledge, and initiatives are taken seriously and where these projects promote the welfare of the collective (Thiessen, 2012, p. 121).

Therefore, this thesis is close to the post-colonial view of emancipation since it is interested in tracking Indigenous communities' resistance processes and strategies in a historical context of colonial and state formation. Colonialism and modernity propagate injustice in Indigenous communities, which, in turn, received resistance from Indigenous people to survive and gain cultural, political, and economic independence. It also adapts elements from post-liberalism, such as equality and environmental reform, identity, gender, and class, to highlight the legitimacy of local organizational forms. In addition, it acknowledges post-structuralism's contribution to equality, global justice, and sustainable ecology, especially in connecting peace praxis to political transnational networks and agencies with creative ways of resistance.

3.5 Critical Southern theory

Critical theory calls for new models of peace focusing on emancipation, Indigenous perspectives, and communitarian approaches that must be implemented in peacebuilding processes (Tschirgi, 2020, p. 320). Critical theory emerged from the Frankfurt School in Germany during the 1920s to interpret and update Marx's original class conflict theory. The new interpretation of Marx's theory included historical materialism and elements

from psychoanalysis, culture, and the social sciences. From this perspective, the objective was to scrutinize control and domination mechanisms produced by capitalism (Marcillo et al., 2017). It also included analyzing and challenging domination, inequality, and exploitation lived by societal groups needing freedom, participation, and organization to struggle against injustice (Marcillo et al., 2017). From a critical perspective, the theory encourages social transformations to change people's lives for their well-being, unlike traditional theories (Marcillo et al., 2017).

Critical theory also seeks to understand the world by embracing concepts like discourse, hegemony, domination, and systematically distorted communication (Hansen, 1993). It also includes Marxist and psychoanalytical ideas like social classes and productive forces to highlight the dysfunctional aspects of society, societal imbalances, and individual and community frustrations that originated from social systems (González, 2002).

The term "critical" underscores the importance of challenging the prevailing order and delving into its origins (Cox, 1981). In the context of PACS, critical theory typically involves interrogating the underlying assumptions guiding peacebuilding practices and the overall framework of ideas and implementations that constitute the paradigm influencing individuals' thoughts and actions (Pugh, 2013, p. 12). This critical analysis challenges the dominant conventional norms regarding existence, cognition, emotions, and behaviour. By scrutinizing power dynamics, societal institutions, symbolic representations, discourses and narratives, cultural customs, economic and political systems, and cognitive frameworks, critical theory in PACS empowers individuals to challenge and change the norms that jeopardize peaceful and equitable societies while promoting exclusion and oppression as the sources of conflict.

Critical theory and the emancipation process can then engage with Southern theory, involving Indigenous communities in the periphery (Connell, 2007). The former is concerned with the in-depth examination of knowledge predominantly generated in Northern regions, typically taking on a universal character. Southern theorists contend that the historical colonial and imperial legacies of Europe and the resulting disparities in knowledge have been overlooked in the pursuit of peace in peripheral areas (Morrell, 2016, p. 193). From the standpoint of emancipation, Southern theory represents an alternative way of thinking that aligns with critical theory yet diverges from the Frankfurt School's critical theory, which originated in select European countries like Germany, England, France, Russia, and Italy to influence progressive social movements within Europe. However, the circumstances in Southern regions encompass distinct historical, socio-political, and cultural contexts (De Santos, 2011). For instance, Indigenous social movements in Latin America construct their struggles based on ancestral, popular, and spiritual knowledge, which could contrast with the scientism inherent in Eurocentric critical theory (De Santos, 2011).

Conversely, there exist stark differences in ontological perspectives concerning existence and life. Within these communities, being is defined in terms of its relationships with the collective rather than as an individual, as asserted by the Western liberal world. Further, these communities acknowledge the presence and vitality of ancestors, animals, the spirit realm, and the earth's mother (Connell, 2007). The Global South possesses a non-Western worldview that necessitates undertaking intercultural translation efforts, a process of translating ideas and concepts from one culture to another, for comprehension and appreciation (De Santos, 2011, p. 27).

Additionally, while rooted in critical theory, Southern theory is geographically situated in the Global South. It employs epistemological frameworks from Southern

contexts to advocate for novel approaches to generating and assessing scientific and non-scientific knowledge (Connell, 2007). This perspective also emphasizes examining the interplay between diverse forms of knowledge grounded in the experiences of social classes and social groups who have endured systematic disparities and discrimination stemming from capitalism and colonialism (De Santos, 2011, p. 35). Although primarily associated with countries in the Southern Hemisphere, the Global South is not strictly a geographical notion. Instead, it is a metaphor for the worldwide human suffering of capitalism and colonialism, and it underscores the Indigenous people's resistance to combat or to mitigating these forces, and characterizing itself as an anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, and anti-imperialist entity (Connell, 2007).

This perspective is not confined solely to the Global South but also extends to the Global North, manifesting in marginalized and silenced communities such as Indigenous peoples, undocumented immigrants, the unemployed, ethnic and religious minorities, and victims of sexism, homophobia, and racism, collectively forming the "fourth world" (De Santos, 2011, p. 35). Consequently, critical social movements rooted in Southern contexts have emerged locally and have occasionally drawn upon a redefined Marxism as a theoretical foundation.

Southern theory also embodies a liberation philosophy that takes a solid critical stance against classical philosophy, which is seen as Eurocentric and oppressive (Connell, 2007). It advocates for a perspective that originates from the experiences of the oppressed and those residing in the periphery (Silva, 2018). Being born on the edge provides a unique vantage point in contrast to the philosophical practices prevalent in dominant centers of power (Dussel, 2011). European philosophy often becomes a tool of oppression serving the interests of central control in peripheral regions; it takes on a role of liberation for Indigenous communities in the Global South. Liberation as a

philosophical concept emerged within the critical discourse of the periphery, reflecting a postmodern philosophical outlook (Dussel, 2001).

As a result, there is a call for fostering cross-cultural dialogues that place diversity at the forefront. This inclusive dialogue brings together critical perspectives from feminists, ecologists, anti-discrimination movements, various ethnic groups, marginalized communities, immigrants from economically disadvantaged countries, as well as children and the elderly. It also encompasses peasants, inhabitants of the "third world," underprivileged peripheral nations, and individuals considered "victims" of modernity, colonization, transnationalism, and late capitalism (Dussel, 2001). The philosophy of liberation seeks to examine and define the philosophical meta-language of these diverse social movements, fostering a sense of value and respect for all voices.

Consequently, the critical perspective, specifically Southern theory, became a meta-language for Indigenous perspectives about peace. Despite their differences, Indigenous communities worldwide base their view of peace on ancestral and spiritual knowledge that the Global North has excluded and oppressed via colonialism. The following segment explores the idea of the local turn in peacebuilding and its relations with the critical perspective and the culture and community approach, which are also close to Indigenous systems and theory.

3.6 The local turn

The critical perspective on the classical approaches to peacebuilding, such as realism and liberalism, the use of post-structuralism theory, and post-colonial and emancipatory scholarship and practice, has influenced the emergence of PACS of the local turn. Scholars like Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) have reflected deeply on the advent of the local community as the center of analysis and intervention in peacebuilding. The

policies of many International Organizations (IOs) and bilateral donors have focused on the state-building component of peacebuilding (OECD, 2011, cited in Campbell & Peterson, 2013, p. 336). There is a correlation between overseas aid and economic and strategic interest that often disputes local economic strategic dynamics (Newman, 2013). Therefore, the complexity of the matter also implies that economic projects, ideology, identity, and other multiple variables eventually represent the contestation of the conditions of emancipation across various locales (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013).

As a result, the local turn in PACS not only acknowledges the power imbalance perpetuated by classical peacebuilding theories but also empowers the local community. It respects and promotes local culture, history, and identity, and emphasizes local critical agency (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). This local critical agency, or social "mobilization for peace in practical terms," is a beacon of hope. It can be both easily visible or covered and "often expressive of informal critical or tactical capacity" that expresses "limited subaltern agency" and "significant social legitimacy" (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 770). The local agency is a testament to the social and historical struggles that are entangled with a "complex local–international mix of identities, values and norms, and cultural, political and economic practices" (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 770). It allows local people to struggle for power to balance power relations that the implementation of injustice structures has unbalanced (Byrne & Thiessen, 2019). The local turn is emancipation found in everyday life, which develops empathy and solidarity (Paffenholz, 2015).

Looking at the locals implies that PACS practitioners and scholars focus on local community dynamics and culture. The discussion of community dynamics is related to the interactional character of the human being as the local community settings reflect a relational nature of ongoing interactions. In this everyday context, peacebuilding should

include all participants, rather than simply elites, to "work out shared agreements and tacit understandings in response to everyday contingencies" (Hall, 1987, p. 6, cited in Stroschein, 2013, p. 279). The peacebuilding process, including the work carried out with elite groups, must be filtered through these incremental and diffuse local interactions (Stroschein, 2013, p. 279). Local initiatives and interaction between ordinary individuals can promote peace not only at the local level but at the national level too (Rodríguez, 2012), yet they can also reduce peace.

Looking at the local communities means understanding how local people deal with the quality of their relations at different levels. It also means engaging with local people's knowledge, skills, and resources to encourage a bottom-up process, assuring authentic local participation (Byrne & Thiessen, 2019). An example of regional dynamics is conflict resolution in some Indigenous communities, meaning their spiritual expressions are central to their epistemologies and worldviews (Wilson, 2009). In this case, peacebuilding practitioners and activists should learn to engage with their local communities through faith, rituals, and spiritual life rather than secular peacebuilding values and methods (Abu-Nimer, 2013).

Building peace necessitates a keen understanding of the ever-evolving dynamics within a community. Relationships among community members can vary in intensity, ranging from periods of apparent stagnation to instances of heightened significance within different contexts. These relationships inherently encompass power dynamics and the agendas of gatekeepers. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize that a community is not an entirely closed entity; it is permeable, with outsiders who possess varying degrees of involvement compared to community members and individuals outside the community. Further, cultural factors play a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics within a community, as culture encompasses how people live their lives and share a collective

worldview. It is a dynamic framework consisting of values, practices, and implicit and explicit shared understandings, all developed through an ongoing creative process. This process involves the social organization of space, time, and interpersonal relationships, including those between the material and nonmaterial realms, between genders, and among individuals, groups, and the self (Brown, 2013, p. 137).

Therefore, an awareness of community dynamics and culture challenges the simplistic universalism often inherent in mainstream peacebuilding theories. Thus, local agencies and the community and cultural dynamics become the subject of bottom-up peacebuilding applications in contrast to a top-down approach depicted by liberal peacebuilding (Debiel & Rinck, 2016). However, scholars and practitioners must not see the debate as a dichotomous reality but as a dialectical understanding of the relationship between bottom-up and top-down, relativism and cosmopolitanism, and formal and informal peacebuilding processes. This understanding is crucial for a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding.

In response to this challenge, Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) contextualized the local turn and moved beyond the tension between localism and cosmopolitanism, proposing a hybrid peacebuilding approach. Nonetheless, the local turn has recently become the subject of critique. For example, the agency in the everyday realm as a central theme in local peacebuilding can be problematic because it brings up selectivity (Randazzo, 2016). It is difficult to differentiate between violent and nonviolent forms of agency because some local agencies focus on using "quasi-violent methods," and they depend on a "high degree of subjective judgement" and power relations among local elites (Randazzo, 2016, p. 1356). Hence, scholars and practitioners should also avoid enticement to romanticize local communities' Indigenous and traditional peacebuilding methods (Mac Ginty, 2008).

In conclusion, the local turn is a crucial aspect of the critical approach within PACS. Post-structural theory, post-colonial scholarship and practice, interdisciplinarity, and alternative ethnographic, sociological, and action-related methodologies are perspectives and methods feeding peacebuilding practices focusing on locals. However, this perspective is not free of criticism. It is a call to action for theorists, academics, and practitioners to engage in an ongoing conceptualization and interrogation of what the local means and the relation between local peacebuilding and other forms of creating peace. This ongoing engagement is vital for the continued evolution and improvement of peacebuilding practices.

3.7 Indigenous theory and the rights of Indigenous people

Indigenous people, despite facing existential dangers and conflicts with the dominant society, have shown remarkable resilience. The loss of their territories and resources, the disfranchisement processes, and the deprivation of their political, cultural, social, and economic rights created a hostile environment that threatened their existence and left them with historical trauma (Brown-Rice, 2013). In addition, Indigenous peoples underwent a Western definition of non-human under colonialism as they were stigmatized as savages and non-civilized humans as their worldviews were destroyed.

However, these communities have not succumbed to this oppression. They have been oppressed by the military, political, economic, cultural, and educational systems of the colonial state (Martin & William, 2019). In response to this historical oppression, a decolonization process started in the 1940s, culminating in an attempt to restore the Indigenous culture movement in the 1980s (Tuso & Flaherty, 2016). This renaissance includes efforts to recognize and acknowledge Indigenous ways of life, including

rituals, art, Indigenous rights, health and justice systems, knowledge systems, peacebuilding processes, and conflict and land management.

For example, Kalland (2000) recognizes three levels of Indigenous knowledge: 1) *Empirical knowledge* refers to empirical observations that Indigenous people select for survival strategies and environmental adaptation. It differs from data collected in modern science, which is tested and validated empirically through theoretical models (Kalland, 2000, p. 322). Empirical knowledge in the Indigenous context is practical knowledge. 2) *Paradigmatic knowledge* denotes Indigenous people's holistic understanding of their behaviour and relationships. It is about how Indigenous people interpret practical knowledge and create a system of thought or worldview (Kalland, 2000, p. 323). 3) *Institutional knowledge* indicates the organization that emerges from Indigenous premises and priorities as they use their culture to formulate their epistemologies (Kalland, 2000, p. 323).

This classification helps understand the Indigenous production of knowledge and analyzes how Indigenous people use this knowledge to survive. For example, epistemological or empirical knowledge materializes when Indigenous people understand how nature and human beings are interconnected in a usable form. However, this interconnection is embedded in a thought process or worldview system that understands the world holistically. Finally, the Indigenous people's whole worldview needs to be institutionalized via community organization as it allows knowledge movement and social organization to face political and social challenges. Ultimately, each level helps Indigenous people adapt to a changing natural and social environment.

The above classification can be summarized in the definition of Indigenous knowledge offered by Dei (1993), who highlights that Indigenous knowledge is "cultural traditions, values, beliefs, and worldviews of local peoples as distinguished

from Western scientific knowledge" (cited in Tuso & Flaherty, 2016, p. 11). In addition, this knowledge emerges from people's experiences with nature and the complex relationship created with the social world, as it is a holistic and inclusive form of knowledge (Tuso & Flaherty, 2016, p. 11). Indigenous knowledge also materializes via stories that are a valuable system of knowledge, and stories are Indigenous theories (Million, 2014; Martin & William, 2019).

Stories contain the emotional part of people's experiences and their perspective and understanding of their realities as they work as the foundations for action and agency (Million, 2014). In Indigenous cultures, storytelling is a fundamental way of transmitting knowledge, preserving history, and understanding the world. Storytelling is also an important research methodology (Senehi, 2020). Therefore, Indigenous communities found in stories not only a way to keep their past alive, but they also provided them with potential tools to act against the structures that oppresses and excludes them. Indigenous theory expressed through stories is developed when communities make and take a proposition about what and why something is happening to them in their everyday lives (Million, 2014). People's narratives and stories are told about intergenerational traumas, victimization, survival strategies, people's memory, resilience, relationship with the land and the environment, and the healing process (Cormier, 2020).

That said, Brigg and Walker (2016) relate three characteristics within Indigenous theory, namely collectivist, decolonial, and holistic. From a conflict resolution perspective, a *collectivist* approach aims to develop activities that bring harmony to the group. The focus is on restoring broken relationships in contrast to individualistic peacebuilding approaches in Western societies. In addition, the Indigenous theory is *decolonial* in respecting and understanding Indigenous knowledge and worldviews

that have been excluded through colonization. It challenges assumptions and values from exclusive colonial cultures by offering alternative standpoints (Behrendt, 2019). Finally, the Indigenous theory is deeply *holistic*, interconnected, and cyclical. Indigenous perspectives are inclusive, involving humans, nature, ancestors, and spirits (Simpson, 2017). It is a web of connections to each other, including animals, rivers and lakes, and the cosmos. This interconnectedness is a reminder that we are all part of a larger whole, and that Indigenous systems of thought are "much more fluid, transforming and interconnecting reality" rather than the linear perspective based on cause and effect normalized by Western societies (Ross, 2014, p. 21).

The Indigenous decolonization process includes Indigenous theory acknowledgment and human rights. The modern world's impact on Indigenous people became more visible in global scenarios in the 1970s. In that decade, the *World Council of Indigenous Peoples*, a significant international organization representing Indigenous peoples, came together, one of the essential steps for creating *The Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples at the U.N*. The World Council wrote the Charter for Indigenous Rights that "captured the growing recognition that Indigenous peoples around the planet had suffered similar impacts historically through colonization and the consequences of modern development" (Synott, 2017, p. 2). The World Council was followed by regional and world conferences on Indigenous peoples' cultures, achievements and concerns related to education, health, law and justice, languages, self-determination, distinctive rights, and land rights (Synott, 2017, p. 2). These conferences and Indigenous activities led to the formation in the early 1980s of the U.N. *Working Group on Indigenous Populations*. It was the "first mechanism established in the U.N. with a specific focus on the rights of Indigenous Peoples' and the advent of the U.N. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in 2007" (Synott, 2017, p. 2).

Some U.N. agencies also advanced some acknowledgements of Indigenous people's contributions to global peace before the U.N.'s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. For example, UNESCO recognized Indigenous nation's contributions to peace in its *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* 2006. This paper acknowledged the importance of Indigenous culture in seeking permanent peace and environmental sustainability around the globe (Synott, 2017, p. 8). One way to accomplish those intercultural dialogues is to embrace knowledge produced and shared in Indigenous studies. Indigenous people, elders and Indigenous scholars' expertise and interests can find allies in the social science disciplines like cultural studies, Indigenous studies, anthropology, and PACS.

That said, human rights have become a paradigm and a legal mechanism for diverse groups to claim and make visible issues related to social justice at the international level (Thornberry, 2002).

Concerning the Rights of Indigenous people, human rights law challenges the context of colonialism, raising people's awareness of advocating for social justice for Indigenous peoples. Peacebuilders note that the human rights framework is valuable for the "educative function on the nature of social conflict" and for explaining the function of human relations in becoming a moral basis to promote a shared world, including diverse social identities (Ansloos, 2017, p. 68). The U.N. Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People became a tool to expand and clarify the application of existing human rights to protect Indigenous people's inherent rights (Ansloos, 2017, p. 68). The Declaration helps catalyze the decolonial Indigenous processes around the globe as it is an effort to address the criticism of the liberal peace and human rights institutionalization over traditional justice systems by situating culturally Indigenous issues within their cultures.

3.8 *Sumac kawsay*, or *el buen vivir*, or good-living

The Andes language-Quechua word *sumac kawsay* and the Spanish concept of *el buen vivir* can be translated as good living. The good-living idea refers to a new society created in opposition to the culture imposed on it by colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism. The oldest text, including some references to good living, is from the 17th century (Ortiz, 2010). The Indigenous chronicler Guzmán de Poma learned how to write in Spanish and sent a letter to King Felipe III of Spain describing the local society from an Indigenous point of view and proposing the need to apply the ethics of good governance, which is the Indigenous word for good-living (Ortiz, 2010). Another reference to good living is also found in the work of the Augustinian priest Baltasar de Salas in 1625 when he mentions some principles applied by the Indigenous group Aymara, from the current territory of Chile, Bolivia, and Peru, about their way of life and their agricultural laws. Baltasar de Salas noted that elements in Indigenous thought, such as "living in a web" and nature as the fabric of life, express Indigenous principles like relationship, complementarity, and reciprocity (Medina, 2011).

From a historical perspective, the *sumac kawsay* existed in the historical memory of the Andean Indigenous communities as a sense of life and an ethic that ordered the community's life. This characteristic did not survive after the destruction of the pre-Columbian state with the Spanish conquest and the establishment of a settler colonial society. However, the *sumac kawsay* was rescued and practiced by local families and the community. Indigenous movements have claimed this principle from an ethical-civilizing perspective (Simbaña, 2011, p. 2). In general, *sumac kawsay* is a kind of renewed paradigm to live in abundance, wisdom, dignity, and harmony as the local peoples and their cultures live in balance with Mother Nature as an alternative to

the failure of the capitalist and development ideology created in Western countries (Viteri, 2013).

In addition, *sumac kawsay*, or good living, is a social and political movement that claims the harmonic living conditions of the original peoples of *Abya Yala* or Latin America (Dávalos, 2011). As a political movement, *sumac kawsay* intends to incorporate the so-called Andean worldview (Estermann, 1998) as the primary cultural reference of Latin American societies so that Indigenous peoples lost ancestral identity can be recovered and used to promote a civilizational change (Prada, 2011; Estermann, 2012). *Sumac kawsay* helps Indigenous people to look for equity and sustainability, and its influence has spread from the Indigenous movements of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia to the rest of the Indigenous social activities of *Abya Yala*, most of which have incorporated the concept of good living into their political struggles.

Sumac kawsay provides relevance to Indigenous peoples' self-determination and proposes converting Latin American nation-states into plurinational states (Simbaña, 2011). It attaches great importance to the recovery of the ancestral traditions of Indigenous peoples and pays special attention to the spiritual elements related to good living (Huanacuni, 2010; Maldonado, 2010). Most of these postulates correspond to a pre-modern conception of the world and an ancestral Andean and Amazonian nature (Hidalgo-Capitán & Cubillo-Guevara, 2014).

Sumac kawsay is also closely related to what Western societies call peace. *Sumac kawsay* facilitates meeting individuals' and communities' needs like fulfilment, dignified quality of life and death, the real possibility of loving and being loved, healing damaged relationships, and creating peace and harmony with nature and the diverse human cultures (Ministerio de Educación, 2009). *Sumac kawsay* also means Indigenous people having free time for contemplation and emancipation as it creates space for an

individual's freedom, capacities, and possibilities to expand and flourish as well as their individual and collective identities (Ministerio de Educación, 2009). Simultaneously, Indigenous people achieve what society, and groups aim for in their territories both materially and subjectively and without producing any domination over another group (Ministerio de Educación, 2009).

In conclusion, *sumac kawsay*, or *el buen vivir*, or good living, is a philosophy of life that is embedded within the Andean culture and region of Latin America. This way of life promotes living in harmony with people and nature on many different levels, such as with the self, within and among communities, nature, and other cultures. *Sumac kawsay* is the principle that guides the plans and programs of the Indigenous communities in Latin America and assists them in surviving, emancipating themselves, and having political and cultural freedom. It is also a peacebuilding system of thought emerging from the South that contributes to PACS.

3.9 Conclusion

This research delves into the resistance of Indigenous people, seeking to understand it as a process for their survival and harmonious coexistence with mainstream society and nature. To fully grasp this intricate phenomenon, it is crucial to embrace a multidimensional perspective. This approach, which incorporates various theoretical frameworks, is essential to shed light on the complexity of Indigenous resistance. This chapter underscores the interconnectedness of diverse viewpoints originating from emancipation, Indigenous perspectives, Southern theories, resistance philosophy, and PACS theory. By employing a holistic theoretical approach, we aim to deepen our understanding of the Indigenous struggle in Colombia.

As a general approach, I employ the emancipation framework from a post-colonial, post-liberal, and post-structural perspective to investigate the resistance processes and strategies of Indigenous communities within the historical context of Colombia's colonial and state formation. This theoretical framework not only enables the tracking of injustices but also places a strong emphasis on Indigenous agency, connecting it to their political and cultural practices. Additionally, the implementation of critical Southern theories in this study facilitates the integration of peace with ancestral and spiritual knowledge, establishing a dialogue with postmodern perspectives originating from the Northern Hemisphere.

The local turn, a crucial theoretical perspective, highlights the bottom-up approach to Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) analysis. This perspective interconnects with the Indigenous paradigm and the rights of Indigenous people, enabling the examination of community dynamics within a holistic framework. It emphasizes the importance of local perspectives and experiences in understanding and addressing conflicts. Further, I adopt the notion of resistance processes as ambiguous and complex relations between the oppressed and the oppressor, avoiding dichotomous viewpoints such as violent and nonviolent resistance actions.

Finally, any analysis of Indigenous resistance in the Andean region should also consider the sumac *kawsay* perspective, as it is a fundamental viewpoint embraced by Indigenous communities in the Andean region. *Sumac kawsay* serves as a philosophy of life that not only provides meaning to Indigenous social movements but also enriches them with the cultural richness and significance of Indigenous communities.

Chapter 4

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The thesis methodology design involves a dialogue between qualitative methodology and Indigenous methodology. It acknowledges the differences and similarities between both research approaches. Qualitative research is grounded in the idea that people construct knowledge due to the meaning they make of individual's and community's activities and experiences or any phenomenon (Thiessen & Byrne, 2017). In contrast, the Indigenous methodological concept of self is intricately intertwined with the family, community, and the Other and everything around the community, including elements of nature which help mould people's identities and relationships (Kovach, 2021). However, there are also similarities; for example, both methodologies acknowledge that the research procedure is a mediation that emerges from peoples' worldviews, meanings, purposes, and values.

It uses document analysis, storytelling, and interviews as multi-methods within the hybrid qualitative and Indigenous methodologies. Qualitative research guides the historical perspective of this thesis. The thesis uses documentary research methods to investigate historical and academic documents to explore the Indigenous Emberá resistance processes recorded by the Spaniards and analyzed by specialists. From documentary research, the social images are obtained and expressed by the Spanish and Colombian conquers and colonialists, priests and expeditionary forces in their letters, diaries, or communications about how the Indigenous Emberá Chamí living in the upper part of the San Juan River resisted Spanish domination and subjugation. This historical method allows researchers to explore the Emberá Chamí's resistance method's consistency and change over time. In addition, the documentary research is used to review

specialized literature about the Indigenous Emberá Chamí, looking for information about resistance and power structure domination strategies identified in the literature yet not compiled within the scholarly literature.

On the other hand, the use of an Indigenous methodology is not just a choice, but a necessity to fully explore the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's resistance tactics against the armed groups-Colombian government conflict and the current governance power structures. This methodology guides the study regarding the Emberá Chamí community's worldview and the holistic perspective that comprises the foundation of this study is to generate and analyse their oral data. Storytelling is the primary research method used within this critical methodology. The storytelling method allows researchers and people to access Indigenous knowledge encoded in stories and other unwritten forms (Te Maihāroa et al., 2022, p. 178). Stories can emerge via conversation, in-depth interviews, creative participation, observation, and focus groups, allowing researchers to approach and involve people's cultures. Therefore, from a decolonizing point of view, the storytelling method helps affirm people's culture and knowledge centred on Indigenous values, practices, worldviews, traditions, ways of knowing (Te Maihāroa et al., 2022), and recognition of their struggles against oppression.

The participants' stories were stimulated through semi-structured interviews that emerged in the negotiation between the lead researcher and two co-researchers to explore the community's experiences, knowledge, and wisdom. The storytelling method values local voices, traditions, Indigenous knowledge, and the role of everyday people in building peace (Senehi, 2019, p. 46). The co-researcher team comprised one former Emberá governor and one young leader who belonged to the Emberá Chamí community from the San Lorenzoreservation. The leading researcher knows both co-researchers from previously working with them. After explaining the research objectives to them, they

offered to assist the leading researcher in contacting leaders from the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River at the Mistrató municipality. The local leaders assisted researchers in contacting the reservation government to ask their permission to carry out the research and sign the research introductory letter.

Chapter four also describes the qualitative methodology that is centred on documentary research. Additionally, it elucidates the Indigenous methodology used that is closely interconnected with qualitative research, emphasizing its relational perspective. Storytelling emerges as the preferred method within this methodology. Further, I reflect on my positionality within this study, delving into power relations and my role as an external entity to the community. Subsequently, the research participants are described along with the essential ethical considerations for conducting the research. These ethical considerations are not just a formality, but a fundamental part of the research process, ensuring the integrity and respect for the community. Finally, this chapter outlines the data analysis process and presents the guiding questions used in the storytelling method.

4.2 Qualitative methodology

A qualitative methodology proves valuable for researchers seeking to comprehend individuals' interpretations of their experiences, "how they construct their worlds," and the significance they assign to their encounters, experiences, and context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 6). It is based on the belief that knowledge is socially constructed. In other words, qualitative research focuses on understanding how people interpret and make sense of their lives, contexts, and experiences. The researcher is the "primary instrument" for collecting and analyzing data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.16). It allows for processing data directly, clarifying information, looking for respondents' accuracy, and exploring responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.16). In addition, qualitative

research is inductive since the researcher collects data to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than testing ideas from positivist quantitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.17).

On the other hand, qualitative research is an umbrella term for different qualitative inquiry strategies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The thesis has a historical perspective exploring the Indigenous resistance process from the Spaniards' conquest of the territory to the present epoch. Therefore, the qualitative methodological approach includes historical narratives and stories for each analytical period. Hence, to access accounts from the conquest, colonial, and republican periods, the thesis uses documentary inquiry, primary data like reports and letters from the conquistadores and the colonial elites, and secondary data from academic sources. Documentary inquiry is one of the qualitative research techniques for collecting, compiling, and selecting information from reading documents, magazines, books, recordings, films, newspapers, articles, research results, and memories of events, among others (Guerrero Dávila, 2015).

This type of research also refers to bibliographic research, characterized by using secondary data as a source of information. The main objective of bibliographic data is to direct the research from two angles: relating already existing data from different sources and, subsequently, providing a panoramic and systematic vision of a particular issue developed from multiple dispersed sources (Barraza, 2018). *Documentary research* can be defined as a strategy for understanding and analyzing theoretical or empirical realities through reviewing, comparing, or understanding different types of documentary sources referring to a specific topic through a systematic and organized research strategy. All documentary research is conducted using documents to undertake the research analysis. These sources are considered durable

materials that collect information from their time, allowing researchers to access them anytime (Equipo editorial, Etecé, 2024).

Documentary inquiry is essential to review the qualitative data logically to establish the sequence of events. Thus, documentary research helps the researcher to reflect on all those categories that refer to research instruments to evaluate the analysis categories. It helps to outline the phenomena of study, build starting premises, develop a theoretical base, make relationships between conclusions, track research questions and objectives, observe the aesthetics of the procedures, establish similarities and differences between the results and the researcher's ideas, categorize experiences, distinguish the most addressed elements with their observational schemes, and specify areas not yet explored (Valencia López, n.d.)

For example, Máxima Uriarte (2020 cited in Reyes-Ruiz & Carmona Alvarado, 2020, p. 2) suggests the following steps to develop the documentary research underway:

• Source analysis: Abundant selection of material that could help develop the research topic.

• Review: Discarding less helpful material.

• Comparison: Comparing and organizing the available material to obtain quotes and references that support the researcher's theories.

• Interpretation: Analysis of the collated material and proposal preparation for the researcher's critical reading, opinion, interpretation, or deduction.

• Conclusions: Total closure regarding the topic that contains the previous points to support the theory or provide a solution to the researcher's doubt.

The epistemological approach informing this documentary method in this thesis is hermeneutic. Hermeneutics offers a theoretical framework for interpreting meaning, particularly emphasizing context and the original intent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Hermeneutics provides a viewpoint for interpreting narratives, tales, and various texts, highlighting the importance of discerning the author's intended communication, understanding the intended meanings, and situating documents within their historical and cultural context (Palmer, 1969, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 34).

4.2.1 Documents and artifacts

Documents and artifacts represent readily available data sources in both physical and digital settings. The classical documents and artifacts include official records, organizational materials, letters, newspapers, poems, songs, corporate records, government documents, historical accounts, and diaries (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The thesis uses historical reports and academic dissertations specialized in the history of Embera Chamí Indigenous groups and themes related to the territory historically belonging to this Indigenous community. This type of document records the ongoing activities of society. "They can reveal aspirations, arrangements, tensions, relationships, and decisions that might be otherwise unknown through direct observation" (Patton, 2015, p. 376, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 164).

The historical perspective in this thesis acknowledges that the production of historical knowledge consists of a complex mediation between the interpretive operations of the historian and the voices coming from the documents (Escribano Roca, 2019). In addition, the leading researcher approached these documents from post-structuralism and post-colonial perspectives, recognizing that these historical and academic records are not neutral artifacts but knowledge systems that are culturally mediated and that function as symbolic technologies of power (Escribano Roca, 2019).

Therefore, the documents analyzed in this dissertation are materials intentionally produced and conceived from specific interpretation schemes that responded to their

time's ideological, political, and scientific criteria, from which the Indigenous people know as the Emberá Chamí were configured, explained, and framed. In short, the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community cannot be understood as a subject that has persisted over time but as the expression of different constructions, tensions, adaptations, identities, and intentions expressed in the stories and narratives of other actors.

Within the historical documents, the leading researcher focuses on the Collection of unpublished documents relating to the discovery, conquest and organization of the ancient Spanish overseas possessions that were edited and distributed between 1864 and 1884 (Escribano Roca, 2019). Its editors were three prominent figures among the Spanish intellectual elite. The leading actors were Luis Torres de Mendoza, a lawyer and former senator, and Joaquín Francisco Pacheco and Francisco de Cárdenas y Espejo, who were politicians, writers, and erudite historians. The document includes forty-two volumes that comprise the Collection, incorporating more than 2,500 documents. For example, Escribano Roca (2019) asserts that the editors carried out a complex exercise of remembering and forgetting, deciding which issues, files and data belonged to the "history" of Spain overseas. The editors classified, transcribed, and discarded the documents based on the narrative demands of liberal Hispanism, which already had a long development at the time of publication.

The thesis data analysis also considers the analysis of Escribano Roca (2019) of the Collection as a compilation of historical documents related to the Spanish overseas colonies' exploitation, conquest, and administration. This Collection is a source for scholars researching and studying the history of ancient Spanish possessions in America, Asia, Africa, and other corners of the world. It contains various documents like letters, reports, diaries, and other records written by people involved in the expansion and governance of the Spanish empire overseas.

These documents provided detailed information about historical events, colonial policies, and interactions between Spanish colonizers and Indigenous populations in different colonial regions. Therefore, the Collection is a valuable source for researchers interested in the history of Spanish colonization. This thesis focused mainly on Volume II and some other documents that included stories about the ancestors of the current Emberá Chamí Indigenous community.

In addition, this thesis analyzes Jean-Baptiste Boussingault's memories, which are recorded in various volumes stored in the Bank of the Republic of Colombia. The focus is on Volume II, where the French scholar Boussingault describes his experiences travelling throughout Colombia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Boussingault was a French scientist who contributed to developing the chemistry and mining engineering fields, producing more than 200 scientific publications (Maldonado, 2017). He led a scientific mission financed by the Colombian government during the Republic's first years between 1824 and 1831. Boussingault reported the general results of his scientific mission in the document titled *The Memoirs of Jean-Baptiste Boussingault, 1903*. The book includes contributions mainly in mining and geology. However, Boussingault also includes detailed descriptions of the regions visited, which makes it an inexhaustible source of scientific and sociological data (Espinosa, 1991).

The thesis also includes data from the transcriptions made by the Colombian historian Fredy Andrés Montoya López (2010) of the Report from Chocó made by José María Lozano y Peralta in 1801, a member of the elite of the New Kingdom of Granada for the Spanish king. The transcript details the daily life of the Mulattos, Zambos, Afro-descendants, Indigenous and free people who settled on the banks of the Atrato and San Juan rivers. It includes accounts of how they lived in the jungle, outlining details about their fishing practices, the cultivation of the land, the hunting of animals, and the

construction of houses. Likewise, the document recounts the wealth of the mountains rich in water, dyes, sugar cane, and medicinal plants. This document also offers a general overview of the region. The transcription was made textually. Anthropologists and historians consider the document a critical source for the peripheral history of the Chocó region (Montoya López, 2010).

Other sources consulted include the Documentary History of the Chocó, edited by Enrique Ortega Ricaurte in collaboration with Ana Rueda Briceño. It comprises exciting information on the mining provinces, some of which record the state of the gold extraction fields in the tributaries of the Atrato River and describe the process of creating a Chocoan jurisdiction separate from Popayan (Puentes & Suárez, 2015). In addition, a book titled *Reports of some apostolic excursions in the Chocó Mission* by Father José Criado provides some accounts of Catholic priests' excursions into the Chocó Mission that includes narratives from different missionaries over time that detailed the Catholic Church's activities in the Chocó region (Gutiérrez, 1924).

Finally, this thesis also gathered information from secondary sources depicted by social science dissertations and the analyses of specialists that include:

1. Victor Zuluaga Gómez. Zuluaga Gómez was a local historian and former professor at the Technological University of Pereira who wrote extensively on the Emberá Chamí Indigenous community. Zuluaga Gómez is a historian of great repute in the Departments of Risaralda and Caldas. He is well known for his comprehensive exploration of the processes of colonization and the creation of cities in the region (Borja Alarcón, 2009). His work, which goes beyond the mere examination of historical documents, has given voice to the often-marginalized perspectives of Afro and Indigenous leaders of Risaralda and Caldas. The documents analyzed in this thesis are part of the Victor Zuluaga Gómez

Collection. This Collection is open access and can be found at this link: https://sites.google.com/view/coleccionvzuluaga/biblioteca-virtual?authuser=0. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in regional history and historiography.

2. Luis Guillermo Vasco Uribe. Vasco Uribe is an ethnographer and former member of the Department of Anthropology at the National University of Colombia. For almost four decades, Vasco Uribe has been a steadfast ally of the Emberá and Guambiana Indigenous communities. He developed an ethnographic method based on Karl Marx's theories, which he called "collecting concepts in life." His work was characterized by unwavering solidarity with Indigenous social organizations for the recovery of Indigenous territories and the strengthening of their social and political organizations (Cunin et al., 2006). This thesis examines five documents by Vasco Uribe in which he examines the historical development of the Emberá Chamí and their relationship with the territory, the Indigenous community's current situation, the Jaibanás, the processes of political struggle, and some stories and voices from social and political leaders from the Emberá community.

3. Juan David Montoya Gúzman. Montoya Gúzman is a historian and an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at the National University of Colombia in Medellin. As a dedicated member of the research group History, Territory and Settlement in Colombia, Montoya Gúzman has contributed significantly to the collective understanding of Latin American history. Montoya Gúzman earned a PhD in Latin American History from the Pablo de Olavide University in Spain, with a focus on the history of the New Kingdom of Granada. His other areas of interest include the history of the early modern age of the Iberian worlds,

paleography, and diplomacy. Four of Montoya Gúzman's publications were analyzed related to the creation of the Popayán government, wars and borders in Chocó in the 16th and 17th centuries, interethnic and anticolonial wars in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Pacific, and the evangelization of the Indigenous people (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2019).

4. Mauricio Pardo Rojas. Pardo Rojas is a social anthropologist from the University of Caldas. Pardo Rojas is a versatile scholar. Pardo Rojas earned a PhD in Social Anthropology from the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Brazil and he is a part of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History. He has penned more than thirty documents including articles and book chapters. His diverse research interests include social movements, cultural policies, heritage, ethnolinguistics, music and society, and ethnography of the Pacific and the Caribbean. Two of Pardo Rojas' papers were analyzed for the thesis. One is related to historical data, ethnohistorical data, linguistic data and current settlements of the Chocó Indigenous people, and the other document is associated with the historical transformations of the Chocó Indigenous people.

5. Patricia Vargas. Vargas is a researcher who investigated the Embera and Cuna Indigenous groups from the Spanish Empire. Vargas is an anthropologist who holds a master's degree in Andean history and postgraduate studies in cultural geography. Vargas is a PhD candidate in Latin American cultural studies. Vargas is a researcher and professor who uses participatory, transdisciplinary, and intercultural research as well as socio-environmental sustainability and history of territorialities approaches. Her experience involves archival research, and oral memory of Indigenous, peasant, and Afro-Colombian peoples, and their systematization of experiences and cultural heritage. She has developed technical

concepts on topics related to isolated peoples of the Colombian Amazon, conservation production, traditional knowledge, uses and meanings of biodiversity, differential rights, and education and interculturality.

Two works by Vargas were scrutinized in the thesis. The first document analyzes the territorial borders between the Embera and Cuna Indigenous peoples during the conquest period and the other document analyzes the territorial transformations of the Indigenous peoples in Chocó.

6. Sven-Erik Isacsson. Sven-Erik Isacsson was a social anthropology professor who directed the ethnographic museum of Gothenburg and the ethnographic museum in Stockholm. Erik Isacsson obtained his doctorate in social anthropology at the University of Gothenburg. In 1972, he carried out multi-year field research in Chocó, Colombia. Later, in 1980, he visited the Atrato area in Chocó, Colombia, to complete ethnography work. Two works by Erik Isacsson served as the basis for this thesis. The first analyzed the travel diary of a Spanish missionary, Fray Matias Abad, along the Atrato River in 1649 and the other explored the formation of the toponym Indígena under the Spanish Empire.

Chapters 5 and 6 are grounded in the data collected from these documents and artifacts.

One of the challenges in this thesis was researching the ancient Indigenous Emberá Chamí through historical documents. The historical documents referred to the current Emberá Chamí during the Spanish conquest and colonial period as Tatamá, Sima (Cima) or Chocó. In addition, the Spaniards used the word Chocó to refer to different Indigenous groups living in the Pacific Colombian territory. Therefore, when I came across the

ethnonym Chocó, I carefully considered how the writers referred to those groups located in the upper part of the San Juan River or the Tamaná or Sima (Cima) province.

4.3 Indigenous methodology

The thesis integrates qualitative methodology with an Indigenous methodological perspective. Wilson (2001, 2009) described Indigenous methodology as fundamentally centred on relational accountability. It constitutes a paradigmatic approach, wherein research methods must align with the Indigenous worldview (Kovach, 2010, p. 40). An Indigenous paradigm is a system of cohesive ideas and beliefs that serve as guiding principles for collective actions, offering a foundational model for problem-solving and knowledge development within the community (Wilson, 2001).

Distinguishing between both paradigms, Eurocentric and Indigenous, reveals a fundamental contrast. The Eurocentric paradigm perceives knowledge as an individualistic entity, whereas the Indigenous paradigm conceptualizes knowledge from a relational standpoint (Smith, 1999). Euro-Western thought is characterized by linearity, positivism, and normativity, assuming observable, measurable, and predictable causal relationships (Absolon & Willet, 2004, p. 10). In contrast, Indigenous thought is holistic, circular, and relational, emphasizing an intuitive learning process integral to its non-linear nature (Absolon & Willet, 2004, p. 10). Indigenous perspectives are linked to the interconnected relationship between spirits, oceans, land, humans, and all living beings (Te Maihāroa, 2022, p. 59).

Indigenous methodology deviates from the rigid, rational, and logical processes often associated with Eurocentric methodologies. Instead, it emphasizes an intuitive learning process and negotiation that emerges from the diverse worldviews, goals, and

principles inherent to Indigenous communities (Wilson, 2001). This characteristic aligns Indigenous methodologies with qualitative methodologies, both of which are committed to acknowledging knowledge construction's subjective, contextual, and dynamic nature.

The relational perspective plays an essential role in an Indigenous research methodology. Everything is connected in the Indigenous cosmology and epistemology (Eke & Byrne, 2022). For example, people's actions affect the environment, and observations change what is observed (Absolon & Willet, 2004, p. 7). The self and individual are interconnected with the family, community, cosmology, and ecology, which have spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical elements affected by the historical, social, cultural, political, and economic context (Absolon, 2010, p. 76). In addition, Indigenous people depend on each other and everything that surrounds them, including air, water, rocks, trees, animals, humans, and crops, all living in a world of circles shaping people's identities, relations, and epistemologies (Steinhauer, 2002, p. 72). Researchers must be aware, knowledgeable, and responsible for people's interconnections.

Although the qualitative and Indigenous methodologies can coexist thanks to their interactive, storying, interpretative, and reflexive nature, both are distinctive because of their epistemic foundations (Kovach, 2021). The theory is strongly connected with the method. The knowledge and philosophical assumptions influence any action to generate, analyze, and interpret data (Lambert, 2014). In this sense, the storytelling and narrative method is a communicative sense-making contributing to building the world in a relational model (Barcham, 2023), creating a space where theory and practice assemble to give way to ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions (Senehi, 2019).

Indigenous methodological strategies are based on their worldview and knowledge traditionally acquired in their natural world and territory (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; McGuire, 2020). It means that the research process must consider the idea of territory. It emphasizes the relationship between the place and knowledge in the Indigenous world (Q'um Q'um et al., 2022). Indigenous knowledge is rooted in the long inhabitation of a particular location or territory, such as in the South American context (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). The territory is an area regularly and permanently inhabited by Indigenous people. Although not owned in the Western sense of land ownership, the territory constitutes the traditional habitat of the Indigenous people's religious or spiritual, social, economic, and cultural activities. The territory is a living space that mediates the Indigenous notions of an interdependent universe and the importance of place in Indigenous societies (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). The territory is the center of a comprehensive, holistic, systemic approach to exploring Indigenous community knowledge.

In addition, the Indigenous methodology is relational, reflexive, and abductive (Kovach, 2021). Abductive reasoning logic emerges from observation, instinct, and experience; it is a creative, insightful, and helpful moment to understand any phenomenon (Kovach, 2021). Relational, reflexive, and abductive reasoning are Indigenous methodological characteristics that guide researchers in comprehending knowledge generation from an Indigenous perspective. Therefore, this study understands knowledge production as a reciprocal relationship process between and among the community and the research team. This relational knowledge construction includes permanent reflexivity from the researcher and participants. This means that the researchers are aware of and connected with the research situation and critically

examine the researchers' effects on the study and their interactions with the participants (Strega & Brown, 2015).

Knowledge production from an Indigenous perspective involves political activity (Kovach, 2021) since the research process is framed under critical and emancipatory approaches, decolonization perspectives, and people's agency development and acknowledgement. Then, applying an Indigenous methodology includes reflecting on the role of the "subject" as a psychological, cultural, physiological, historical, interpersonal, and holistic entity (Wilson et al., 2019). The question about the "subject" is found in Kirkness and Barnhardt's (2001) description of how Indigenous students must accommodate the university's *modus operandi*, forcing them to change their worldviews. Researchers must reflect on the relationship they want to construct with their "subjects"/research partners to create new knowledge and transfer it to others. In addition, researchers need to pay attention to complexities that come into play when two fundamentally different worldviews collide, which include researchers' social structures and subjects' cultural and social dynamics (Barnhardt & Kawagle, 2005).

4.3.1 Storytelling

Storytelling is key in peace and conflict research (Senehi, 2019). In addition, stories are fundamental to Indigenous knowledge because of the oral tradition in Indigenous communities and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge (Kovach, 2010, 2021). Within the Indigenous paradigm and epistemology, stories are also a relational process. Kovach (2010) emphasizes that this relational process is accompanied by a particular protocol consistent with ancestral knowledge identified as guiding the research. Therefore, working with the narrative element as part of the method is central

to generating and analyzing data with Indigenous communities and PACS. Using stories through conversation is a culturally organic means to generate knowledge within research (Senehi, 2002). Storytelling has a holistic nature, and it is a holistic method that allows the sharing of memories and remembrances that evoke the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental (Senehi, 2019). In addition, storytelling and narrative methods support the construction of respectful and trusting relationships with Indigenous communities (Martin, 2018).

Consequently, the thesis implemented storytelling and narrative methods within an Indigenous paradigm. For example, Martin (2018) recognizes that both methods are complementary because they inquire about people's connection with the territory, traditions, and ways of knowing while minimizing the epistemological division between Indigenous and Western methodologies. Storytelling and narrative are non-prescriptive methods. Through stories, the teller shares history and teaches lessons that acquire meaning to the listener. At the same time, narrative allows the teller to express their thoughts, feelings, and sense of life from any point of their own experience; "there is no plot" (Martin, 2018, p. 189).

Storytelling can guide a multi-method strategy in PACS (Senehi, 2009, 2019). In addition, storytelling can be critical, decolonizing, emancipatory, therapeutic, and ethical (Senehi, 2019, 2022; McGuire, 2020). I applied the storytelling method in the field through an open-ended conversational mode. Thus, stories shared via conversation are a means to generate knowledge considering cultural dynamics (Kovach, 2010). This is a helpful relational method to co-create knowledge with participants and build trust and reciprocity within the dialogue (Kovach, 2010). Receiving a story must be an ethical learning process that includes several dialectic acts (Senehi, 2019). It embraces acknowledging the story, sharing the knowledge with participants and communities, and

including communities' values and protocols. In addition, the hearer must explore the internal transformation happening when receiving the story and the synergy that connects him/her to the teller (Archibald & Parent, 2019).

In Latin America, storytelling is part of the academic movement of "history from the bottom," emphasizing the importance of giving voice to subaltern social movements to transform societies (Archila, 2005, p. 298). The oral tradition of Colombian Indigenous communities is an essential dimension in transmitting Indigenous knowledge, culture, and memory to Indigenous people (Ramírez Poloche, 2012). Storytelling pluralizes the past's reconstruction by introducing more voices, altering the traditional narrative, and challenging the foundations of positivism (Archila, 2005, p. 299).

The narrative or storytelling process encompassed the four directions proposed by Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000) and further explained by Martin (2018). The four directions in narrative inquiry focus on inwards and outwards, backwards and forwards. Inwards looks at feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and morality; outwards refers to context and environments, and backwards and forwards focus on the past, present, and future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 191). Finally, the thesis emphasized the memory and experiences of the Emberá Chamí people living in the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River in the Risaralda Department in Colombia. This is important as organized societies retain a record and recount their cultural memory. Stories about people's experiences give meaning to places, names, people, origin, and creation in an alive and interconnected land (Absolon & Willet, 2004).

Stories are full of meaning, teachings, and spirit. Stories are also relevant and meaningful to the lives, culture, and survival of each Indigenous nation (Absolon &

Willet, 2004, p. 8). Therefore, I considered the ethical practices that needed to be put in place so that I was responsible for people's stories and knowledge, including the understanding that this study is with the Emberá Chamí people and not about them (Martin, 2018). This means I considered the participants' knowledge producers, not objects to scrutinize and dissect. Therefore, the participants are consultants rather than simple informants. The research followed community-relevant protocols for the implementation of the research strategy. Chapters 7 and 8 are grounded in the stories told by 18 participants from the Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River.

4.4 Limitation of the study

Conducting an exploration of the resistance tactics employed by Indigenous groups necessitates a thorough and substantial inquiry involving the analysis of historical data present in archival documents as well as using oral narratives. Throughout the research process, I encountered the formidable task of sifting through an extensive volume of documents to select, categorize, and scrutinize papers spanning different periods of Colombia's history, specifically those about the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people situated in the upper region of the San Juan River. It became evident that establishing an organizational system for categorizing these documents was imperative.

The initial hurdle I confronted pertained to gaining access to these historical documents, many of which are housed in vast physical repositories such as the National Library of Colombia and the General Archive of the Indies in Seville, Spain. My access was restricted to the digitalized versions made available by these repositories.

I pursued the trail of previous academic studies related to the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people to categorize the historical documents. This strategy has dual implications. On the

one hand, it can be viewed as advantageous, as it facilitates the researcher's identification of documents containing pertinent information on the subject and enables the comparative analyses of the same data by different researchers. Conversely, it raises concerns about originality, with some quotations appearing in prior analyses, potentially conveying that the research fails to contribute novel insights into the Emberá Chamí's resistance history and struggle to achieve peace. However, this argument is contested, as the present study is grounded in a hermeneutic epistemological approach, acknowledging that interpretations can vary even when analyzing the same dataset.

Moreover, the narratives generated by the research participants predominantly focus on the community's recent history and do not provide insights into the events that emerged during the Spanish conquest and colonial period. This limitation impedes the triangulation of information between participant narratives and historical/academic documents. It is crucial to underscore that despite this constraint, participants' voices constitute the most significant information for analyzing the community's resistance process in the face of the modern Colombian conflict and contrasting it with their historical resistance tactics.

Finally, given the dispersion of the Embera community and the limitations of the research team due to displacement and security, the investigation focuses on the Risaralda department. This study presents a historical case analysis centring on the Embera Chamí Indigenous groups from the upper reaches of the San Juan River. The selection of this location stems from numerous conversations with the Embera Chamí community in various reservations and towns, where migration from or familial ties to the San Juan River underscored its significance for the community. While the Embera Chamí community is dispersed throughout the country, facing marginalization in urban settings

due to forced displacement and acculturation processes, this thesis exclusively addresses events narrated in the context of the San Juan River.

4.5 Positionality

During the field research, I worked collaboratively with my co-researchers from the Indigenous Embera community in exploring the historical context and resistance process of the Embera Chami living in the Embera Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River within Colombia's ongoing conflict. I worked from a critical perspective, so I continuously reflected on my positionality, power relations, and the research process. The study participants needed to share their stories, experiences, and knowledge about the land, the conflict, forced displacement, discrimination, and the acculturation process. The first step of the field research was to work together with the research team made up of two co-researchers comprised of one young female leader and one former female Emberá governor to plan the activities that were suitable to generate information, empower the community and call for local action for the community to achieve social justice. The conversation space in this study allowed us to reflect formally and informally on these issues.

Both co-researchers from the community as well as myself played a significant role in making sure that the knowledge generated from the research process would stay within the community and that the observation, conversations, shared stories, data analyses and the implemented research instrument were in synergy with the cultural, socioeconomic, political, ethical, and historical context of the reservation. The research team explained the research objective and methodology to the community in their social and cultural activities and local spaces, as permission was granted to us by the reservation government to conduct the field research.

As a mestizo-white, Colombian, educated man, I was conscious of the intersectional power and privilege I held in some contexts. I also was aware of my position as an outsider in this study. The methodology implemented in this study reflected the community's understanding of their context and history and not solely my interpretation of it as an outsider (see Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000). As a researcher, I constantly examined my characteristics, positionality, and the intersubjective elements in play with each encounter with the research participants and the co-researchers (see Adu-Ampong & Adams, 2020). As an outsider, I shared valuable experiences with the community to build trust with the leaders and community members participating in this study. I was also introduced to Emberá Chamí culture through both co-researcher narratives and their understanding of the social and political reservation dynamics. Moreover, I engaged in critical self-reflection regarding the research process, constantly negotiating the power symmetry with the co-researchers and participants as we worked together.

4.6 Recruitment strategy

The primary method for participant selection in this study was snowball sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The snowball strategy is a non-probabilistic technique that involves identifying a few key participants who meet the established criteria to participate in the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These initial participants then refer the researcher to other participants who also meet the criteria to gain access to a broader range of valuable information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher develops and manages the selection and progress of the sample, striving to ensure that referrals for the study stay within relevant limitations (Etikan et al., 2015). One potential issue with snowball sampling is that participants often recommend others who have similar characteristics or viewpoints, so it is also important for the researcher to

ensure that the group of respondents is diverse enough to prevent the sample from being overly biased in any particular direction (Etikan et al., 2015).

Given the collaborative nature of the research with Indigenous community members, snowball sampling emerges as a particularly fitting method for participant inclusion. As highlighted earlier, one of the strengths of Indigenous communities lies in their interconnectedness and sense of communal identity, so the snowball process was inclusive, bringing new community members into dialogue with the research team. Both co-researchers played a pivotal role in approaching social leaders to gauge their interest in participation or to reach out to community members with the time and inclination to be interviewed. Mainly, schoolteachers emerged as influential leaders possessing valuable knowledge of potential participants, a deep understanding of the community's history, and important leadership roles within the community and lived experiences of conflicts in the region.

Personal contact with potential participants was initiated with the accompaniment of schoolteachers and one of the co-researchers. In each meeting, the study's objectives and the permission letter signed by the reservation government were presented to the potential participants. After addressing any questions raised by the potential participants and obtaining their authorization, the interview process commenced.

4.7 Research participants

After obtaining ethical protocol approval from the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board 2 and permission from the Indigenous reservation government, initial data generation commenced in January 2023. I relocated to the Department of Risaralda for nearly two months to facilitate my access to potential participants based on their

availability and to utilize regional libraries and repositories. Visits to the reservation were coordinated based on the leaders' assessments of opportune moments to be there, considering community social activities and political dynamics, to conduct interviews.

Interview locations varied depending on people's availability, safety, and comfort. These locations encompass private residences, public venues, schools, and coffee shops. Despite some of the results offering specific insights into Indigenous women's leadership in the regional conflict context, participants' specific socio-demographic characteristics like age or gender were not considered as independent variables within this study because the research objectives focus on the resistance strategies implemented by the Indigenous Embera Chamí as a unit. The participants were asked to share their perceptions and experiences of community resistance and conflict experienced in their territory (Appendix A).

Eighteen (18) individuals participated in this study. The research did not incorporate special socio-demographic considerations, yet I worked to ensure gender parity and confirmed that all participants were adults. Consequently, ten women and eight men were included in the sample that contributed to this research. Table 1 provides an overview of who the participants are.

Table 1. Study Participants

Participant Number	**Role**	**Gender**
Participant #1	School teacher	Male
Participant #2	School director	Male
Participant #3	School teacher	Female
Participant #4	Social leader	Female
Participant #5	Social leader	Female

Participant #6	Social leader	Female
Participant #7	Social leader	Male
Participant #8	Social leader	Male
Participant #9	Community member	Female
Participant #10	Community member	Male
Participant #11	Community member	Female
Participant #12	Community member	Female
Participant #13	Community member	Male
Participant #14	Congresswomen	Female
Participant #15	Former local governor	Male
Participant #16	Former social leader	Female
Participant #17	Former social leader	Female
Participant #18	Local governor	Male

Two more participants were interviewed during the field research. However, they were omitted since they mentioned that despite being Emberá Chamí community members, they belonged to a different reservation.

4.8 Human ethics

Researchers must ensure that the study collaborators will not be harmed because they participated in the research project (Stringer, 2014). This project followed a set of moral and ethical foundations laid out in Canada's Tri-council policy statement on the ethical conduct of research. In addition, this study is embedded within Indigenous methodology principles. According to Davidson (2016), seven principles guide Indigenous methodologies. 1) Relational accountability - relates to the question, what are my

obligations in this relationship? 2) Respect - cultural knowledge is embedded in stories, and it is crucial to respect the people who own and share the story. 3) Responsibility - it is the researcher's responsibility for how the information is generated and how it is shared. 4) Ensuring authenticity - involves participants' feedback about the dialogue maintained through the research process. 5) Reverence – the researcher must ensure that people's stories are respected and kept confidential. 6) Reciprocity - refers to giving back to the people and the participants the learning generated in the dialogue between the researcher and the participants. 7) Holism - acknowledges the connections between each person and the community's intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physicality (Davidson, 2016, pp. 32-43).

Therefore, I took the position in the field of research as a learner as I followed these seven ethical principles. My learner position allowed me to act as a resonance for community voices in academia and other mainstream social spaces that were suggested to me by my research collaborators. I listened to each person's story and participated in each conversation attentively and respectfully. I honoured the knowledge embedded in each story by acknowledging the teller's experience, resilience, and motivations. Tellers are the authors of their stories. As a researcher leading the field research, I cared for each person's story. It means that tellers and stories will not be used to stigmatize and discriminate against the community.

The stories highlighted in the empirical chapters consider the community's desires. The research team offered the research collaborators feedback from the intuitive process in each conversation and shared story. The participants decided whether their names, stories, and reflections were to be part of the final thesis. Reciprocity materialized between the research team and the community through sharing knowledge from the conversational and observational methods. The research results will be

returned to the community through a pedagogical tool created from this study. Finally, I listened to the community participants' stories and conversations using all my senses and deep concentration. I approached people's stories as part of the Embera Chami's worldview, history, struggle, and survival.

Some of the risks associated with this study could have resulted in the participants becoming anxious or distressed by participating in an interview where they might have experienced psychological or emotional discomfort. Consequently, I asked each participant how they felt at the interview's beginning, middle, and end to ensure they were not distressed. However, if any person needed assistance, I guaranteed each community member they could contact the Jaibanas counselling service, a medical and spiritual protector. In addition, I am a trained psychologist in the Western tradition. I also offered counselling services to those collaborators in case they needed access to this type of counselling. None of the 20 interviewees were distressed and needed counselling services. Moreover, I evaluated with my co-researchers if there was a need for a pre-research discussion to prepare the research participants (Kovach, 2010). However, the conclusion was that it was unnecessary since most participants were open to collaborating with the research team.

4.9 Data analysis

The 18 interviews included in this study were audio recorded on a password-protected phone belonging to the primary researcher with each participant's permission. The stories and conversations were transcribed through the Trint voice transcription technology. The data was analyzed using the categories that emerged inductively from the intellectual, spiritual, and emotional points found in each person's narrative. I used

both the analysis and interpretation phases to categorize and code the generated data, as Stringer (2014) pointed out. I reviewed, unitized, categorized, and coded the data in the first phase. In the second phase, I analyzed people's significant experiences, such as feelings, crisis moments, or incidents revealed during the research process.

A content analysis technique was employed to analyze historical and academic documents. This included following the analysis process outlined by Espín (2002). Initially, a pre-analysis phase was undertaken, focusing on document selection. Consequently, a search was conducted in databases of universities near the reservation, with a significant volume of research related to the Embera Chami community. Repositories from the National Library of Colombia, the Luis Angel Arango Library in Bogotá, and online documents from the Archivo de Indias in Seville, Spain, were also scrutinized. The documents were selected and searched after reviewing bibliographic references provided in academic works. Criteria for analyzing these documents encompassed their historical sequencing and reference to the Embera community residing in the upper part of the San Juan River.

Following this process, the corpus analysis was established, enabling a thorough examination of each document's content. An analytical sheet systematically documented reflections, ideas, textual fragments, and comparative elements (Appendix B). This file organized information and initiated the coding and categorization process.

4.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research combines two methodologies, Indigenous and qualitative. The research was developed in two stages, namely, 1) the collection of primary and secondary sources (documents, articles, books, laws, and regulations, among others),

and 2) the collection of primary data through storytelling and 18 open-ended conversations with members of the community that allowed for the co-creation of knowledge.

As an outsider, I reduced the power imbalance through constant critical self-reflection and permanently negotiating the power asymmetry. Some actions related to balancing the power included giving back knowledge to the community, active community participation, following ethics protocols from the community and Canada's Tri-council policy on ethical researcher conduct, and my positionality as a learner. Community participation was voluntary, and the participants were informed about the research objectives and the risks of participating in the study. The data analysis process included a systematic procedure found in the academic literature.

Chapter 5

The Spaniards domination strategy and the Embera Chami people's resistance in the first part of the Spanish conquest

5.1 Introduction

The Colombian Pacific region, characterized by its remote and inhospitable nature, including dense rainforests, persistent rainfall, and high humidity, constrained Spanish exploration and settlement efforts from when the conquistadores first arrived from the North. The area was also inhabited by diverse Indigenous groups who vehemently resisted Spanish expeditions and settlements. Around 1690, the Spanish established significant control in this challenging terrain. Subsequently, the Colombian Pacific area transformed into a central mining district, with a diminished Indigenous population that survived adapting to the gold-mining economy alongside enslaved African descendants. Despite their conquest and colonization, the Indigenous population in the region, particularly the Emberá Chamí, managed to preserve their ethno-cultural identities, resisting complete subjugation by the Spaniards (Williams, 2004).

Thus, Chapter Five reflects on various instances of Emberá Chamí Indigenous resistance during the initial stages of the Spanish conquest of their land. The information in the chapter is drawn from historical and academic documents, accounts and perspectives provided by Spanish conquerors and colonizers, and insights from specialized scholars focusing on the Indigenous Emberá Chamí. The chapter commences with a concise overview of the Spanish (or, more precisely, Castellanos) imperialistic conception, aiming to elucidate how the ideologies of the Spanish empire shaped its colonization strategies and influenced its perceptions of Indigenous resistance. The Spanish colonial ideology is also instrumental in tracing the discursive path employed by the empire to depict, comprehend, and analyze the Emberá Chamí

Indigenous population, describing them as “barbarian” and “rebels” forming a peripheral and marginal “imagined community” (in the words of anthropologist Benedict Anderson). The central focus of this chapter encompasses the strategies of Spanish domination, Indigenous resistance, adaptation strategies, and the colonial narratives and ideas derived from territorial control and Indigenous domination and extermination.

5.2 Spanish ideology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

This section aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the ideological and political debates that transpired within the Spanish Empire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It does not delve deeply into the specific ideas and worldviews held by intellectuals of that era who significantly shaped both the decisions of the Spanish monarchy and popular thought. Rather, this segment is crafted to the extent necessary for comprehending the actions of the conquerors within a comprehensive framework of ideas and debates. These ideological discussions ultimately exerted a direct and indirect influence on the Spanish strategies employed to subjugate the Indigenous population.

5.2.1 The Indigenous issue

The historian John Elliott (1989) highlighted that when Carlos I of Spain became Carlos V, known as the Holy Roman Emperor in 1519, the Spanish populace enthusiastically embraced the imperial concept. The cohort of humanists surrounding Charles V shaped Spain’s contemporary imperial style. Their conviction, rooted in the Gospel of Saint John, posited that the universal harmony sought through the governance of a singular legislator could be achieved by uniting all of humanity (Elliott, 1989, p. 24). Specifically, the Castellanos drew inspiration from the Holy Roman Empire, situating

this idea within the context of Christianity. Consequently, their responsibility was safeguarding and propagating Christianity, transforming Spain into the last bastion of medieval confessional Christianity.

In the sixteenth century, the Lutheran reform movement emerged as a critique and protest against the practices of the Catholic church, questioning the Pope's authority over all of Christianity (Belda Plans, 2019). The Lutheran movement galvanized and strengthened the Catholic church's spiritual forces, leading to a definitive push for reform, and these reform efforts culminated in the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which was the practical apprehension of the long-awaited ecclesiastical reform that had been attempted many times in the past (Belda Plans, 2019). Therefore, Europe experienced two religious reforms in the sixteenth century, namely Catholic and Lutheran, which ran parallel and overlapped (Belda Plans, 2019).

The Council of Trent favoured a more ideological Christianity form that sought to counter the advancements of science and modern culture (Carvajal Aravena, 2009). Therefore, the Catholic reform movement sought to renew scholastic theology through the humanism developed by Francisco de Vitoria and his disciples of the *Escuela de Salamanca* that privileged fidelity to the church and the Pope in critical moments for the unity of the faith (Belda Plans, 2019). The ideology of the Spanish Catholic monarchy, strongly influenced by the company of Jesus and the Council of Trent, positioned itself staunchly against Protestant Christianity.

In following the footsteps of the Roman Empire, contextualized by Christian ideology and debates, the Castellanos adhered to a threefold process, namely conquest, colonization, and governance with the exploitation of their conquered subjects (Elliott, 1989). This colonial process gave rise to several questions related to the relationship between the Papacy and civil powers, the Spanish empire and other European states,

Christians and non-Christians, civilization and barbarism, the individual and the state, the community and the state, the origin of sovereignty, the rights of the sovereign, the right to go to war, and the sources of international law, among others (Fodor, 1988, p. 19). In addition, one of the earliest challenges the Spanish faced was the Indigenous population's legal status. Uncertainty prevailed regarding whether the population should be treated as enslaved people or free men, what taxes they owed to the Spanish Crown, and whether they were deemed human or sub-human beings (Elliott, 1989, p. 33).

Those issues were framed within the debate between the Catalán-Aragonés party and the *Escuela de Salamanca*. The first group were merchants who supported the Spanish Crown's actions overseas, considering conquest an enterprise that promised advantages to their investments. Therefore, the conquistadors and *encomenderos* (people who distributed Indigenous people and their lands to Christianize them in exchange for the Spanish Crown's protection) who sought glory, power, and wealth supported the Catalán-Aragonés side. The latter group, which included the religious orders who wanted to save souls, also promulgated the propagation of the Christian faith, the glory of the King and the wealth of Spain yet were against the subjugation of the Indigenous people (Fodor, 1988, pp. 19-20).

When Spain began the organization of the conquered territories in America, it appointed Nicolás de Ovando as its first governor, who received the right to create the *encomiendas* as the mechanism to convert the Indigenous people to the Christian faith. However, the lack of regulation and control caused the *encomenderos* to take advantage and abuse the Indigenous people (Fodor, 1988, p. 20). Ultimately, this regulatory mechanism precipitated a significant decline in the Indigenous population, who were unaccustomed to continuous labour, inadequately nourished, and vulnerable to diseases for which they lacked natural immunities.

The abuses to which the Indigenous people were subjected in the conquered territories soon reached the Crown and public opinion. A group of Dominican priests complained to the King from Hispaniola in 1511 (Melo, 1996, p. 7). Dominicans, led by Fr. Alonso de Montesinos, apart from posing a profound moral problem, called into question the Spanish legal rights to retain control over the new lands, which was based on the need to catechize the non-Christians population (Melo, 1996, p. 7). This situation forced the Crown to find a way to regulate the *encomiendas* without turning them against the royalty. Therefore, the Crown asked the Junta of Burgos in 1512 to resolve the problem (Fodor, 1988, p. 21). Thus, the Junta issued the Laws of Burgos in 1513, which legally regulated the *encomiendas* and positioned them as the legal instrument for the conversion of the Indigenous people to the teaching of the Catholic religion.

The Law of Burgos regulated the Indigenous people's work, ordering that they must dedicate nine months a year to the service of the Spanish and that a third of the time, they had to work in the mines. In contrast, the Spaniards had an obligation to treat the Indigenous people well (Melo, 1996, p. 7). This Law also indicates that the Indigenous people had to settle next to the Spanish cities and their disposition to the *encomenderos*. Additionally, it recognizes some cases of slavery of the Indigenous people (Fodor, 1988, p. 21). In practice, this Law allowed the settlers to have a servile population (the Indigenous people) to satisfy their needs, creating a social group they would use to consolidate their control over the Indigenous workforce and their lands (Melo, 1996, p. 8).

Later, with the rise of Pope Paul III, the Papal Bulls of 1537 were published. In the first of these bulls (Altitudo Divini Consilii), he handed over the spiritual conversion of the Indigenous people to the local bishops in contrast to what was indicated by the Laws of Burgos. Likewise, the second bull (Veritas Ipsa) condemns the slavery of

Indigenous people, and the third bull (Sublimis Deus) declares as heresy anyone who considers Indigenous people as non-human and incapable of assimilating the faith (Fodor, 1988, p.21). This uncertainty spurred intellectual debates in the sixteenth century, exemplified by the discussions between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. Las Casas advocated for evangelization and the recognition of the natural rights of all people, asserting a principle of natural equality based on their humanity. Conversely, Sepúlveda supported the official stance of the Spanish colonial imperial state, prioritizing the state's rationale and the economic implications of territorial conquest over the dignity of the Indigenous people (Carvajal Aravena, 2009).

Deliberations culminated in the determination that Indigenous people were not to be subjected to slavery, but instead, they should receive instruction in the Christian faith. Consequently, they were assigned a distinct yet subordinate status, placed under the protective umbrella of the Spanish Crown. This position found expression in the issuance of the New Laws in 1542, which aimed to halt the extermination of Indigenous populations and normalize their exploitation. These laws specifically abolished the enslavement of Indigenous people, designating them as tributaries to the Spanish King. Simultaneously, the legislation prompted a reconfiguration of the *encomienda* system, forbidding the coercion of Indigenous individuals into involuntary labour. Moreover, the laws mandated landowners seeking Indigenous labour to remunerate corresponding wages for their services (Martínez, 2001).

Another stipulation outlined in the New Laws advocated for the settlement of Indigenous people in designated geographical areas, referred to as Indian towns (Solórzano Vega, 2017). Consequently, the New Laws perpetuated the concept of overseeing the Indigenous population by confining them to territories under Spanish control.

5.2.2 Conception of war and peace

The concepts of war and peace also played pivotal roles in shaping the international relations of Spain and the administration of the conquered territories in America, with the *Escuela de Salamanca* significantly influencing these conceptions (Fodor, 1988). Two prominent figures associated with this school were Francisco de Vitoria and Francisco Suárez. Vitoria posited that the state is a unique amalgamation of nature and human free will, with public power stemming from the nature of humanity and ultimately finding its source in God, the creator of nature (Fodor, 1988, p. 23).

Vitoria rejected the King's absolutism, asserting that certain limitations were imposed by nature (Valenzuela-Vermehren, 2013). In his view, Christians and non-Christians share equal legitimacy as members of the same humanity, and the state's goal should be the common good. In this sense, "all mankind, regardless of race or religion, had intrinsic human rights that could not lawfully be taken away" (Amell, 2017, p. 69). Vitoria articulated the proposition that despite the historical depiction of Indigenous people as barbaric, foolish, and slow-witted, the mere existence of individuals with superior leadership capacity does not inherently relegate others to a status of naturally enslaved people or beings devoid of rights and dominion (Valenzuela-Vermehren, 2013).

However, Vitoria sought to justify Spain's right to convert Indigenous people by preventing potential abuses (Fodor, 1988, p. 23). He contended that violence could only be authorized if Indigenous people used violence against peaceful missions, and if they resisted Christianity, they could not be compelled through force. According to Vitoria, non-Christian states were also sovereign, and conflicts between them should be resolved under international law. Just wars against Indigenous peoples were only justified in cases of international law violations, allowing the propagation of the Christian faith,

defence of converts, and protection of innocent lives. The right to form alliances and engage in free trade was also considered within international law (Fodor, 1988, p. 23).

On the other hand, Francisco Suárez, like Vitoria, focused on the origin of political power, popular sovereignty, the right of resistance, tyrannicide, and international law (Carvajal Aravena, 2009). Suárez defined war as an armed conflict between two states, emphasizing that war, when faced with enemies of faith, could be justified by natural and evangelical laws. Suárez's theory of war was framed within the theoretical developments in Europe, explaining Western civilization's material and spiritual domination over the rest of the world, aiming to consolidate normative principles protecting the interests of the Spanish Catholic colonial empire (Carvajal Aravena, 2009). Suárez also developed the idea of resistance and tyrannicide, asserting that people waging war against a tyrant king were not intrinsically evil, particularly when confronted with oppressive rule.

Subsequently, the promulgation of the New Laws in 1542 encountered substantial resistance, leading to their suspension. This escalation heightened the discourse surrounding the conceptualization of Indigenous people and the use of just war. Central figures in this debate were Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and Bartolomé de las Casas. Relying on Aristotelian tenets, Sepúlveda argued in his writings that Indigenous people were inherently barbaric and, consequently, were naturally enslaved people (Fodor, 1988). According to his perspective, it was justifiable for the state to forcibly remove them from their state of barbarism through war and spiritual conversion. Should the Indigenous people reject civilization, they were deemed rebels deserving of punishment through slavery. Sepúlveda attributed part of their sins and transgressions to the worship of idols and human sacrifices, thus legitimizing Spain's use of war against them (Fodor, 1988).

In contrast, de las Casas contended that even if the Indigenous people were considered barbarians, the Spaniards also exhibited similar behaviour. Further, he asserted that despite the Indigenous people lacking arts or writing, they were the rightful owners of their lands, and other sovereigns had no authority to confiscate their property (Fodor, 1988). Additionally, de las Casas argued that, despite their worship of alternative idols and engagement in human sacrifices, neither the King of Spain nor any other monarch held jurisdiction over the Indigenous people. He grounded this argument in territoriality, origin, and vassalage relationships, emphasizing that none of these principles applied to the Indigenous people's relationship with the King (Fodor, 1988).

However, de las Casas refrained from challenging the King of Spain's authority over America, as it derived from Pope Alexander VI's papal bull of 1493, which stipulated that although the King lacked authority over non-Christians, peaceful methods could be employed to overcome obstacles to evangelization. According to de las Casas, the King pursued the peaceful conversion of Indigenous people, while it was the conquistadors who committed crimes against them (Fodor, 1988).

This debate persisted until the middle of the seventeenth century, with individuals aligning themselves in favour of or against these positions. Nevertheless, by the seventeenth century, the Spanish Crown sought to rationalize conquest and the propagation of the faith, focusing primarily on the most effective and efficient means of administering territories and the *encomiendas.* The theological discussion took a backseat, and the discourse shifted towards legal and political considerations (Fodor, 1988).

5.2.3 Governance and crisis

The Crown effectively maintained control over its distant territories by employing a robust bureaucratic and administrative structure grounded in utilizing administrative records that facilitated the connection between the monarchy and its peripheral territories (Elliott, 1989). This connection was established because a viceroy represented the Spanish King in the peripheral territories, while councils within the monarchy comprised representatives from those territories. Consequently, these councils, convened at the court, received information from the viceroys stationed in the periphery. Furthermore, a judicial system was in place to oversee the viceroys, executed through a panel of judges known as the *Audiencia*, which possessed the authority to constrain and regulate the powers of the viceroy in the peripheral territories (Elliott, 1989).

This colonial governance system necessitated the formulation of regulations and the documentation of processes, leading to the engagement of notaries and officials to assist in transcribing these records, thereby engendering a substantial bureaucratic process. These bureaucrats adhered to tradition and legalism, deriving prestige from their roles and benefiting financially from their endeavours, ensuring a sense of royal authority and the defence of the monarchy (Elliott, 1989).

Nevertheless, Spain started to suffer a crisis at the beginning of the seventeenth century when Spain and France got involved in a long war. In addition, Spain faced territorial insurrection from the United Provinces, there was also an increment of British pirates in the international market that affected the movement of gold and silver from the conquered territories, tensions with the Netherlands also arose, and the secession of Portuguese territories followed (Carvajal Aravena, 2009). In addition, Spain experienced the need to import products for their supply and trade with America, the delivery to foreign sectors of a part of that trade, the inflation that made national

products more expensive, and the hefty taxes that fell on the productive population - mainly agricultural workers worsened the crisis (Margulis, 1992).

All this led to the Spanish monarchy seeing its hegemony threatened, significant challenges to its power in foreign policy, and its permanence in the American empire threatened, causing it to lose some territories in Europe (Carvajal Aravena, 2009). The Spanish empire had grown but had exceeded the financial capacity of the Crown, and by 1557, it was bankrupt. At the height of its political power, Spain was threatened by its economic and financial weakness, the rebellion of the Netherlands, and the rivalry of England, which appeared on the horizon to compete for the sources of its empire. In 1558, the maritime military expedition to invade England failed. Sir Francis Drake's English navy defeated the armada, and the Netherlands separated from Spain toward the end of the sixteenth century. The Catholic evangelizing Spanish empire, supported by the clergy and nobility, was breaking down and weakened and was beginning to give in to the advances of the Protestant northern countries, in which capitalism and the Reformation took hold (Margulis, 1992).

In broad terms, Spain could not establish a robust capitalist system due to social and political factors inherent in its structure and historical development. The Spanish Empire, primarily upheld by the feudal order and Christianity, experienced early national unity under absolute monarchy. However, various factors, including the loss of economic momentum in the first half of the sixteenth century, a decline in agriculture, industry, and population, and active involvement in European wars, contributed to a general crisis in the seventeenth century. This crisis resulted in Spain's transition from a first-order power to a second-order power in the international order. Mercantilism propelled other rivals like England, France, and the Netherlands into pole position in the global capitalist order (Margulis, 1992).

5.3 The Spanish colonial strategy of domination

In this thesis, I am interested in the history of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's resistance actions and their relations with colonial domination structures. Therefore, I move between a power structure strategy and the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's tactics to challenge their oppression and exclusion developed by the conquistadores and the Spaniard Empire. It implies an effort to explore the strategy developed by the Spaniards to subjugate Indigenous people in the Chocó region considering the Spanish Empire context. Its methods of subjugation included building villas and/or towns, consolidating specific ideas and images of the Indigenous Embera Chamí that were a representation of the ideology debate about the Indigenous people carried on in Spain, and converting Indigenous people to Christianity. In this section, I briefly explore those strategies as part of the domination process undergone by the Indigenous Emberá Chamí in Colombia.

5.3.1 Territorial order: Towns and villas as part of the domination process

The social sciences have shown that space organization is essential for controlling human action and represents and inculcates a social order and particular worldviews (Herrera Angel, 1998). In this sense, ordering space and territory implies applying a system of meanings through which a social system is communicated, experienced, explored and reproduced (Herrera Angel, 1998). As mentioned in the previous section, Spanish laws promoted the confinement of the Indigenous population in towns and villages to maintain control over them. Since the Spaniards arrived on the American continent, the Spanish Crown issued numerous requirements, royal decrees, and regulations to guide the new settlements and provide order from the beginning, illustrating how the monarchy extended its power to the American territories. In this

context, it is understood that territorial and spatial ordering in the Americas operated as a legitimizing element of the political and social structure of the Spanish Empire.

From the beginning, towns and villas had an Indigenous population creating the space for a mixture of cultures and an acculturation process and starting the operation to reunify disperse Indigenous groups. Cities, towns, and villages became the axis for the colonization enterprise that included agrarian, livestock, cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and mining colonization, among others (De Solano, 1990). Ultimately, the Spaniards' territorial management aimed to settle the newcomers in America and segregate and homogenize diverse ethnic groups.

The Spanish conquerors, as soon as they took possession of a territory, laid out the streets of a city, distributed lots for housing among the conquerors, gave plots of land on the city's outskirts for orchards and to choose the local authorities, which essentially consisted of a collective body with administrative functions, named the council (Melo, 1996). The councils distributed the land in the name of the Spanish King since he had dominion, as royal lands or vacant lands included all the lands that were not Indigenous property, and only those lands that were used in agriculture by Indigenous people were usually recognized as Indigenous property (Melo, 1996). Thus, all non-Indigenous land was the King's property and did not leave his domain except through an act of donation or grant made by the monarch or his agent (Melo, 1996).

Neither the occupation nor the dispossession of the Indigenous people gave title to the property. Apart from distributing land to the Spaniards, the councils usually separated a portion of the land for common pastures to obtain some income from its use or rental. The council's other essential functions included setting prices, regulating the type of services, and representing residents before higher authorities (Melo, 1996).

On the other hand, towns and villas sought to create a moral community that decided to settle in a place to live under the same government in search of common well-being (Acosta Franco, 2020). In the context of the Spanish American conquest, this moral community was, in essence, a soldier who participated in the expedition and acquired a civil and political status after the founding of towns. In addition, members of these communities had obligations and privileges that were permanently negotiated with the Spanish Crown. Finally, towns and villas functioned through negotiations at different power levels that created property rights legitimation and a common culture that reflected political acumen (Acosta Franco, 2020, p. 34).

Soldiers became neighbours in these new cities, towns, and villas that helped to sustain urban and political space. The settlers and the Crown negotiated services and rights rooted in the sacrifices made by the conquers in the territory (Acosta Franco, 2020, p. 40). However, the foundation of new towns and villas went through moments of instability, struggles and political divisions, resulting, on occasion, in the abandonment of the urban project or the transfer of the population to a new territory (Acosta Franco, 2020, p. 40). Ultimately, one of the leading settlers' interests was preserving the town to maintain its civil and economic position there (Acosta Franco, 2020, p. 40).

However, it is necessary to emphasize that armed confrontations against the Spanish occurred continuously and widely in the Colombian colony. In the sixteenth century, the Indigenous Chocó rejected about ten expeditions that attempted to reach the Atrato and San Juan rivers. Faced with such failure, the Spanish concentrated on strengthening the foundations of towns surrounding Chocó, like Santa Fe de Antioquia, Arma, Anserma, Toro, and Cáceres (Vargas, 1984, pp. 48-58).

Therefore, the constitutions of towns and their sustainability during the colonial period developed two general objectives. First, the settlers intended to gain and maintain benefits from the Crown. Second, the constitutions legitimized the empire's political and social structure in the new territories. The firt objective implied that the relationship with the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's ancestors was determined by a search for benefits promoting the formation of specific Indigenous images that justified the creation of new cities and villas. Some benefits included obtaining encomiendas, the right to trade, tax reduction, loans for slave purchases, etc. Likewise, neighbours needed to protect their towns from Indigenous people as they cared for the Crown's interests (Acosta Franco, 2020, p. 49).

Concerning the second objective, the organization of space is acknowledged as a potent instrument for the domination and control of the political system (Foucault, 1975, as cited in Herrera Angel, 1998, p. 98). Scholars like De Certeau (1996, as cited in Herrera Angel, 1998, p. 98) emphasize that the assimilation of domination by "common people" is not automatic and is met with resilience. Domineered sectors employ tactics to react against and resist domination. Consequently, space, territory, and organization assume the role of a "battlefield" where conflicting interests within a society are negotiated and resolved.

The following segments describe how Spaniards privileged specific Indigenous images to justify the creation of new cities and villas and how Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups challenged the domination strategy.

5.3.2 Social images of Indigenous Embera: The barbarian warriors' image and the resistant tactics against villas during the conquest period

An image is a set of ideas associated, in this case, with the Indigenous Emberá. The history of the Spanish conquerors and colonialists' views of their conquered people reflects their history of themselves. The image of the Indigenous Emberá changes throughout the colonial domination strategy, yet the formation of social images is a strategy of domination itself.

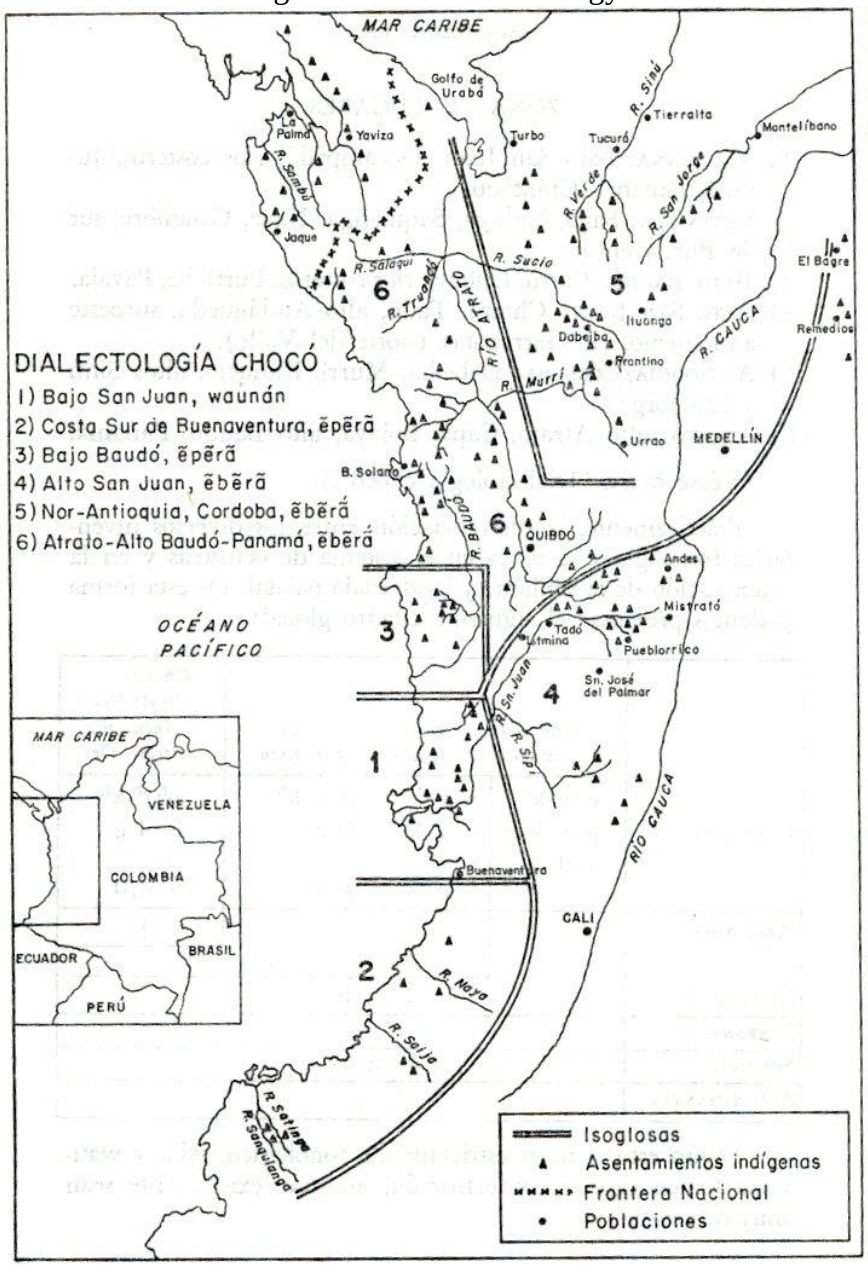
When the Spaniards arrived in what is today regarded as the current Colombian territory, the Emberá Chami's ancestors were in the upper part of the San Juan River and the Tatamá River basin. This territory borders the current political frontier between the departments of Chocó and Risaralda. The Tatamá and the upper part of the San Juan Rivers are called the Tatamá province. The Spaniards named Chocó to the Indigenous people inhabiting this province (Aguirre Licht, nd). For example, Montoya Guzmán (2008) argues that the Chocó concept was an Anserma town inhabitant's invention in the first half of the sixteenth century to evoke savagery, terror, and cruelty from some Indigenous groups. In the Spanish conquerors' documents, Spaniards also referred to the current Indigenous Emberá Chamí as Sima (Cima) or Tatamá. According to Pardo Rojas (1987), the communities currently established in the upper San Juan area are identified with the Indigenous people called Chocó by the Spanish during the conquest, which means that there is a more or less stable geographical permanence of the Emberá Chamí groups there (p. 51).

Nevertheless, the term Chocó referred to the Embera Chami, the Sima (Cima), and the Tatamá groups, as well as to the Waunanas-Noanamás and the Eperaras who lived in the lower San Juan River and to the South of Buenaventura (Machado Caicedo, 2011). Later, the Chocó became an ethnonym to call Citará (Citarambirá) Indigenous

communities located in the upper part of the Atrato River (Aguirre Licht, nd). By the seventeenth century, the Spaniards also referred to Noanamás from the middle and lower San Juan River as Chocó, as well as those Chocó living in the upper part of the San Juan River and Citará in the Atrato River (Isacsson, 1974). This means that the Chocó denoted several Indigenous communities that spread mainly in the far west of Colombia, from the South to the North.

On the other hand, Hansen (1991) noted that by the second half of the seventeenth century, there was confusion regarding what constituted the Chocó, Tatamá, and Poya groups. The Chocó seemed to be a differentiated group from the Tatamá, yet they seemed to inhabit the same or nearby territories since both names referred to those groups living in the upper part of the San Juan River. In addition, these Indigenous groups shared some cultural qualities with the Citará and spoke similar languages. However, in this region, the Spaniards did not differentiate among the distinct languages of these Indigenous groups, namely the Emberá and the Waunana. Hitherto, these Indigenous groups differentiated among themselves by the territories they occupied and their relations with their neighbours.

Figure 4. Chocó dialectology



Note. From "La lengua de los Emberá del grupo chocó (Colombia)," by D. Aguirre Licht, n.d., p.14.

The Emberá Chamí Indigenous people are part of the Karib linguistic family. Although the Karib denotes a linguistic concept, chroniclers and historians also used it as an adjective to refer to all those Indigenous groups with a markedly bellicose character and practitioners of the "anthropophagy" ritual. They represent a broad cultural variety and were foregrounded for their resistance against the Spanish invasion (Castaño Uribe, 1984, p. 207). Castaño Uribe (1984), based on archaeological,

ethnographic, linguistic, and anthropological evidence, classified Karib's groups into two categories: traditional and integrative. Traditional groups are those that moved and lived along the Magdalena River. Their characteristics included groups organized in multifamily settlements, dispersed housing units, existing in egalitarian societies, creating permanent political groups, and having distributed and defensive settlements.

In contrast, integrative groups were located on both sides of the Cauca River and the West Mountain range. Their characteristics include intertribal alliances, authoritarian leaders, and political integration justified by internal and external conflicts, "anthropophagy" rituals, defensive settlements, and *palenques* (a wooden fence or stockade made for defence or ritual purposes). Indigenous groups like the Anserma, Quimbayas, Pantágora, Lile-Timba, Pijao, and the Chocó belonged to the Karib integrative branch (Castaño Uribe, 1984).

In addition, the anthropological literature describes the Cauca River Valley as a conflict region inhabited by ethnic groups that practiced cannibalism before and during the Spanish conquest (Jaramillo, 1995). Even though these groups were under the umbrella of the Karib's linguistic family, they were separated from the Chocó Indigenous groups due to the West Mountain range that worked as a natural barrier between them. The Chocó groups located in the upper part of the San Juan River bordered the East with the Tachiguí, Tabuyas, Guáticas, and Cañamomos Indigenous communities, to the South with the Apias, to the West with the Tadó and the North with the Caramanta communities (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a, p. 15).

The archives discuss the appointment of Vasco Núñez de Balboa as the first Spanish conqueror trying to reach the Chocó region. He was also known as one of the leaders who headed the first European plantation on continental land, Santa María de la Antigua del Darien. Vasco Núñez de Balboa also penetrated inland from Uraba in the

North by the Atrato River to the Sucio River, which he called Negro, from where he reached the Albanumaque tribe. However, he did not continue his advance because he received news about an Indigenous uprising in the North, in the Darién (Lucena Salmoral, 2018). Likewise, the Spanish conqueror Diego Almagro attempted to reach Chocó from the Pacific Sea, and Juan de Andagoya did the same from the South. Studies indicate that none directly interacted with the Chocó Indigenous groups (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a, p. 11). Those first incursions encouraged new expeditions, yet they encountered difficult climates, problematic topographic conditions, and a diverse Indigenous population (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a).

Later, another conqueror, Sebastián de Belalcázar, went to the South and earned the governorship of the new municipality of Popayán (Zuluaga Gómez, 2021a, p. 11). He introduced a settlement system that entailed founding a city with two or three subordinate towns or villas that contrasted with the *cabalgadas* system implemented on the Caribbean coast during the first part of the Spaniards' conquest of America. For example, Popayán, Cali, and Timana were central settlements with villas on their borders, such as Pasto, Anserma, and Neiva (Zambrano & Bernard, 2014). Later, Francisco Pizarro, governor of Nueva Castilla, authorized Lorenzo de Aldana to be the Popayán Governor in the absence of Sebastian de Belalcázar, who went to Santa Fe de Bogotá. Lorenzo de Aldana, interested in expanding the Spaniards' colonies, put Jorge Robledo in charge of the Spanish army to conquer the province of Anserma in the North of Popayan (Molina Martínez, 2018). Jorge Robledo also sent Captain Luego Gómez Fernández to the Andágueda River expedition in 1539, from where the Indigenous Chocó expelled him (Pardo Rojas, 1983). This is one of the first contacts between the Spanish conquers and the Emberá Chamí groups reported in the official documents.

This contact is recorded in a letter by Juan Bautista Muñoz and authorized by the notary Pedro Sarmiento. The letter is found in the Archivo de Simancas (Simancas Archive) in Valencia, Spain, in the Collection of unpublished documents related to the discovery, conquest, and organization of the former Spanish possessions in America and Oceania. The following quote is part of a copy of that letter:

> The said Captain, Gomez Fernandez, a resident of the said city, as leader, he sent him with fifty men on foot and many crossbows and dogs […]. He went to the province of Choco or Sima where he, from the city's four leagues, began to enter through the mountains and found many towns of *Barbacoas* (word taken from the Taino Indigenous to refer to the houses built on wooden logs by the Indigenous inhabitants) and warlike people.
>
> And there, he was walking many days; until he arrived in the said province of Chocó, where he received many encounters, and discovered a mighty river that is believed to be a source of the Darien River, and they went down, until in another town they found very tough people. They had a reunion with them, so that while they were fighting, the Indians came up to the Christians and gathered so much together that they took a Christian life and badly wounded three or four Spaniards; and when they saw what had happened, the Spaniards withdrew, seeing themselves already destroyed [...] (Sarmiento, 1864, pp. 277-278).

Later, in 1540, Jorge Robledo wrote Descripción de los pueblos de la provincia de Anserma (Description of the towns of the province of Anserma), in which he described the territory and characteristics of different Indigenous settlements inhabiting the basin of the Cauca River that had been somehow "pacified." In the description, he mentioned

the inhabitants of Sima, Tatape, and Chocó provinces. Here is what he said about this territory and its inhabitants:

> In the Sima, Tatape, and Chocó provinces they call themselves *barbacoas* provinces in Indian […] they have them [*barbacoas*] on tall and big trunks […] they go upstairs, and at night the raise them [stairs]. There are tigers on the land; there is not another animal they guard against. They are bellicose people, and they fight from the top of the houses […] they have some blowguns as weapons […].
>
> They shoot little arrows with tips of black palm, and the arrows are in the form of a flower that the reeds from here throw with their flower. Also, they pour boiling water; and then, seeing that they can't take anything with them, they burn the *barbacoas* with all the clothes they have in it and give themselves to prison. His livelihood is small corn, many pigs and deer, and much fish, from the many rivers that flow into the Darien [river] (Robledo, 1865, pp. 412-413).

In Robledo's description of Anserma, he also described Indigenous groups from the Karib family, like the Armas, Pozos, Pijaos, Quimbayas, Paucuras, Irras, Caramantas, and Cartama. All were located in the Cauca River. Something particular in Robledo's accounts was the emphasis on the anthropophagy or cannibalism ritual practiced by the Karib groups at the Cauca River. Nevertheless, he did not mention the Chocó as an anthropophagy group. On the contrary, researchers found clues in Emberá myths suggesting that they avoided anthropophagy, and it was a practice attributed to rival tribes (Gálvez et al., 2009).

On the other hand, the historian Juan David Montoya Guzmán (2008) quoted the theologian Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, who wrote that "the Chocó inhabited provinces in an extensive space, with few populations: these Indians live in *barbacoas*, which they have made on the highest and steepest hills of their land, which is very

rough" (p. 170). The Chocó "did not have lords or heads," and each member of the groups acted as they pleased in times of peace; yet in times of war, the Chocó seemed to come together under the authority of a single chief. The Chocó's two key characteristics, according to Montoya (2008), were dispersion in terms of their settlement pattern and war in terms of their reaction to the presence of the Spaniards on their land. This statement was connected to Pardo Rojas's (1987) description of the Chocó flexible social organization. He described the Chocó groups during the Spanish conquest period in the following way:

> In times of war, no more than fifty men and their families, grouped around a chief who had proved bravery and military expertise. These groups could ally with other groups to face common enemies creating a type of union. Chocó's groups took refuge in large circular houses surrounded by palm walls raised on high poles from which they resisted enemy attacks or moved in night advances to suddenly fall on their enemies, exterminate them and burn their houses (p. 59).

Pardo Rojas suggests that Chocó groups were leaderless in times of peace yet had leaders during the war. In addition, Montoya Guzmán (2011) asserts that it is very probable that unmarried children, brothers-in-law, nephews, sons-in-law, and grandchildren became available warriors to support a prestigious Indigenous leader to face off against enemies in a war. These multi-family structures, through their leaders, overlapped into larger units to create a kind of "federation." The "federation" used "guerrillas' tactics" against the Spaniards.

The local historian, Alfredo Cardona Tobón (n.d.), mentions that the war against Spaniards in the first part of the conquest focused on the villas of Anserma, Antiochia, and Toro, close to the Chocó's territory. Cardona Tobón's description in a quote from a

chronicler of the Indies, Juan López de Velasco, wrote about the frequent attacks implemented by the Chocó on Anserma, Antiochia, and Toro villas. Here is what Cardona Tobón had to say on the issue:

> They [the Chocó] killed a large number of Spaniards in ambushes on the roads, infesting them in such a way that they could scarcely pass from one city to another. They looted several times the towns of the reduced Indians and the farms of the Spaniards, and they took to their countries [Indigenous territories] the cattle (p. 8).

Montoya Guzmán (2008) also noted the "guerrillas' tactics" the Chocó and other groups used during that period. He says that Indigenous populations like the Chocó, Noanamá, and Yaco bordered the cities of Toro and Cáceres to repel invaders using surprise attacks and ambushes along the rivers. Part of the Spaniards' response to this tactic was related to their forming cities and villas. As pointed out above, Sebastián de Belalcázar created and institutionalized a settlement system consisting of a city with subordinated towns or villas. The villas operated as an outpost for the Spanish conquest of the territory, which allowed the conquistadores to rest and relax and increased the possibilities of their domination of the Indigenous people. La Historia Documental del Chocó (Documentary History of Chocó), which gathers archives from the conquest and colonial period, registered the following request by Captain Gil Rengifo from Anserma in 1553:

> To populate [create a new villa] a town or more in the provinces of Chocó would be very useful for this town [Anserma] because it would result that Indians who are in the mountains and *barbacoas* leaving them to the prairies and giving rise to the possibility of extract[ing] a lot of gold from the mines and they would not be fleeing as they do, because they do not want to come to serve as many of

> them used to serve, and if they were not populated it would be that the Indians who were fleeing in the said *barbacoas* and others they would go with them to their thieves places to hide […] it seems to this witness that, populated is a great good and utility comes to this town (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 9).

Another witness from Anserma, Andrés de Riveros, indicated similar concerns related to the Chocó province and called for creating a new villa to defend Anserma before the Indigenous groups confederated. He reported on the issue in the following manner:

> If the population were not created in the province of Chocó, it would cause great damage to the residents of this town [Anserma] because this witness has seen from six or seven leagues from this town the land of war and many of the native Indians of this town confederate with others who are at war. Great damage would result to this town if the population is not created (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 14).

The last two quotes have two connotations relating to the economic system and the gold mining organization, and they describe the Chocó province as an Indigenous resistance space. In this sense, Colmenares (1997) pointed out that the politics of city formation in the conquest period corresponded to the stimuli for reaching out to the gold mines more than the wish to defend the colonization process (p. 18). In addition, Colmenares (1997) also mentions that the administrative division and frontiers established by the Spaniards responded more to the correlation of forces among the conquers and between the conquers and Indigenous communities than responding to a conscious logic from a specific order (p. 27).

From this analysis and the Spaniards' reports, it is possible to think of the hypothesis that the creation of villas and towns responded more to a disorganized

strategy of exploiting mines and controlling rebel Indigenous groups from Chocó than to creating an organized colonial strategy. It makes sense since this analysis corresponds to the first conquest period when no clear colonial structure existed. In contrast, a precise territorial occupation was established to secure gold from the territory.

The Chocó resistance delayed the Spanish invasion of the Pacific area (Hansen, 1991, p. 60). Therefore, creating villas and towns soon became a mechanism to expand the gold mining frontier and turn from the conquest period to the colonial system. For example, Pedro de Acevedo Sotelo, an inhabitant of Anserma town, requested a petition to find new towns to pacify bellicose Indigenous groups. The following quote on this issue was obtained from *Historia Documental del Chocó* (Documentary History of Chocó):

> The Indians under their jurisdiction [Anserma] who are indomitable and warlike and of bad disposition and that without any cause other than for not serving or being quiet and peaceful. They rise up and are going to get into the towns of Chocó […] whose residents receive notorious damage and danger [...].
>
> The Indians of the vicinity of Anserma, seeing that there were Spaniards in them [towns], they would return to their first settlements, quiet and pacified in their natures and, they would not try to rise up or rebel as they do every time they wanted, rather they will serve and give their tributes that his majesty receive great service and increase his rights (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 23).

Therefore, there is a linkage between the formation of new villas and towns, the narrative of gathering bellicose Indigenous groups in those villas to control them, and the exploitation of the gold mines. For example, Hansen (1991) stated that the route into extensive gold mines marked the end of the *cabalgatas* system characterized by spoliation and looting in the first part of the Spaniards' conquest of the mainland and

then the beginning of the formation of mining districts, which later became an extensive network of towns dedicated to the development of commercial exchange. This phenomenon is associated with the expedition made by Melchor Velásquez to pacify the Chocó and Chanco Indigenous groups in 1572, which marked the beginning of a partial Spanish occupation in Chocó (Hansen, 1991). Velásquez's expedition was registered in the *Historia Documental del Chocó* (Documentary History of Chocó):

> Don Jerónimo de Silva, Governor and Captain General of the Popayan Governorate, appointed Captain Melchor Velásquez de Valdenebro, resident of the city of Guadalajara de Buga, for the planning of the province of Los Chancos, population and evangelization of those of Chocó and Dabaiba, October 15, 1572 (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 48).

> With the desire he has to increase your royal crown, he offered to discover and populate the province of Chocó, which lies behind the city of Anserma, whose natives were at war and did notable harm to the Indians of peace and from where they had news of great wealth and a large population of Indians (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 61).

Montoya (2011b) asserts that the "barbarian" warriors and brave image attributed to Chocó Indigenous groups were used to legitimize the conquest of the Chocó region. This idea links to broadening the town's network through the foundation of new settlements on rivers and ports. Here is what the Popayan Governor instructed the Captain related to this endeavor to do:

> You will appoint major and minor sheriff of the towns [...] because it could be that in terms of the towns that you populate in this way there are some ports at the North and South seas and rivers that flow from them. I give you power so that they discover ports and put mayors and justices in them [...] so that natives

> of [the] ports can better come to peace and dominion (Ortega Ricaurte, 1954, p. 50).

The Spaniards' new villas established a mining frontier in the region. Understanding the frontier as a set of non-integrative relationships between Spaniards and Indigenous groups led to the cultural shock dynamic among Indigenous people and territorial quarrels (Colmenares, 1997). Frontiers were a "contested ground" zone where permanent conflict and negotiation occurred. The stress in the frontier lined by the cities and villas of Cali, Buga, Cartago, Toro, Anserma, and Antioquia forced the Indigenous Chocó not only to dispute territory with the Spaniards but also to displace other Indigenous groups from the area like the Cunas, Cuevas, and Uraba in the Atrato River (Herren, 1992, p. 51) and to create alliances with other groups that they were in conflict with. For example, Melchor Velásquez's attempt to pacify part of the Chocó region led to the creation of a union of Indigenous groups that included the Chancos, Chocó, Totuma, Yngara, and Noanamá to face the Spaniards' outposts (Fundación Arieta, 2020)

Another alliance identified by scholars included the participation of the Tatamá (and/or Chocó). This alliance happened in 1593 when the mines and *encomiendas* were attacked by the Chocó, Tatamá, and Noanamá Indigenous groups. This attack forced the Spaniards to withdraw from the mining camps bordering the province of Noanamá (Hansen, 1991, p. 49). This type of alliance suggests that the Spaniards' attempt to expand the mining frontier faced violent resistance from the Indigenous people.

A second wave of Spaniards' expeditions to consolidate their presence in the Chocó region was encouraged by the gold production crisis experienced in the first half of the seventeenth century. In this case, the Spaniards focused on reaching the Citará province (north of Tatamá territory) in the Atrato River to incorporate new mining

districts (Hansen, 1991, p. 54). Scholars registered an alliance between the Spaniards and Tatamá groups in 1627. For example, Isacsson (1975) noted that an *oidor* named Lesmes de Espinosa Savaria narrated that Anserma town inhabitants had commercial relations with Tatamá Indigenous people for seven years. Tatamá groups asked the Spaniards for help in defence against their enemy, the Tarabiraes because they (the Tatamá) were fewer than the Tarabiraes, who were the same ethnic group as the Citará.

A year later, in 1628, Captain Martín Bueno, with the aid of the Indigenous Tatamá groups, reached the province of Citará (Hansen, 1991, p. 56). The report narrated that once the captain arrived at the Atrato River, he fought and killed Indigenous people from the Citará groups. After the Spaniards' victory, the captain wanted to move to another province. Nevertheless, their Indigenous friends (the Tatamá) warned him about the danger of such an exploration, so they returned to Anserma, facing little resistance from the Citará groups (Isacsson, 1974).

However, these alliances between the Spanish and some ethnic groups cannot be seen as homogeneous and enduring strategies and resolutions undertaken by the Indigenous community. Some of those alliances were characterized by deep distrust and hostility that had their roots in age-old conflicts between Indigenous groups rather than by an acknowledgement of their shared interest in confronting the Spanish settlers. The local historian Victor Zuluaga underlines that, in 1628, five *caciques* from the Tatamá province sent a letter to the Real Audiciencia de Bogotá asking Captain Martín Bueno not to take more Indigenous people from the Tatamá province to accompany him on his expeditions. They claimed that the great majority of Indigenous people accompanying those expeditions perished, and as a response, they maintained continuous war in the Anserma town (Zuluaga, 2021a)

On the other hand, Isacsson (1974), from data located in the Archivo General de las Indias (General Archive of the Indies), narrated that ten years later, Captain Martín Bueno attempted to conquer the Citará territory and again, his army was accompanied by Indigenous people from the Tatamá region. In this case, the Citará Indigenous people defeated the Spanish troops and killed its captain. Later, when the Spaniards sent new troops to avenge Martín Bueno's assassination, they captured a Citará Indigenous leader named Vega, who witnessed the Spaniards' downfall (Isacsson, 1974). Vega said that the Tatamá Indigenous group accompanied the Spaniards' army and joined the Indigenous people of Citará to attack the Spaniards in 1638. In addition, the witness also narrated that after the attack, the Tatamá and Citará retreated to the Arquía River close to Antiochia because of their fear of the Spaniards' retaliation (Isacsson, 1974, pp. 2-6)

These accounts illustrate the complexity of the dynamic resistance system that the Tatamá groups developed during the Spanish conquest of their territory. It was characterized by "guerrilla war" methods, alliances with other Indigenous groups, including past enemy groups, as well as creating partnerships with the Spaniards, betraying friends and foes, and fleeing conflict zones to re-organize themselves in different territories. This dynamic resistance differentiated from other Indigenous groups surrounding the Tatamá. For example, Hansen (1991) outlines that the success of the Spaniards in the conquest process from the middle of the sixteenth century in the Chocó region was grounded in their alliances and collaboration with other Indigenous groups like the Tootuma and the Yngará as part of the colonial divide and rule strategy (p. 58).

By the end of the 1650s, the governor of Popayan sent Diego Ramón as his lieutenant to Christianize the Indigenous population of Tatamá and Citará. However, he

had to seek refuge in the Indigenous Noanamá territory, which by the time was already pacified since the Tatamá and Citará groups attacked him (Hansen, 1991, p. 83). The following twenty years included a series of events that led to the "pacification" of the Tatamá. Three possible variables can explain the "pacification" process of the Tatamá: (1) The implementation of a commercial system with the Indigenous groups inhabiting the region; (2) the Tatamá groups feared an alliance between the Spaniards and other Indigenous groups; and (3) the introduction of Catholicism to the Tatamá groups' as part of the Spaniard's colonial policy (Hansen, 1991).

In general, the Spaniards wished to take advantage of the economic resources in the region, including a rich and abundant mineral supply, to help the Spanish Empire's economic recovery. In addition, they preferred peaceful pacification by converting the remaining Indigenous population to Catholicism (Williams, 1999). These objectives materialized, expanding Spain's commerce, alliances, and contact with the natives. For example, in 1666, López García was the lieutenant in charge of the Tatamá region, and two years later, he had control of the entire Chocó region with the primary goal of establishing a mining operation in the whole area. He implemented a trading system, which consisted of "exchanging gold for machetes, axes, and other goods" (Hansen, 1991, p. 85).

On the other hand, López García also considered using the already pacified Noanamá groups to move against the Tatamá. Hansen (1991) quoted the Jesuit Fr. Antonio Marzal, who noted that the Tatamá feared implementing a peaceful agreement with the Spaniards (pp. 85-86). Finally, the priest Fr. Luis Antonio de la Cueva reported that López García "introduced secular priests for the introduction in Holy Faith and trained them in the payment of tributes to the Crown" (Hansen, 1991, p. 87).

That said, Francisco de Quevedo also met with groups from the Noanamá, Tatamá, and Citará to reach an agreement where those groups engaged in becoming Catholics and receiving missionaries, acknowledging the Spanish king as their sovereign while paying tributes to the crown and congregating in the Spanish settlements. All these actions were in exchange for those Indigenous groups not being parcelled out in *encomiendas*, and the Spanish would assist them against their enemies. In the end, Indigenous representatives agreed to pray, to receive the sacraments, and to pay tributes to the Royal Treasury (Hansen, 1991, p. 87). Data shows that the Tatamá and the Citará started paying tributes to the settlers between 1667 and 1668 (Hansen, 1991, p. 95).

So far, all the attempts to congregate the Indigenous population in permanent settlements met with some failure. Most observers agreed that two crucial factors lay at the heart of the Spaniard's inability to gather the people: their traditional settlement pattern and social structure (Hansen, 1991, p. 107). It was known that the Indigenous population from Tatamá was characterized as being a series of small, dispersed communities composed of several extended families (Hansen, 1991). In addition, these groups shifted their settlements continuously to areas where they cultivated their maize.

Another difficulty assembling them was the lack of Indigenous "political leaders" to negotiate and make the rest of the population obey the Spaniards' instructions. The colonial conquers' response to the difficulty of reducing the Indigenous population into permanent settlements included assigning a *Cacique* or governor from the Indigenous people to represent them. Nonetheless, the *Cacique's* influence was very restricted since the Indigenous people only respected those who were courageous. However, over time, the institutionalization of "*caciques*" recognized by the Spanish *corregidores* gradually caused an erosion of their recognition by

Indigenous communities and the displacement of the source of their authority towards the support of the colonial establishments (Pardo Rojas, 1987, p. 59).

However, by the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Spaniards could control the region to some degree. Two factors helped the colonizers to successfully have power over the locals, namely that, first, the Indigenous population's demographics began to decline. By the end of the seventeenth century, the only persistent Indigenous groups living in the Pacific region were the Tatamá, the Citará, the Noanamá, the Soruco, and the Burgumia[6]. Second, the contact created the proliferation of business and interpersonal relation between the colonizers and Indigenous people (Williams, 1999, p. 399).

5.4 Key findings

This section describes the primary outcomes of the research, focusing on the strategies employed during the first period of the Spanish conquest and their impact on the Indigenous populations in the Tatamá and Chocó regions. The examination unfolded several key findings, such as the creation of towns and villas, the disorganized nature of early Spanish settlements linked to mining interests, the settler's negative characterization of the Chocó Indigenous people, and the resistance strategies adopted by the Emberá groups against the colonizer. Further, Chapter 5 also explores the ideological underpinnings that justified the subjugation of Indigenous populations during this historical period. Eight key findings emerged from the historical artifacts and records.

[6] The local historian Victor Zuluaga Gómez noted that by 1687 the Indigenous groups left in the Chocó region were the Tatamá, the Citará, the Noanamá, and the Poya.

First, the dominant strategy executed during the Spanish conquest involved establishing towns and villas in the territory to confine dispersed Indigenous groups sanctioned by various laws within the Empire. This strategy, with its intricate layers, aimed to organize the colonial enterprise through structured settlements while simultaneously homogenizing and pacifying the population by converting Indigenous groups to Christianity and enforcing Imperial regulations on them. This strategy was designed to give territorial control to the Spanish Empire. However, it was influenced by Carlos V's imperial concept, which embraced the idea of a united humanity under the Christian faith. According to Elliott (1989), the imperial process was based on conquest, colonization, and governance, and creating towns and villas was a fundamental axis of control of the natives throughout the process.

Soon thereafter, the debate in Spain about the relationship between Christians and non-Christians emerged due to the Spanish struggle to control the new colonies. On the one hand, the Catalán-Aragonés party was founded supporting conquistadors and encomenderos. On the other hand, the University of Salamanca, a bastion of intellectual discourse, opted to be against the subjugation of the Indigenous people. Therefore, establishing towns and villas as a controlling strategy was framed in the debate between the Catalán-Aragonés party and the University of Salamanca. The encomenderos played a crucial role in the dominance process as they were appointed as the legal instrument of the Spanish monarch to convert the Indigenous population to Catholicism. Towns and villas were the geographical areas where encomenderos managed Indigenous work and faith, per the 1513 Law of Burgos. It was in these settlements that Indigenous people were forced into servile status by the Spanish conquistadors. Later, with the election of Paul III Pope, towns and villas became a more "spiritual zone" to force Indigenous

people into a Christian faith assimilation servile status under the control of the Spanish conquistadors.

Second, the new strategy called cabalgatas was introduced by Sebastián de Belalcázar and was fundamental in founding towns and villages in the Chocó region. The cabalgatas system consisted of plundering and exploiting Indigenous people during the early stages of the Spanish conquest of the mainland, which eventually transitioned into establishing mining districts. These mining districts eventually evolved into a widespread network of towns focused on fostering commercial trade and development. The first cabalgatas founded in the Chocó region were formed by those who left established colonial cities such as Popayan. As cabalgatas emerged in the Chocó region during the sixteenth century, several towns and villages were established around the region occupied by the Chocó Indigenous people, and some of these towns included Santa Fe de Antioquia, Arma, Anserma, Toro, and Cáceres (Vargas, 1984, pp. 48-58).

Third, the Spanish Empire created an important bureaucratic and administrative structure, which materialized in parts of the American territories via towns and villas. However, in the early stages of the Spanish conquest, the creation of towns and villas in the Tatamá and Chocó region lacked organization and was driven primarily by the colonizer's desire to access the gold and silver mines.

In addition, the administrative process in the Tatamá and Chocó region faced many challenges due to the remarkable resilience of the Chocó Indigenous people. For example, the Indigenous Chocó turned away approximately ten Spanish expeditions to access the Atrato and San Juan rivers, forcing the Spaniards to retreat to neighbouring towns. At the beginning of the Spanish conquest, the Indigenous Chocó resistance tactic was more effective than other methods used by other Indigenous groups located in the

same region since the Spaniards took more than a century to take partial control of their region.

Fourth, the Spaniards presented the Indigenous people of Chocó as barbarians, which also happened in other regions of America. The term "Chocó" became synonymous with savagery, terror, and cruelty and was perpetuated by the Spanish settlers to denigrate their culture and dehumanize them so that they could be controlled with violence. The settlers' characterization of the Indigenous people of Chocó was instrumental in justifying their requests to the Spanish Crown for permission to establish new settlements to subdue the natives.

The Embera Chamí's ancestors were related to Karib Indigenous groups that the Spaniards portrayed as bellicose people who practiced cannibalism. At the beginning of the Spanish conquest, the Spaniards did not differentiate between the cultural variety expressed among Indigenous groups in that region, and they classified these groups into a united characteristic depicted by their hostility toward Spanish invaders. Indigenous Chocó groups were separated from other Karib Indigenous groups due to the West Mountain range's natural barrier. In addition, despite the Spanish colonizer's efforts to connect Karib groups with cannibalism, the literature review and the historical documents did not indicate that the Tatamá and Chocó groups were practitioners of cannibalism, and some data indicated that the Tatamá and Chocó groups disliked and feared this practice.

Fifth, the image of the Indigenous Chocó as a barbarian is also related to their initial resistance to living in the towns and villages and their refusal to take on a servile position towards the Spaniards. Additionally, the constant looting and attacks on cities by the Chocó Indigenous people reinforced the Spanish portrayal of them as warriors

and savages. As related in the historical documents, the inhabitants of cities near the Chocó region feared the constant attacks of the Indigenous people.

Another element used by the Spanish to both frame and justify the barbaric image of the Chocó Indigenous people was the fact that they attacked other Indigenous groups that were already pacified. The Spaniards framed this contrast between civilized or pacified Indigenous people and barbarian Indigenous people. The civilized Indigenous people were the "docile" group that had submitted to the Empire's control, while the barbarians were the rebel group that fought against Spanish rule. For example, expeditioners like Melchor Velásquez justified the war against the Chocó Indigenous groups because they were causing notable harm to the already pacified Indigenous groups in the region.

Sixth, the use of war against Indigenous people was debated in the Spanish Empire. For example, Francisco de Vitoria presented his definition of war so that Spain could justify waging a "just" war if it protected the Christian faith, secured and defended Indigenous people who had converted to Christianity, and defended the innocent. His war definition impacted the framing of the image of the Indigenous people who posed a threat to the "civilized" Indigenous people. It was used to justify the Spaniard's war against the Indigenous Chocó as it was the right of the Spanish Crown to defend these converted people against the "barbaric" natives.

Therefore, the settlers' desire to display the Chocó groups as "savages" killing innocent natives validated the war waged against them and the creation of towns and villas that were organized as platforms for settler expeditions to access new gold and silver mines. Thus, the settlers' material benefits were derived from portraying the Embera groups as savages to be tamed or extinguished.

Seventh, the Spanish settlers' consolidation of the Chocó Indigenous groups as barbarians during the initial phase of their conquest of the territory reflected the prevailing belief mentioned by individuals like Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in Spain that Indigenous populations were inherently barbaric. This perspective aligned with the merchants supporting the Catalán-Aragonés party, whose primary goal was not to protect Indigenous people but to facilitate free trade and make a profit.

Thus, the ideas highlighted by Dominican priests like Fr. Alonso Montesinos and Fr. Bartolome de las Casas, who were close to the Escuela de Salamanca, did not arrive in the Tatamá and Chocó region in the first part of the Spanish conquest of that territory. The Spanish conquistadores framed the image of the Chocó as barbarian and alienated from the Empire's conception of conquest, colonization, and governance, with their exploitation and conquest as an integral part of the settler's colonization process.

Eighth, the Tatamá or Chocó Indigenous resistance tactics in the Tatamá and Chocó provinces emerged as a significant response to the early Spanish conquest of their lands. In the beginning, the Chocó groups responded with tactics to defend their territory from their homes high up in the trees, using blowguns, poisonous arrows, and boiling water. Then, when the Chocó Indigenous people realized that they could not keep the Spaniards away with their weapons, they fled, burning their belongings and houses.

A second resistance strategy found in the archives was the formation of Indigenous group alliances with others who shared common enemies, creating a form of federation to face the Spanish advance as "my enemy's enemy becomes my friend." Some alliances even involved rival Indigenous groups. For example, local Indigenous people created a union of Indigenous groups, including the Chancos, Chocó, Totuma, Yngara, and Noanamá, to face the Spaniards' outposts led by Melchor Velásquez.

Therefore, the Embera groups could ally with rival Indigenous groups for specific proposes. However, they could also have quarrels with those rival groups for territorial control or because of a long history of past struggles.

In addition, the resistance tactic also involved negotiating an agreement with the Spaniards to combat rival Indigenous groups together. However, these alliances were fragile, and some historical records narrate instances of betrayal whereby the Spanish betrayed their allies and vice versa. Consequently, Indigenous groups could be seen as traitors who the Spaniards could not trust.

A third resistance tactic the Tatamá and Chocó groups used was a form of "guerrilla warfare" characterized by their attacks from the bush and from the roads on Spanish exploratory campaigns. This tactic also could include alliances with other Indigenous groups. Historians like Alfredo Cardona Tobón and Juan David Montoya Guzman noted it. Tobón highlighted how the Chocó Indigenous groups frequently attacked Anserma, Antiochia, and Toro villas, and Montoya Guzman noted Chocó Indigenous groups' use of "guerrillas' tactics" when they repealed invaders using surprise attacks and ambushes along the rivers.

5.5 Conclusion

Chapter five explored part of the Spanish settler-colonial conquest strategy to control the Pacific flank of what is today Colombia, as they created towns and villas to corral and control Indigenous groups together while also consolidating a specific racist idea in the territory that the Indigenous people from the Tatamá and Chocó regions were so-called barbarians. In addition, the chapter describes some of the tactics of resistance implemented by the Chocó Indigenous groups against the Spanish settler-occupation

from historical records. The facts were gathered from historical documents related to the conquest and colonial period and from scholars who specialize in researching the Emberá Chamí community.

The first two centuries of Spanish occupation of the Pacific flank were seen and acted on through the racist, ethnocentric ideology and prism framing Indigenous people as barbarian warriors. This highly negative image was anchored in the idea that the bellicose and naturally "barbaric" character of these Indigenous groups kept the Spanish colonization architecture away from the Pacific region in the first conquest period. The Indigenous barbaric image, in contrast to the Spaniards' so-called civilized attributes, was used by the settlers in a violent relationship between them and the Indigenous groups. This ethnocentric racist image was used in the middle of a territorial dispute with the settlers whereby the Tatamá and other Indigenous groups responded with "guerrilla tactics" and different types of alliances to survive the settler onslaught. The conquest period included disputes over territory among different Indigenous groups and the Spaniards, the consolidation of competitive images related to framing the Other, the need for the settlers to establish a mining economy for the Spanish empire, and the attempt by the Spanish colonizers to build villas and towns to consolidate their power, curb Indigenous rebellions, and to control the gold mines.

Chapter 6

The turn to colonialism, the mining activity, and the advent of republicanism

6.1 Introduction

Chapter six delves into the era of conquest, primarily in the sixteenth century, with the seventeenth century serving as a transitional period between the Spanish conquest and settler colonialism. Colonialism, in this context, represents the Spanish Empire's endeavours, amid a state of economic crisis, to assert control over the intersubjective dynamics within the Indigenous communities of the Tatamá and Chocó regions through Christian evangelization. Consequently, the seventeenth century emerges as the nascent phase of Spanish colonization.

Chapter six narrates this transitional phase and its profound repercussions on the forbearers of the contemporary Emberá Chamí Indigenous people. Following the analytical trajectory established in Chapter Five, Chapter Six also outlines the Spanish domination strategies and the resilient tactics adopted by the Indigenous populace to combat oppression. However, while Chapter Five focuses on the initial stages of the Spanish conquest in the first half of the sixteenth century, Chapter Six focuses on the colonization process at the end of the sixteenth century transitioning into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The initial section unveils a transformation in the Spanish construction of the Indigenous people of Chocó, shaped by the Empire's evolving commercial and colonizing dynamics. Further, this section underscores the amalgamation of both violent and nonviolent tactics that were employed by the Indigenous community to resist settler aggression and expansion. The subsequent section shifts its focus to the expansion of settler mining activities, intricately linked to the economic tumult Spain faced during

the seventeenth century as rival European powers challenged its power. Commencing with an exposition of the administrative order instituted in the Chocó region during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this section delineates the establishment and organizing of new settlements, subsequently forming the territorial foundations for several present-day Emberá Chamí reservations. Notably, this section captures a second metamorphosis in constructing the Chocó Indigenous people. It highlights their emerging forms of resistance, like their deliberate refusal to participate in church prayers.

The concluding segment of this chapter delves into the ramifications of republicanism and Colombia's quest for independence for the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people. Analogous to the preceding sections, this segment introduces new views about the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people, particularly during the colonial and republican periods. Additionally, it expounds on how the Spanish leveraged the imposition of *caciques* or Indigenous chiefs on the Indigenous people as a strategic tool for their indoctrination. Finally, this section interlaces the legal transformations impacting Indigenous land ownership under republicanism with the assimilation efforts facilitated through Catholic schools.

6.2 The image of the peasant, and the implementation of a combined Indigenous resistance tactic

Montoya Gúzman (2011 b) called the new Spaniards' strategy to dominate the Chocó region *la politica por "medios suaves"* (politics "by soft means") in the second half of the seventeenth century to refer to the settler's preference to evangelize the Indigenous people. This politics "by soft means" included planting Franciscans, Mercedarians, Capuchins, and Jesuits missionary groups among the Indigenous people living in the

long Pacific flank. The missionaries' incursion, in part, responded to the politics of war failure implemented by the Spaniards in the first part of their conquest of the territory. For example, the representative government of the Spanish Crown expressed this notion by considering that "the military conquest of the Chocó was fully justified by the fact that native population would not be peacefully reduced and was more fiercely resistant to the Spaniards than that of other regions" (Hansen, 1991, p.61). What it, in fact, meant was the Spanish colonizer implemented a new strategy during this phase of the colonization process via missionary missions to disempower and domesticate the Indigenous groups instead of focusing solely on their military conquest.

The "new" politics was also established around the territorialization of the Indigenous population through the legal recognition of some territories as reservations titled by the Spanish Crown. The colonial authorities concentrated the population in these territories to increase taxes and amplify the workforce in the different regions (Naranjo Peña, 2012).

Before implementing this new soft politics, Dominican clergy members arrived in the Chocó region. In addition, in 1637, the bishop of Popayán endeavoured to indoctrinate the Indigenous population of the province of Noanamá and Tatamá via the creation of a settlement named Sed de Cristo. However, the Tatamá and Citará groups destroyed this settlement a few years later (Hansen, 1991, p.122). On the other hand, in 1648, a Franciscan priest, Fr. Fray Matias Abad, reached the Arquía River to convert Indigenous Cunacuna, and a year later, the same Indigenous group assassinated him. A Jesuit expedition made another example of previous attempts at converting natives to Christianity in the Noanamá (including the mining camp of Sed de Cristo) and Citará province but without much success. Secular clerics also dabbled in the Chocó territory. For example, Luis Antonio Cueva entered the area of Tatamá and Citará in 1667,

"where he baptized more than 500 Indians" (Hansen, 1991, p.126). Despite these evangelization efforts, Indigenous communities remained free without complete clerical domination, which forced the Spaniards to change the technique to subdue the Indigenous population.

> For example, Hansen (1991) found this idea expressed by the fiscal economic chancellor of the Council of the Indies and this is what she noted in her research: In 1669, the fiscal noted that the conquest of the Chocó and subsequent exploitation of the region's gold mines would benefit the royal treasury-as well as promoting commercial activities in surrounding regions, but he insisted that the Crown's principal objective was to achieve the conversion of the native population (p. 66).

The new period of pacification was also based on congregating small Indigenous settlements into larger, centralized, and permanent villas. However, the missionary mission changed its conception of what it understood to be the territory. The missionaries did not conceive of the frontier as an enclave, as did the armed settler conquerors; rather, they understood it to be a line of communication between the different towns inhabited by Indigenous groups (Montoya Gúzman, 2011b). The towns would no longer function as specific points of penetration, closed and impregnable, but as colonial outpost points. They would also become an open space for the Indigenous people and a place to communicate with its inhabitants (Montoya Gúzman, 2011b, p. 20).

The settlers established the missionaries as a privileged instrument of surveillance and Catholic conversion of the Indigenous population. The power of the missionaries in the settlements in the Tatamá and Chocó was not over the land and its products but over the Indigenous population (Montoya Gúzman, 2011b, p. 21). Keeping

the Indigenous people entrapped in towns and villas helped the Spaniards instruct and control them. The new colonial strategy sought to entice and convince the Indigenous people to change their behaviour and adopt a new way of behaving, transform their customs, adopt Spanish cultural norms, and establish a common and homogeneous standard of living.

The Royal Crown *cédulas* (royal charters) of 1666 and 1674 were the legal framework during this period. The 1671 *cédula* promoted the pacification of the natives and opened the way for Franciscan Catholic groups to be the missionaries and forerunners in the evangelical process in the province of Tatamá and Citará (Williams, 1999, p. 400). Those *cédulas* also included a tribute payment exemption for ten years for the Chocó Indigenous communities in exchange for providing food to friars (Hansen, 1991). In addition, the new *Ordenanzas sobre el Descubrimiento* promulgated by King Felipe II forbade the use of the term "conquest" and replaced it with words like "discovery" and "pacification" (Hansen, 1991, p. 114). It was a sign of a turning point during this period from moving from a more direct, violent, and forced dominion of the territory by the Spaniards to a softer, more political, spiritual, economic, and behavioural domination strategy.

Three Franciscan missionaries settled in the Tatamá province, while another group of five missionaries from the same congregation stayed in Citará. From the beginning, these groups found it difficult to form permanent settlements related to Indigenous settlements' patterns and social organization (Williams, 1999). Indigenous groups lived in small, dispersed communities that shifted location according to their agricultural needs. Indigenous groups from the Chocó region moved from one settlement to another place because once they cultivated maize in an area, they could not instantly grow it again in the same place. This slash-and-burn cultivation of the land

that caused Indigenous groups to move their location constantly was a barrier to Franciscans gathering them together for extended periods around a territory with a Spanish structure. An example can be found in Hansen (1991), who narrates how a friar reported that Indigenous people from the Tatamá province abandoned the settlement of Nuestra Señora de la Paz de Pureto once it was created (pp. 138-139). On the other hand, the lack of permanent authority or leadership among Indigenous groups hindered the Franciscans' task since there was no leader to help them keep the Indigenous community in one place (Williams, 1999).

This period was also characterized by tensions and conflicts that emerged between missionaries and Indigenous people, which explained the clerics' lack of success in indoctrinating the natives into Christianity. Indigenous groups from Tatamá and Citará, like other Indigenous groups, also resisted using a combined resistance strategy against the Catholic clergy. For example, Williams (1999) narrates how some Indigenous groups from the Chocó region had taken up arms against the Franciscan mission in the Lloró town in 1674 or how another friar was attacked because he forced an Indigenous person to pray. Nevertheless, this violent tactic does not necessarily correspond to a planned method but to a natural resistance by Indigenous people to adapt their strategy to resist oppression. That is to say, it was a response by the Indigenous groups to the mistreatment of some missionaries and the history of exclusion and pressure created by the settlers since the arrival of the Spanish in the territory of the Chocó in the sixteenth century.

However, the Indigenous people's resistance did not always include violence. Williams (1999) also describes how it was expected that Indigenous people would supply food to the missionaries and miners. Still, most Indigenous groups were unwilling to trade food for goods like beads, bells, axes, machetes, knives, and scissors.

Moreover, those Indigenous people who accepted change sometimes only provided food when they had a surplus or sold it "at an excessive and arbitrary price" (Williams, 1999, p. 412). The Indigenous people's lack of cooperation contributed to some missionaries and miners leaving the region, and those who stayed considered controverting the policy of not collecting tributes from Indigenous people.

At the same time, however, the Franciscan project coexisted with the miners' enterprise. The miners actively wanted to include Indigenous communities in the economy's mining system. For example, Williams (1999) also noted that miners in the Tatamá province wanted Indigenous people to "be forced to cultivate two maize crops annually" (p. 412) instead of doing it only once a year and that they should give "maize to all the slave gangs thrashing the maize, putting it in baskets, and taking it in their canoes to the mining camps or stores" (Williams, 1999, p. 412). In this sense, Indigenous people from Tatamá, like other Indigenous groups, were considered to be "peasants" who would supply food to the settler's economy that was forced upon them by the Spaniards. These attempts by the settlers to force Indigenous people into the role of "peasants" was a strategy created by the Spaniards due to their need to mobilize Indigenous groups to work and produce products to guarantee supplies for the new settlements. The new idea of framing the Indigenous people as "peasants" helped create an Indigenous labour force attached to the history of taxes implemented in the colony (Colmenares, 1997).

When the Franciscans used physical punishment or implemented violent strategies against the Indigenous people, the Indigenous population used laws given by the Spaniards to be an inhabitant in a town or villa to work as peasants. For example, in a letter written by José López de Carvajal in 1711, who was governor of Antioquia, it is noted that a protector of Indigenous people and a *cacique* from the province of Citará

went before the governor of Antioquia to report how Indigenous groups were subjected to mistreatment by the *corregidores* and lieutenants of that province. A segment of the letter is described below:

> Don José de Montoya, Indian *cacique* of the province of Zitará, has arrived in this city with other Indians from his town and has informed me that, since the natives are oppressed, and with the very heavy yoke of the bad treatment and hostilities they suffer, the *corregidores* and lieutenants of that province have remained with it up to this point with notable dismay due to the continuous servitude they have without allowing them to attend to some of the fields, banana plantations and fisheries in time for the necessary food for themselves and their women. Depriving them of raising their children (AHNB Legajo XI Caciques e Indios f, I cited in Zuluaga, 2021c).

The local historian, Víctor Zuluaga, points out that this event occurred in a dispute between the governments of Popayan and Antioquia over-exercising authority in the Chocó region. Therefore, the claims of the Indigenous groups were also affected by the tensions and disputes over territorial control between the Spaniards (Zuluaga, 2021c, p. 49).

On the other hand, in 1632, the judge of the province of Citará, Joseph Joaquin Martínez Melo, commented on the grievances received by the Indigenous people from the Chamí people who were treated as beasts of burden by the magistrates and lieutenants despite being prohibited by the laws. This is what Joseph Joaquin Martínez Melo said at that time:

> How much they serve, without being slaves, because they still treat them but if they were [slaves], as [it] is proven by the continuous trips they make, whether by land or by water, carrying them as if were beasts, or brutes, if we allow them

> to carry what is necessary for their sustenance, and to be able with some relief to endure the burdens that are imposed on them and those that they carry on their backs, through harsh mountains, as happens from the town of Chamí, to the port of Andágueda, it being prohibited, by the Laws of these Kingdoms, for the Indians to carry loads on their backs, due to the damage they receive to their health […].
>
> Having considered with careful reflection the serious excesses and many others committed against them, and paying attention to the just complaints and clamors, which they have repeated, generally, requesting their freedom, which is so mandated in the laws and Royal Decrees, Provisions and Dispatches that his favor are issued so repeatedly by virtue of the many resources that on different points have been executed through their Protector in request of their relief and benefit (Zuluaga, 2021c, pp. 65-66).

Additional evidence of Indigenous people using laws and authorities to protect themselves from the mistreatment of merchants, miners, and *corregidors* can be found in a complaint submitted by Chief Fernando Cortéz of the town of San Antonio de Tatamá de Chamí to a prosecutor in 1790. The following is a section containing Cortéz's complaint:

> At the feet of his excellency we prostrate ourselves, that by hearing us in justice your excellency may serve to remove Don Agustín Ortiz as Corregidor, since in less than six months this Corregidor has sacrificed us. First of all, he has not allowed us to graze our corn, which is the food we have to sustain ourselves and our children; the thirds that we charge to people who transit through the province of Citará (Zuluaga, 2021c, p. 86).

The last quote indicates how Indigenous leaders approached the authorities to request the removal of corregidores who mistreated them and sometimes provided suggestions for their replacements. In this sense, Indigenous people from Tatamá and Chocó also used laws given to them by the Crown to protect the community from harm. It was also a nonviolent strategy to resist corregidores and clerical influence.

In addition, there were cases where other Spanish settler residents of the villas supported some of the Indigenous people's claims. For example, Williams (1999) and Hansen (1991) narrate how the rebellion in the late 1680s forced the Antioquia Governor to replace some friars who conflicted with Spanish settlers and Indigenous people. Indigenous people from Lloró, Citará, and San Francisco de Atrato carried out the uprising. It was not mentioned whether the Tatamá was an actor in this revolt against the Franciscans.

However, it is very probable that the Tatamá also participated since the rebellion leaders needed a high number of Indigenous groups, and the Tatamá was close to the frontier with Citará despite the history of confrontation between the Tatamá and Ciatará groups; there are also reports of sporadic alliances between them.

Four years later, another revolt in the Citará region affected Negua, Lloró, and the San Francisco de Atrato settlements. This rebellion was planned and coordinated by captains from different provinces and towns in the Chocó region. Indigenous people killed Spaniards living in the mining camps and those living along the riverbanks (Williams, 1999). Something interesting that happened in this story is Williams (1999) and Hansen's (1991) hypothesis that some Indigenous leaders from Chocó supported the Spaniards against the Indigenous rebellion because they received the title of Indigenous governors of the new settlements and subsequently adopted Spanish names. Even though it was a small group, they helped some Spaniards to survive. This is

important because it indicates that shifting individual identity to a dominant group identity could have been the Spaniards' strategy to undermine their enemies.

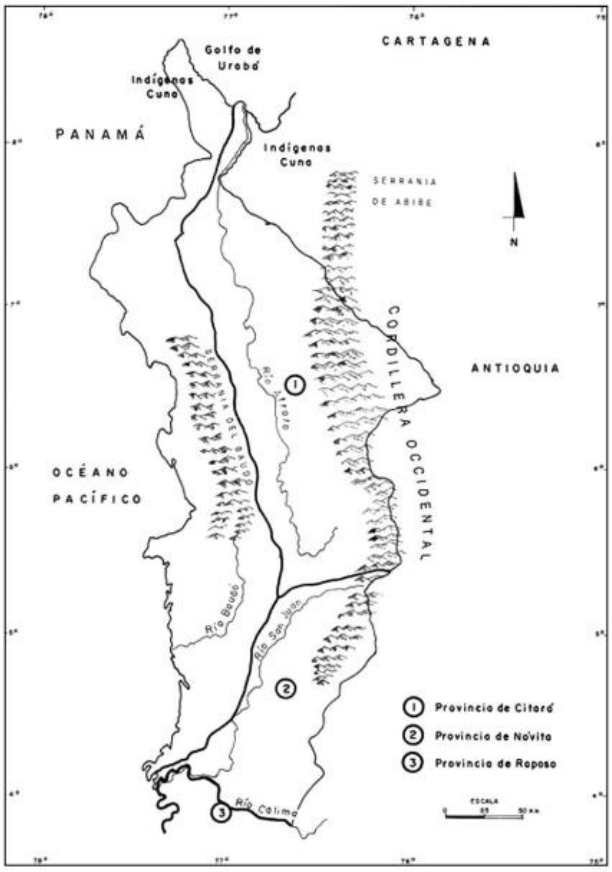
Finally, the Spaniards' reaction to this rebellion included the arrival of armed soldiers and loyal Indigenous people from Antioquia and Popayan to pacify the region and punish rebellion leaders. Hansen (1991) indicates that 30 Indigenous people from Tadó town, which was part of the Tatamá province, along with 130 Indigenous people from the Noanamá province, accompanied the Spaniards to gain control of the situation. This means the possibility of Tatamá groups supporting Indigenous people from Lloró town was real. Then, the Tatamá groups played a pragmatic and shifting role in the conflict against the Spaniards and Citará groups. At the end of the seventeenth century, the Chocó Indigenous groups were pacified, systematically beginning the Chocó settlement with enslaved African descendants. Those movements aimed to consolidate Chocó as one of the most crucial gold mining enclaves in the Nueva Granada, drawing the Indigenous population into the mining economy.

6.3 The expansion of the mining activity: The Indigenous image as beasts of burden and bush people

Until 1687, there were four provinces in Chocó, namely Poya, Noanamá, Citará and Tatamá. The settlements or mining camps of Tadó, Nuestra Señora de Pureto, San Pedro de Alcántara, San Francisco Ytaguri, San Juan de Yró, and Santa Cruz de Yragugu compounded and made up the Tatamá province (Hansen, 1991). By 1726, the region's territorial political distribution changed, giving way to the creation of the Chocó governorate. This political redistribution regrouped the four existing provinces of Poya, Tatamá, and Citará y Noanamá into three regions: Nóvita, Citará, and Baudó. However, Baudó lost its provincial status because of the small quantities of gold

produced in its mines. Therefore, by 1730, the new Chocó governorate included the provinces of Nóvita (formerly Noanamá) and Citará (Hernández Ospina, 2006).

Figure 5. Nóvita and Citará map



Note. From "El Chocó: Un paraíso del demonio. Nóvita, Citará y el Baudó, siglo XVIII," by O. Jiménez, 2004., pp.9-10 cited in "Formas de territorialidad española en la Gobernación del Chocó durante el siglo XVIII," by M. P. Hernández Ospina, 2006, p 22.

However, the number of towns and their names were confusing. For example, some documents had the following distribution with Nóvita including Tadó, Las Juntas, El Barranco, Noanamá, and San Agustín, while Citará was comprised of Quibdó, Lloró, and Bebará (Hansen, 1991). In contrast, Zuluaga (2021) indicates that Nóvita was made up of El Cajón, Las Juntas, Los Brazos, Baudó, Noanamá, Tadó and Zipí, while Citará integrated Lloró, Beberá and Beté, Cupica, Chamí, San Juan Gurior, Murri, and Tatamá. Table 2 below provides a comparative distribution that includes both historian's perspectives.

Table 2. Political distribution of the Chocó governorate

Caroline Anne Hansen	**Victor Zuluaga**
Nóvita province	**Nóvita province**
Tadó Las Juntas Noanamá El Barranco San Agustín	Tadó Las juntas Noanamá El Cajón Los Brazos Baudó Zipí
Citará province	**Citará province**
Lloró Bebará Quibdó	Lloró Bebará Beté Cupica Chamí San Juan Gurior Murri Tatamá

The information above shows Spanish confusion over the administrative relocation of Tatamá province and towns. Although Tadó belonged to the region of Tatamá, with the new political distribution, it was included in the Nóvita province. Hansen (1991) did not clarify if the rest of Tatamá province was included in one or the other region. On the other hand, the local historian Zuluaga (2021) mentioned that the new political and administrative distribution included the Tatamá and Chamí in the Citará province. Moreover, by that time, sources noted that the Tatamá province included the three settlements of Chamí, San Juan, and Mombú (Hansen, 1991).

Confusion about the administrative relocation of Tatamá province and its towns and mining camps made it difficult to distinguish from the historical documents the different Indigenous groups coexisting in the Chocó region by the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Tatamá's geographical location was at the border of both the Citará and Novitá provinces. Therefore, it is possible that the Tatamá groups moved from one region to another, relating to the Citará and Noanamá Indigenous groups. This hypothesis is supported by the documents' description of the permanent dispersion of Indigenous groups away from settlements to cultivate maize and plantains in rural areas. In addition, the Spanish description points out that the hostility between the Tatamá and Citará persisted at the beginning of the eighteenth century. For example, Williams (2004) found that by then, some Spaniards underlined that although the Tatamá and Citará spoke the same language, they detested each other (p. 6). In addition, Torres commented that by 1759, the Spaniards used the Chocó groups to attack Cuna groups and their Scottish allies (as cited in Pardo, 1983, p. 617). Nevertheless, the Indigenous Chocó's complexity and fluctuation, sporadic alliances, deep rivalries, commercial interchanges, and resistance to and acceptance of the Spaniards' culture by some members of each group should guide the analysis of those complex relations more than a simplistic dichotomous view of friends and enemies.

On the other hand, Zuluaga (2021) recounted that three towns gathered the Emberá Chamí Indigenous ancestor groups together during the middle of the eighteenth century. Those towns were San Juan de Chamí, San Antonio de Tatamá (currently Pueblo Rico) and Guntras (later Arrayanal and Mistrató). San Juan de Chamí was the key town. Zuluaga (2021) also noted that colonial documents had mentioned the Chamí town since 1714. However, San Antonio de Tatamá cannot be confused with the

province of Tatamá. San Antonio was a settlement in the region of Tatamá. It is located on the right side of the San Juan River near what is known nowadays as Pueblo Rico. San Antonio disappeared earlier than San Juan de Chamí (Zuluaga, 2021, p. 40). In addition, Guntras, which can be found in the same place known today as Mistrató in Colombia, played a vital role in the Spanish outpost in the Chocó region since the sixteenth century.

That said, San Juan de Chamí is described in detail in the *Cespedesia* magazine, created in 1972 as a scientific bulletin for the department of Valle del Cauca that disseminates botanical, zoological, environmental, and archaeological research. It also published information and statistical data in 1983 about New Granada from the mid-eighteenth century, including a description of the Zitará (Citará) provinces and particularly of the San Juan de Chamí town (Cespedesia, 1983).

> This is the main [town], that is, the province of Tatamá; it has a *corregidor* and priest, who are also from the town of San Juan [...]. The first [Tatamá province] commonly numbers one hundred and twenty tributary Indians; the second (San Juan), from twenty-four to twenty-six. The natives of both are robust and forced, agile on rough roads, and very skilled at carrying *lichigos* [wrappings] and *tercios*, as this is the common and very usual task in which they exercise. Their wives and children accompany them on the roads, and not without particular relief, since they carry the supplies, which at first are heavier than the *tercio* or *lichigo*.
>
> The husband carries, to which may be added the toddler, who because he is tender it cannot walk, but there is still another major peculiarity remaining, the females, due to the immediacy of calving, nor because of the calving itself, do not refuse to undertake and continue these trips, which last ten days [...] in her

> [province of Tatamá] there is no more town or settlers than those mentioned, and such a free servant or slave, who usually have the priest and *Corregidor* (Cespedesia, 1983, p. 425).

Two ideas emerge here. First, the territory was occupied mainly by Indigenous people. The only Spanish presence was a priest and a *corregidor* responsible for collecting taxes from the Indigenous people and distributing their jobs. However, it was not an exclusive characteristic of Tatamá's settlements. In this sense, Hernández Ospina (2006) recognized that the new territorial distribution did not imply that the Spaniards massively occupied the territory, yet they facilitated the growth of a local economy, and they ensured their political control over the Indigenous people. Second, Ospina portrayed the Indigenous image as vigorous and agile within their natural environment.

Specifically, the idea of the woman draws attention since she is described as a strong person who can carry heavy loads, including her children, while she is also pregnant. The image of the Indigenous people as "beasts of burden" is also consolidated here. Zuluaga (2021) highlihted that while some locals fled, others were subdued and became beasts of burden so that gangs enslaved people and supplied them to do the mining. Later, at the end of the eighteenth century, enslaved black people and mulattoes replaced Indigenous people in carrying supplies for the mines (Jiménez, 2004).

In general, the Emberá Indigenous groups were not considered good workers for extracting gold in the mines so the Spaniards gave them a new role as merchandise loaders. The Indigenous people usually carried a weight of around fifty kilos on their backs. They received bread, meat, and salt, at a high price from the *corregidor* a part of which they charged the merchants in kind (Zuluaga, 2021, p. 40). They were often forced to sell those goods received from the *corregidor* at lower prices to buy other supplies that they needed (Hansen, 1991, p. 287). In addition to transporting

merchandise for the *corregidor*, the Emberá were obliged to do agricultural work for the *corregidor* and the local priest, paying tithes and church costs to the clergy at the many patron saint festivities held in the community (Zuluaga, 2021, p. 40).

In this context, Hansen (1991) discloses that the Indigenous people from Tatamá province were particularly abused compared to other Indigenous groups from the Chocó region. She quotes Bishop Juan Gómez Frías' 1723 report in which he narrates that the Tatamá province's Indigenous communities carried heavier merchandise on their backs because the goods had to be carried overland. When fewer people did the work, the children had to step in and carry the food supplies (Hansen, 1991, p. 289). It is estimated that by 1720, the tributary Indigenous population from Tatamá was no more than 100 people, and the life expectancy of the male population was very low because of the heavy work they had to endure.

Consequently, Chocó became one of the central regions for expanding the colonizer's mining activity, and it received many enslaved people to work in the mining economy. Spanish inhabitants managed the mining economy and controlled the religious and civil authorities responding to their interests in the area. However, many conflicts escalated amongst its inhabitants, like the miners, clergy, secular clergy, and royal officials. In addition, the region became involved in corruption and territorial disputes between the Popayan and Antioquia governors, and smuggling grew as goods could easily be moved through the Atrato and San Juan Rivers.

Indigenous resistance to the settlers during this period included fleeing from their settlements (Hansen, 1991) and migrating to other Indigenous groups' territories. Some groups migrated to the Pacific coast from Cuna territories, and some made it to the Buenaventura River, falling into the Pacific Ocean (Pardo, 1983). Indigenous resistance also included an alliance with foreign groups (mainly smuggling groups) and

negotiated a place to establish new settlements (Hernández Ospina, 2006). In this case, the Indigenous people created an opportunity to negotiate the placement of their settlement with the Spaniards thanks to the fact that they threatened to flee into the mountains (Hernández Ospina, 2006).

In addition, Indigenous resistance to adopting the Christian faith also helped challenge the colonization process. In the first half of the eighteenth century, observers pointed out that the Indigenous population did not practice their daily prayers, they had little knowledge of Christianity, and the churches were poor Indigenous people practiced their old customs and beliefs instead (Hansen 1991).

Therefore, the Spaniards struggled to congregate Indigenous populations into permanent settlements because they failed to have political and fiscal control over the natives. For example, the *corregidor* of San Juan de Chamí in 1802 described a local population to the Crown in terms of the tributes owed to the Crown as well as the disbursement of the local Indigenous population as follows:

> The number of tributaries of Chami town exceeds one hundred seventy [...] it has no other inhabitants than these [Indigenous inhabitant's tributaries] their doctrinal priest, the corregidor and the butler who are commissioned by the doctrinaire himself to govern them [Indigenous] and distribute the occupations with which they can pay the tribute that the corregidor expects from them. Many times it happens that some of the aforementioned Indians are dispersed for the love they have for their peoples and for union and peace they live applied to the cultivation of plantain and maize (Montoya López, 2010).

It means that the Spaniards perceived the strategy of controlling and administrating Indigenous communities inhabiting the Chocó region as a failure throughout the three centuries of trying to implement the colonial strategy since a

significant percentage of Indigenous communities remained dispersed throughout the territory, and they did not pay taxes nor practice Christianity. Somehow, Indigenous communities managed to maintain part of their way of living, culture, and spiritual practices. The colonizers understood this behaviour well as the Indigenous communities were in a state of deterioration because they performed undisciplined and fractious behaviour and because they were considered to be people from the bush (Montoya López, 2010).

These negative categorizations and stereotypes were related to the idea of the settler's creation of towns and villas so that the Spaniards could administer Indigenous communities within the towns' frontiers. Therefore, when the Indigenous people chose to live far away from the towns, it became a strategy to avoid the Spaniards' domination of them and to maintain their culture. However, the Indigenous people's rejection of the entire Spaniard's ways of living and their permanent movement between mountains and rivers amplified the settlers' negative configuration of images of the other, portraying the Indigenous people as undisciplined people from the bush.

6.4 Republicanism, the ambiguous image of the Indigenous Embera Chamí as distrustful but friendly people, and their resistance to the education system

In 1808, the political crisis resulting from the French invasion of Spain created a fertile context for the revolutionary period to emerge in the Nueva Granada. In 1810, the first manifestation of the settler's political autonomy was the establishment of the first federal Republic. However, this first attempt to institutionalize republicanism in the Nueva Granada lasted until 1815, when the restored Spanish King, Fernando VII, reestablished monarchical power over the colonies for three years. Finally, Colombian Republicans launched a counteroffensive in 1818, culminating in their victory against

the Spaniards. The participation of ethnic groups in the independence war was complex, heterogeneous, and contradictory (Pita Pico, 2022).

Little information or analysis is related to the Emberá Chamí's participation in the independence process. For example, Pita Pico (2022) indicates that most Indigenous groups from Chocó, Amazonas, Llanos Orientales, and Guajira remained on the margins of political and military actions related to the independent movement because they were isolated from the white-*mestizo* population, or they were oblivious to the political dispute. This is important because if we look at the previous resistance tactics of the Embera Chamí, one could conclude that their process to resist colonialism was to be at the margins of the power structures.

After the emergence of the Colombian Republic between 1810 and 1819, the new nation-state became involved in a succession of civil wars where the troops involved in the battles used Indigenous territories to shelter. On the other hand, the ethnographer Vasco Uribe (2002) states that white-*mestizos* combatants used Indigenous people as guides and loader bearers in those scenarios.

During the first period of the Colombian Republic, in 1829, the French naturalist and scientist Jean Baptiste Boussingault evaluated the mining economy system in the Chocó region. He wrote *Viaje a la región aurífera y platinífera del Chocó*, or the journey to the gold and platinum region of Chocó, where he describes his interpretation of the Chocó, including their geographical boundaries, climate, territorial conditions, the inhabitants' characteristics, and commercial relations. This document contains a detailed description of San Juan de Chamí town. In one part of the document, Boussingault described the Indigenous people from San Juan de Chamí town as distrustful people:

> The Chocó Indians, without saying a word to us or making a gesture, positioned their canoe and lowered the San Juan by force of oars […]. They seemed to be suspicious. I had sent their salary, 2 piastres, to the mayor of Tadó who probably had not given them anything. The distrust of the Chocó [Indigenous] with the white men is a consequence of the indelicate procedures that were used with them. They told me that a governor of Nóvita, in love with the wife of an Indian, imagined entrusting him with an office for an authority from Charambirá, in the Pacific, to get her husband away from her; the next day the Indian appeared in his canoe with his wife:
>
> —"But why are you taking your Indian? You will go much slower," said the governor and the Indian answered him:
>
> — "You think, I also think", and he launched his boat down the river (Boussingault, 1994, p. 402).

Boussingault also described his first encounter with the Indigenous Emberá Chamí once he arrived in the Chamí town. This is his description of that encounter with the Emberá Chamí:

> I left my men in the *tambo* and took the lead; I did nothing but go up and down to a height that overlooked the village of the Chamí. There, I found myself in the midst of about 30 Indians, painted and tattooed, who were resting; they carried palm branches destined to renew the roof of their church; they were all my friends and they surrounded me affectionately calling me "compadre." It was 1 o'clock when I arrived and I stayed with the missionary, who welcomed me kindly and served me a much-needed lunch!
>
> Chami is a mission like there are in the mountainous regions. The cabins are scattered on the slope; I had hastened the march to spend Sunday with the

> Indians; that day they were forced to attend mass and doctrine, which matters little to them; the rest of the week they retire to their farms or go hunting and fishing; the surroundings of Chami are heavily forested (Boussingault, 1994, pp. 408-409).

The previous story portrays the Indigenous Emberá Chamí as friendly and welcoming. It also confirms how difficult it was for the Catholic clergy to indoctrinate them into the Christian religion and how Indigenous people remained in the forest for most of their lives. Boussingault did not hide his admiration for them, which originated from his observation of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí. The French naturists observed that the Indigenous Emberá Chamí still lived as they used to before the Spaniards' invasion of their territory, and they escaped being conquered by other nations thanks to their isolation. Boussingault noted that the Emberá Chamí lived together in tightly knitted kin groups and clans:

> I always felt a lively pleasure to meet the Chamis; groups of these Indians often settled in my house when I was in Río Sucio de Engurumí. They all knew me and I liked to observe them because they represented the state in which the natives were found when the Spanish invasion of America occurred. They had not changed their customs because, happily for them, they had escaped thanks to their isolation, from being conquered first by the great civilizers of the Andes, the Incas, and then by the Europeans. The Chami's live in families or clans that speak different languages, even though the populations are often very close to each other (Boussingault, 1994, p. 412).

Finally, Boussingault, thanks to his encounter with the Indigenous Emberá Chami communities, reflected deeply on themes like liberty and happiness. By comparing life in Europe and living in the Indigenous territory, the expeditionary

explorer wrote that in contrast to his stilted life in the French court, the Emberá Chami living in the forest were free to live life to the fullest. This is what he had to say on the issue:

> I had great satisfaction when I found myself in the presence of these simple people; I have indelible memories of this treatment. Frequently, within our guarded society, in the salons next to the emperor, in the midst of characters agitated by all kinds of ambitions, mixed with courtiers who displayed unbridled luxury, my good Chami's would mentally appear to me; I would see them hunting, fishing or assisting their missionary's religious instructions to no avail and I always wondered who would be the really happy ones, if the powerful or the humble of humanity (Boussingault, 1994, p. 416).

Since the Conquest, the Spaniards found it challenging to assemble and control Indigenous communities in the Chocó region because of the lack of stable political leaders. Then, a strategy implemented by the Spaniards to consolidate the Emberá Chami's indoctrination, tribute payment, and forced relocation to Spanish settlements was the creation of *Caciques*or Indigenous governors. Many descriptions of that new role indicate that, at the beginning, the *Caciques* were not respected by the communities since they only valued those who demonstrated bravery in battle. However, the Spaniards insisted on institutionalizing the *Caciques* over the years. The following narration describes the role of the *Caciques* in the Catholic mass ritual and the incomplete indoctrination of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups after nearly three centuries of Conquest and colonialism:

> After the bell rang, the Indians led by the *Cacique* and the governor, all entered the church, where there were only 3 people dressed: the priest, his wife and me. All the assistants knelt down and when the priest indicated that they should kiss

> the earth I was in the best place, the door of the church, to look without threatening indiscretions, the naked behinds of the Indian women, and a singular display in a temple!
>
> First, the priest made the neophytes practice the sign of the cross, which they did quite badly, then he delivered a sermon in Spanish, a language that the Indians did not understand with the exception of the *Cacique* and the governor; finally, the mass began without the attendance paying any attention to the divine service. They laughed and chatted and the *Cacique* reprimanded them so that they would remain dignified, applying sticks to their shoulders (Boussingault, 1994, p. 409).

On the other hand, the new political regime underwent tensions over the ownership of the land and the former Indigenous reservation. During the colonial period, the Spanish Crown introduced the Indigenous reservation as a mechanism of colonial power to control the Indigenous population (Velásquez Ruiz, 2017). The Spaniards' main object in creating the reservation was to ensure a constant Indigenous labour force, subsistence agriculture, and the payment of tributes to the landlords and the church. Between 1820 and 1830, the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, issued a series of laws to protect Indigenous people, including safeguarding Indigenous reservations by integrating them into this new project of the Colombian nation-state. However, implementing a new liberal economic model in the new state forced the dissolution of Indigenous reservations in 1849 because they were considered an obstacle to the new country's economic development.

Later, in 1850, the federalization process allowed for the creation of Indigenous councils, giving some rights acknowledgment to Indigenous communities under the council's direction (Velásquez Ruiz, 2017). The 1886 constitution promoted the

country's homogenization with Catholicism as the national religion, the Spanish language as the linga franca of the state as economic protectionism undermining the idea of the Indigenous reservations and the issue of Law 80 of 1890 permitted the dissolution and division of the Indigenous reservations that stimulated the commodification of their land that was bought and sold on the market (Velásquez Ruiz, 2017).

Many constructs of the 1886 Colombian Constitution were influenced by the Spanish Constitution of the Restoration (1876), especially the Catholic Church's position in public order matters. Therefore, the Catholic Church received the exclusive right to educate Colombians and the power to maintain the civil registry of people, and by1887, the religious missions oversaw "civilizing" the Indigenous people (Figueroa, 2016, p. 46). The socialization method used by the church to implement this strategy was the education of children to train a new, more civilized generation (Pérez Benavides, 2016).

This context intertwined with the recurrent migration of mestizos' settlers, creating the scenario whereby they could expropriate land from the Indigenous Emberá Chamí at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries (Zuluaga, 2021). The stress on land control developed by paisas who migrated to the Chamí region pushed some Indigenous families to migrate to the new Andes town in Antioquia, Quinchía and Belalcázar towns in Risaralda, as well as Restrepo town in Valle del Cauca, among others (Zuluaga, 2021).

The Indigenous Emberá Chamí's reaction to the land expropriation in the new Republic included a legal defence. In this case, they assigned some mestizos as their representatives to recover their reservation property titles (Zuluaga, 2021). However, this strategy generated many conflicts and land expropriation continued unabated.

Zuluaga (2021) explains that in the Emberá Chamí region, including the former Arrayanal town (currently called Mistrató), a payment method to pay lawyers' fees consisted of putting part of the Indigenous people's land up for public auction. The problem, in this specific case, was that the auctioned land exceeded the actual expenses for the legal services. Therefore, large land extensions were auctioned off, including almost the complete land around Arrayanal and Pueblo Rico town. Ultimately, the Indigenous communities only received land near the new town of San Antonio del Chamí. Hence, Indigenous groups that were forced to settle in the new location started conflicts, and tensions escalated with the new settlers who bought the auctioned land.

The San Juan de Chamí town disappeared during the independence era. In 1913, the new land distribution attached the Chamí region to the Pueblo Rico town, and, from this time forward, a new town was created called San Antonio de Chamí on the left bank going up the San Juan River that was three hours from the old town of San Juan del Chamí (Onetti, 1924). Vasco Uribe (2002) mentions that by 1920, there were already six schools in the Emberá Chamí area with around three hundred students, and by 1933, there were ten schools.

As these new schools became institutionalized in the local community, the priest Fr. Francisco Onetti, in a document titled Excursión por el Andágueda y el Chamí or Excursion through the Andágueda and the Chamí that was included in a book titled Relaciones de algunas excursions apostólicas en la Misión del Chocó or Relations of some apostolic excursions in the Mission of Chocó that included writings from Christian missionaries in Chocó at the beginning of the twentieth century mentioned that the children tried not to go to school and only did so when the local police became involved:

> [The teachers] have to fight with the indolence and inconstancy of their disciples, who if they go to school it is for fear of the police, paid by the Mission with the sole objective of forcing parents to send their children to the school; without these policemen, the education of the little Indians would be impossible, since the parents are the first to go to the father or to the police with a feigned pretext to get their children out of school, where they say they are wasting time; that they would better use it in birding [hunting birds with the *bodoquera*], and that with knowing what a paper says, you can't eat (Onetti, 1924, pp. 195-196).

The government ended up closing those schools because of their negative evaluation and the students' poor results. They gave way to creating three boarding schools in San Antonio del Chamí, Purembará, and Santa Cecilia, administered by the Mother Laura missionaries and dependent on the diocese of Pereira. These boarding schools responded to the influence and power of the family over the children (Vasco Uribe, 2002). Vasco Uribe (2002) analyzed the boarding school in the Chamí region as a center that concentrated on trying to incorporate Indigenous communities into the capitalist economic system.

The education center channelled the government institutions' activities in areas like technical education, cultivating cocoa and coffee, cattle rearing, creating panela, pig and chicken farming, and plantain cultivation. Vasco Uribe (2002) states that the boarding school was a socialization agent of assimilation. It was like the residential school system in Canada, which was a method of trying to integrate Aboriginal people into the growing North American economy (Charles & DeGagné, 2013). As explained in the following chapter, some members of the community positively perceived Mother Laura's missionaries for their leadership and for strengthening the community.

6.5 Key findings

The seventeenth century marked a significant phase in the settlers' encroachment into the Indigenous people's territory, transitioning from conquest to colonialism. This shift ushered in new perspectives about the Indigenous populace of the Tatamá and Chocó region. The era also saw the emergence of fresh strategies of domination by the Spanish Empire, aligning more closely with the discourses articulated by the School of Salamanca in the preceding sixteenth century. Faced with these new dominance procedures, the Indigenous groups in the Tatamá region demonstrated remarkable resilience, persisting in employing resistance methodologies forged during the conquest while integrating new strategies to gain power over the social dynamics within the Tatamá and Chocó Indigenous communities. As the mining sector consolidated and Colombia's independence occurred, certain transformations unfolded in the dynamics between the Spanish colonizers and the Indigenous communities. These changes encompassed the introduction of novel control and domination strategies by the Spanish, met with corresponding evolutions in resistance strategies by the Indigenous groups. Chapter six yields nine key findings, which are outlined below.

First, a strategic shift in settler actions occurred when they switched from using violence to indoctrinate the Indigenous population to a more peaceful form of socialization through the Catholic church and settler schools during the transition from conquest to colonialism in the Tatamá and Chocó region. This transition marked a departure from the use of force towards a more directed cultural, spiritual, moral, and ethical dominance over the Indigenous communities. Moreover, establishing towns and villages was a method that persisted from the conquest era onward and was further fortified by attempts to expand these settlements created at the outset of the Spanish

conquest of the territory. The overarching objective remained consistent with the conquest period: to gather rebellious Indigenous people together and implement the acculturation process within a controlled space.

A new administrative order emerged in the Chocó region during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This led to the formation of several new villages and towns in the ancestral territory of the Emberá Chamí. Despite Indigenous opposition to creating these new settlements in the Tatamá province, some settlements were established, including San Juan de Chamí, San Antonio de Tatamá, and Guntras. These remaining settlements were the foundations for creating the aforementioned Indigenous villages and reservations.

When the Chocó governorate was created in 1726, there was confusion regarding the legal location of the Tatamá province. However, local historian Zuluaga (2021) indicates that most of the Tatamá and Chamí provinces were included in the Citará province by then. Geopolitical administration ultimately left the Tatamá province between the Citará and Novitá provinces. It is hypothesized that the Embera Chamí's ancestors moved between these two administrative locations.

Second, the Tatamá region transformed the conceptualization of territory, with Catholic missionaries advocating that towns and villages primarily serve as spaces for gospel indoctrination rather than as enclaves for territorial conquest. Consequently, the populace began to perceive themselves as a religious community rather than a company oriented towards conquest. This shift aligned with ongoing debates within the Spanish Empire dating back to the sixteenth century. Missionaries sought to actualize the notion of converting Indigenous people through peaceful means, deviating from the earlier characterization of Indigenous people as barbarians and enslaved people. The acculturation process also triggered changes in the invaders' perception of the Chocó

Indigenous people, now viewed as a “peasant class” instrumental in supplying food to mine workers. However, this transformation maintained the portrayal of Indigenous individuals as a perpetually uncivilized lower class.

During the colonial era, the emergence of a “new peasant class” was made possible thanks to the Spanish colonizer’s Indigenous territorialization through towns and Indigenous reservations. This new conception of territory, implemented by Catholic missionaries, was in response to the Spanish colonial economic and cultural strategy. This meant that despite tensions between those who prioritized the economy and those who prioritized Christian indoctrination, the mining system was necessary to support Spain’s economic crisis in Europe, and it coexisted uneasily with the church’s cultural indoctrination systems. Consequently, the Emberá Chamí’s ancestors were exploited as food suppliers because of both strategies.

Third, acculturation not only focused on forcing Indigenous groups to adopt Catholicism as the sole religion and to change their behaviour to the Spaniard’s needs; it also included identity shifts in some Indigenous community members. The colonial strategy facilitated the adoption of Spanish cultural characteristics like names and surnames, generating divisions within Indigenous groups and weakening their resistance tactics. Some Indigenous individuals, aligning with the Spanish identity, supported the subjugation of rebellious counterparts. An example was when some Indigenous leaders who adopted Spanish names helped the Spaniards against the Indigenous revolt in the Citará region in 1684. This prompts the hypothesis of whether these acculturation and identity changes were deliberate strategies employed by the Spanish colony in the Chocó region as part of a divide-and-rule strategy.

Fourth, the Indigenous people’s resistance in Chocó during the seventeenth century involved violent and nonviolent methods. During this period, violent methods

were used to attack the populations created by the Spanish and even the physical integrity of the Catholic friars. Two examples of violent methods that stand out during this time were the destruction of Sed de Cristo town in the 1630s and the Indigenous from the Chocó region's rebellion against the Franciscan mission in 1674.

On the other hand, nonviolent resistance tactics also began to emerge. While Indigenous people attacked towns and targeted Catholic priests, they also abstained from fulfilling their civic functions as a tactic to pressure Spanish settlers. During the territorialization process, the Spanish assigned a new role of "peasants" to the Indigenous communities of the Chocó and Tatamá regions. This was a strategy of domination and economic exploitation as it also gave the Indigenous people some power over the Spanish because they were essential in providing food to the town's inhabitants and miners. As a result, the Indigenous communities made fair demands while resisting the Spanish.

In addition, settlement patterns and social organization played a crucial role in Indigenous resistance, particularly regarding the nomadic nature of Tatamá regional groups who moved to gather food. For example, after it was created, the Indigenous people abandoned the Nuestra Señora de la Paz de Puerto town in the Tatamá province in the last part of the seventieth century. Additionally, the absence of a unifying Indigenous leader hindered negotiations and indoctrination efforts by the Spaniards. For example, Hansen (1991) noted that the lack of Indigenous leaders in their social structure, composed of small family units, prevented the Spaniards from co-opting Indigenous people from the Tatamá region into Christian settlers. However, the Spanish settlers' response to the apparent absence of the group's leader was to impose the *Caciques* leadership system as a third-party intermediary in negotiating with Indigenous groups.

Fifth, Indigenous groups from the Tatamá and Chocó regions used nonviolent resistance tactics by leveraging the rights granted to them to reside in towns and villas. The role of "peasants" emerged with the new dynamics in the territory and implicitly gave Indigenous groups some power to resist providing food to the towns and miners. In addition, Indigenous inhabitants of towns also had access to certain rights granted to them by the Spanish Crown.

The Indigenous people, despite their rights, were not immune from mistreatment. They could lodge complaints with the Spanish colonial authorities in the provinces about any mistreatment they suffered by magistrates and friars. However, these claims were only sometimes effective, as they were often contingent on the political tensions between the different Spanish authorities, leaving their rights vulnerable and uncertain of being addressed. This early attempt by Indigenous groups to use nonviolent tactics to secure their survival foreshadowed later instances in the modern world where national and international laws became tools for Indigenous groups to assert their rights against oppressive state structures.

Sixth, the eighteenth century witnessed the settlers' efforts to consolidate a third image of the Chocó Indigenous people as "beasts of burden." Agile and strong Indigenous individuals were utilized in the mining trade. They were later replaced by enslaved Africans for mine exploitation, displacing Indigenous people who were deemed unfit by the Spanish Crown for such labour.

Several Indigenous groups that lived in the towns of the Tatamá region were also used to transport heavy loads on their backs on the roads and along the rivers, until they reached the port of Andágueda and other merchandise routes. When adult men were not enough to carry out the required transportation of materials, the conquistadores also used women and children. This type of heavy manual labour affected the health of the

Indigenous people, who complained to the authorities about the abuse imposed on them by the merchants.

Seventh, Indigenous people's resistance tactics during the eighteenth century included:

- Fleeing Spanish settlements.
- Forming alliances with other Indigenous groups.
- Resisting the evangelization efforts of Catholic priests.
- Using colonizer's norms and laws to claim rights.
- Negotiating with Spaniards settlers

The Indigenous population resisted adopting Christian practices while maintaining their spiritual and cultural traditions, resulting in the settlers stereotyping the Emberá as people who hail from the bush.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the ancestors of the Emberá Chamí could be divided into three groups. The first group comprised those who assimilated some aspects of Spanish identity into their culture as they adopted Spanish names and defended the towns and villages against Indigenous resistance. The second group consisted of Indigenous people who were forced to work as beasts of burden and were incorporated into the social and economic system of the towns. The third group comprised Indigenous people who fled from the towns to rural areas to resist the Spanish acculturation and assimilation processes.

These Indigenous groups used resistance mechanisms both within and outside the Spanish system. The groups assimilated into the economic system and used the colonizers' norms and laws to resist by complaining to the governors. Those who remained outside the system had a better chance of resisting by preserving their culture and worldview. The Emberá Chamí's ancestors also used a strategic negotiation tactic,

in which they threatened to abandon the villages if their demands were not met. This tactic demonstrated a keen understanding of the power dynamics with the colonizers.

Eight, there is no evidence that the Emberá Chamí groups directly influenced Colombia's struggle for independence. Since the Spanish conquest, their isolation strategy was critical to remaining beyond the reach of political tensions and conflicts that arose from introducing a new political system. Later, when Colombia gained independence from Spain, the country was embroiled in a series of political wars. The Emberá Chamí were reportedly utilized by different factions in these conflicts as jungle and mountain guides and porters.

On the other hand, the Spanish colonizer's strategy of imposing a *Cacique*to lead the Indigenous communities was also used in the political regime of the new republic of Colombia. However, the *Cacique* still did not have real visible power over the Indigenous people as described in Boussingault's (1994) narrative of the Chamí region in 1829. Legal and territorial disputes for recognizing Indigenous reservations implemented during the Spanish colonial era were also evident in the nineteenth century. The nation-state project and the development of a liberal economy measured these tensions. Finally, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Colombian state's strategy of "civilizing" Indigenous groups through Catholic schools was consolidated.

The republican land administration encouraged *mestizo* migration to Indigenous territories, threatening their land rights. For example, the Emberá Chamí's territory was disputed by *paisas* migration at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries (Zuluaga, 2021). Indigenous resistance included appealing to the law to claim their rights. However, a lack of understanding of the state's legal mechanisms and the systemic biases of the republican system led to significant territorial losses.

Nine by 1933, ten Catholic schools were in the San Juan de Chamí town (Zuluaga, 2021). The strong Catholic influence on the new state prompted the government to establish Catholic schools in the Emberá Chamí's territory, aiming to convert and assimilate them into the new social and economic order. In response, Indigenous resistance tactics involved fleeing from the Catholic schools, with Emberá Chamí families resisting the education of their children in these colonial settler institutions. Embera Chamí families considered that taking their children to schools was a waste of time since they should be learning about life in the bush (Onetti, 1924, pp. 195-196) and not those norms and values imposed on them by the new colonial socialization process.

In reaction to the limited success of the initial Catholic schools built in the area to assimilate the new generations of Indigenous Emberá Chamí, the government decided to shut down these schools. Instead, a boarding school was established under the leadership of Mother Laura's sisters, and they shifted their focus to agricultural activities, which were more suitable for an economic system like capitalism.

6.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the examination of settler colonialism in the Tatamá and Chocó region and Indigenous people's resistance to it during the eighteenth century reveals a profound and multifaceted transformation characterized by the transition from conquest to colonialism. This crucial era witnessed the emergence of nuanced strategies of domination by the Spanish Empire, influenced by the discourses of the School of Salamanca from the preceding sixteenth century. The Indigenous communities of the Tatamá region responded to these evolving settler-dominating strategies and practices

by blending established resistance methodologies forged during the conquest with new innovative resistance practices.

After Colombia's independence between 1810 and 1819, Indigenous resistance consisted of Indigenous families' refusal to educate their children in the new educational institutions. The authorities reacted to those dissident families by intervening to force the families to ensure that their children attended Catholic schools to be socialized into the Spanish culture and language and the Catholic religion and become obedient and compliant servants. This is clearly demonstrated in the Onetti quotes and registered in the research of Vasco Uribe (2002) and Zuluaga (2021).

Since Colombian independence, the nation-state project has dealt with Indigenous communities through the assimilation process to erase Indigenous education, culture, and ways of living. The process of assimilation and erosion of their ethnic identity. The Catholic school was a powerful mechanism to control and incorporate Indigenous communities into a modern social, economic, and cultural Colombia. Ultimately, the state achieved part of its objectives since a large percentage of the Indigenous community assimilated the private property dynamics and consumerism habits into their culture while also acknowledging Colombia as their country.

In summary, the sixteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth centuries in the Tatamá and Chocó region were characterized by a complex interplay of shifting strategies, resistance dynamics, and transformations in how the settler community portrayed and understood the Indigenous people. The acculturation process and power-over settler domination strategy continued in the early days of the Colombian Republic, generating new forms of Indigenous violent and nonviolent resistance.

Chapter 7

Contemporary violence and resistance

7.1 Introduction

In the preceding analysis, I have underscored the pivotal role of the Spanish colonial power's narratives in shaping the perception of the Emberá Chamí people. These narratives, carefully crafted to align with Spanish colonial strategies, contributed to the emergence of distinct stereotypical images concerning the ancestors of the Emberá Chamí people. These negative images were instrumental in justifying imperialism and facilitating the exploitation of resources and cheap labour within Emberá territories. Additionally, I have outlined the tactics employed by Emberá Indigenous groups in the Tatamá and Chocó regions as responses to the control strategies imposed by the colonial Empire. Both colonial strategies and Indigenous tactics underwent transformations and ruptures that were interconnected with the socio-economic and ideological historical contexts. Up to this point, the analysis has relied on data extracted from colonial documents and insights from specialized scholars on the Emberá Chamí people, which provided the narratives essential to exploring settler and Indigenous strategies.

Chapter Seven focuses on the consolidation of the Colombian Republic and its implications for the Indigenous Emberá Chamí people, particularly those residing in the Emberá Chami unified reservation along the San Juan River. The chapter explores the complex relations between Indigenous communities and the new Republic. In addition, it examines the remarkable Indigenous resistance tactics implemented during the more recent Colombian armed conflict among Colombian governments, leftist guerrillas, and paramilitary groups. The Emberá Chamí people, faced with these formidable adversaries, had to resist to survive, demonstrating their resilience and determination.

The initial segment of Chapter Seven investigates the land struggles experienced by the Indigenous Emberá Chamí inhabitants of the Emberá Chami unified reservation along the San Juan River within the political backdrop of the emergence of the Colombian nation-state. As the new nation-state centralized and solidified its political position, waves of migrants surged into remote territories to pursue new lands for colonization and capitalist endeavours. This centralization had a profound impact on the Emberá Chamí territories, posing significant challenges to the Indigenous communities living there.

With the creation of the Colombian state's new power structure, fresh narratives surrounding Indigenous peoples emerged, shaping the developing relationship between them and the nation-state. In response, we witness the emergence of a modern Indigenous Emberá Chamí social movement as a tactical response to challenge the Colombian state's oppression, advocate for their inclusion, and assert their rights. The Indigenous Emberá Chamí communities also began to sustain their movement by reclaiming and fortifying their cultural and spiritual values, deeply ingrained in their ethnic identity and purpose within the movement.

The latter part of Chapter Seven zooms in on the impact of Colombia's internal conflict among Colombian governments, leftist guerrillas, and paramilitary groups on the Indigenous populations inhabiting the Emberá Chami unified reservation along the San Juan River. This section reveals the narratives recounting community resistance experiences aimed at combating violence within their territory. The section not only highlights the detrimental effects of violence on the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's cultural and spiritual values but also the community's efforts to counteract this violence. Additionally, the section explores instances of children and youth recruitment by armed groups like leftist guerrillas and the federal army, alongside Emberá Chamí community

tactics to counteract this violent phenomenon. The section culminates with anecdotes detailing the leadership roles assumed by Indigenous women amidst times of violence, highlighting their empowerment within the community. Chapter Seven is based on the data generated from the 18 interviews.

7.2 The struggle for land: Indigenous people from proletarian, minors, and legal persons to collective organization

The first "wave" of the mestizo migrant population to the Emberá Chamí's territory in the modern Colombian state at the end of the ninetieth century and the beginning of the twentieth consisted mainly of poor peasants from the Antioquia and Caldas (paisas) region. These peasants did not possess land in their places of origin and sought to own land in the Chamí region to ensure their subsistence. Some years later, powerful landowners appeared in the Chamí region and began to seize the best lands already cleared and improved by peasants and Indigenous people. The landlord's actions produced a relative scarcity of land and led the mestizos' colonists into competition with Indigenous communities for the remaining land. In this competition for land, Indigenous people were in a disadvantaged position because the authorities supported mestizos' migration to the region (Vasco Uribe, 1975).

The anthropologist Luis Guillermo Vasco Uribe (1975) noticed that Indigenous people became "knock down bush machines" for mestizos' migration and landlords since the migrants from Antioquia appropriated land already worked on by Indigenous people. Miriam, an Emberá Chamí leader, told me the following story that she heard from a friend of hers concerning the history of mestizo migration to the Chamí region:

> MIRIAM: It is the story that I received; she told me. I am of your race. My Mom was white, but my Dad was Indigenous.

> Before he died, my father said that when they arrived at the Indigenous town, the whites arrived and they forcibly threw them out, as they came with weapons, machetes, and they arrived with shotguns, that is why they scared them [...] since they (the Indigenous people) had nothing to face the white people with.
>
> They were expelled from their house. So the Indigenous people carried their baskets, their babies, left home and they located another place to live and then, they (white people) reached that new place and then, they kicked them (Indigenous people) out in a hard way. She told me the story that explain how white people through our race into the corners of this territory.

Miriam's story confirms what scholars have noted about the mestizo migration into the Emberá Chamí territory. It is clear that the mestizo migration brought a dispute over territory between the Indigenous community and the mestizo, and the Indigenous community's reaction included migrating to nearby territories. This was like what occurred during the Spanish conquest. Once the Indigenous community settled in the new territory, the mestizos moved again to expel Indigenous people and take advantage of the land they worked on. Therefore, the mestizos not only appropriated land but also exploited Indigenous labour. It leaves Indigenous communities with no option but to migrate to remote, isolated territories. In this sense, the idea of Indigenous people as "knock down bush machines" involved forcing Indigenous families to relocate to a new place, waiting for them to clear and work the land, and then expelling them from that land.

In the same way, some community members also remember land expropriation methods implemented by mestizos' migrants. These methods also remind us of those used by Spaniards during the conquest period. Here is the story shared by Martha, an Emberá Chamí community member, about how the paisas (people from Antioquia) relocated to her homeland as her grandparents traded away vast tracts of their land for salt, clothes, and shotguns:

> MARTHA: In the past, our grandparents did not know what money is. Therefore, our previous grandparents had this immense land, from Mistrató up and down. They had this land from the Indigenous era […] then they exchanged

> half a square of land for salt, they exchanged for a shotgun, they also exchanged with little clothes like that, they did everything, they negotiated everything […].
>
> Then some of our grandparents traded with *paisas* for squares, they arrived in the territory because land was already improved by the Indigenous. Then, everything belongs to white [people], they located everything up to Puerto Lloro, they located Biduba, they located up to Caimito, very far from seven hours, they had located that entire place.

Martha's story illustrates that the mestizos not only used forced displacement to take over Indigenous land, but they also engaged in unfair trade, employing colonial expropriation methods from the early days of the Spanish conquest. Additionally, Martha's story confirms how mestizos profited from taking land from Indigenous communities in Mistrató.

In part, the land appropriation by paisas colonists and landlords responded to the need for land in 1840 to incorporate the nation-state into a liberal capitalist economy. Ultimately, landlords needed cheap labour to work on the extensively acquired land, turning Indigenous people and peasants into peons or terrajeros. The landlords leased a plot from the appropriated land to Indigenous families and peasants so that they could grow food on it for individual consumption. The rent was not paid with money by the Indigenous people to the landlords but with their free labour on the entire hacienda, leaving families with just a few days to produce food for their members. Luis Guillermo Vasco Uribe (1975) also registered in his 1970 ethnographic study in San Antonio del Chami that almost all the Indigenous people worked on the haciendas in a feudal system. Indigenous families were paid with goods in whole or in kind by the landlords for manual labour in the haciendas. For example, the permanent peons or terrajeros earned 180 pesos per month, of which only 120 or fewer pesos were given to them in money. The rest was "paid with clothes or when they got married" (Vasco Uribe, 1975, p. 32). Workers who only worked for certain days earned 15 pesos per day. They had to bring their food, and if the hacienda manager supplied the lunch, they received only 12

pesos per day. However, the landlords frequently paid the workers with cloth and other goods (Vasco Uribe, 1975, p. 32).

That said, when the Colombian state created a liberal capitalist economy, both liberal and conservative governments administrated Indigenous reservation land as potential areas for exploiting natural resources and minerals and developing an economy grounded in coffee crops. Establishing the new nation-state meant turning away from external to internal colonialism (Luna & Byrne, 2019). Indigenous people were not submissive anymore to external colonialism as their struggle instead turned into a confrontation with the internal colonialism of powerful interest groups within the Colombian state. Indigenous communities entered a power relationship with politicians and landlords determined by a legal and economic structure that subordinated and excluded them from participating in the politics and economics of the country. The uneven context boosted conflict among Indigenous communities, peasants, the government, and landlords (Mora Vera, 2015).

Incorporating a capitalist economy strengthened by the paisas migration and land expropriation transformed the Emberá Chamí's survival system. For example, Vasco Uribe (1973) analyzed the emergence of the Indigenous proletariat from a Marxist perspective, noting that before the paisas colonization, the Embera Chamí communities had a self-sufficient agriculture method grounded in their communal system. However, the cooperative communitarian system disappeared in the wake of the state's internal colonialism to make way for private and individual property and wage labour among Indigenous people. This new subject became the proletariat as Indigenous people weakened their sense of community and hindered their social organization formation in the first part of the twentieth century.

Colombian Law 89, issued in 1890, "established how the savages who are reduced to civilized life should be governed" and considered Indigenous people before national Law to be minors and under the tutelage of religious missions. In addition, Article 37 of Law 89 promoted dissolving reservations within a limit of 50 years. However, this Law also became a legal instrument for Indigenous people since it recognized their existence if they could demonstrate their communal coexistence, and it became a starting point for the formation of a modern Indigenous movement (Yamá Taimal, 2012). For example, Article 7 provided stability to the communal land regime, avoiding sudden liquidations and declaring them unattachable, inalienable, and imprescriptible. The Law also indicated a form of conciliation to resolve conflicts between Indigenous councils, among Indigenous people, and between Indigenous people and merchants that were to be mediated by civil authorities like the town mayor or judicial authorities.

Rappaport (2005) highlights that Law 89 of 1890 assisted in determining who could claim Indigenous identity and defined the Indigenous person as a legal individual. In this sense, Law 89 required that Indigenous authorities provide written reservation information and evidence of their existence to maintain a political and territorially autonomous status. This motivated Indigenous people to consult the past to justify the present. Thus, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Indigenous peoples used Law 89 to claim their rights related to their territories, which led to collective claims against the state, the Catholic Church, and landowners (Yamá Taimal, 2012). The most well-known case was the Indigenous Manuel Quintín Lame, who led a social mobilization movement grounded in Law 89. Quintin Lame, with leaders from diverse Indigenous groups, also struggled to recover territory in the Cauca and Tolima Departments. Therefore, Indigenous communities started to present their demands in the national

debate using the language of Colombian politics and Law (Rappaport, 2005). In 1939, Quintín Lame wrote a book titled The thoughts of the Indian who was educated in the Colombian jungles which, later in 1971, was used by the Indigenous people as an organizational tool that materialized into the creation of the Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC) in 1971.

CRIC has seven objectives: 1) recovering land; 2) expanding the Indigenous reservation; 3) strengthening the community councils; 4) eliminating the terraje mechanism; 5) Indigenous learning about the Law; 6) defending the history, language, and customs of Indigenous communities; and 7) training Indigenous people to educate children according to their own culture (Luna & Byrne, 2019, p. 27). CRIC influenced other Indigenous group organizations like the Jivi Sikuani Indigenous Union in Meta and Vichada (UNUMA) and the Vaupés Regional Indigenous Council (CRIVA) in 1973, as well as the Indigenous Organization of Antioquia (OIA) and the Risaralda Regional Indigenous Council (CRIR) in 1976, and the Embera Waunana Regional Organization (OREWA) and the Tolima Regional Indigenous Council (CRIT) in 1980 and 1981, respectively. Some of these new Indigenous councils brought together Indigenous peoples from joint ethnic families that were relatively dispersed (Borrero, 2003).

Between the 1960s and 1970s, Colombia experienced the emergence of communist guerrillas influenced by the Cuban revolution and who wanted to overthrow the Colombian government in a violent class-based revolution (Luna & Byrne, 2019). In addition, social movements encouraged agricultural reforms that included the creation of INCORA to secure land for Indigenous communities and peasants (Luna & Byrne, 2019). INCORA's duties included buying land from the landlords to offer it to the Indigenous people. In this sense, Martha, an Emberá Chamí leader, describes below

how the community began to recover their territory and strengthen their social organization:

> MARTHA: So when *paisas* arrived like this, then the Indigenous people organized the territory as a reservation and a Cabildo Mayor [Indigenous authorities], then I already remember that from the 1980s and up, they put up an offer to buy that land; so, the INCORA bought everything […]. When INCORA bought [land], then later they already gave it to the Cabildo Mayor with a certificate. So, the Cabildo gave land to those Indigenous people [that] needed [it] the most, so the Indigenous people located on that land.

Martha's account indicates that the Embera Chamí people from Mistrató also utilized Colombian Law, government institutions, and other Indigenous social movement experiences to assert their rights and regain control over their territory after centuries of expropriation. In 1976, because of the actions and advocacy of the Embera Chamí social and political organization, INCORA used Resolution No. 106 to establish an area of approximately 17,700 hectares as a special reserve set aside for the Indigenous Emberá Chamí from Pueblo Rico and Mistrató.

On the other hand, a noticeable figure in this period remains the community's memory of the land recovery and their social organizer, Clemente Nengarabe. Liliana told the following story about how Clemente organized and empowered his people and then passed the leadership onto his son Misael:

> LILIANA: In the past our grandfathers, they did not have sense to organize, they did not think about the organization, what territory is, what is ours and our mother land and how we are going to defend nature, rivers, winds, everything […]. But at this time, firstly to organize [the people] to gain territory, the *compañero* [comrade], Clemente Nengarabe. Clemente was an elder who founded this organization to gain territory.
>
> Clemente helped organize with seven little houses […] in 1970, he organized it and later when the father [Clemente] became older, the father told his son, Misael, he told him that "I am old, so you as a son will support territory defense for you to organize the community." That was what he said. Then, when his father was old, then his son, Misael, started organizing to create a territory.

Liliana's story highlights the emergence of significant leaders from the Emberá Chamí community who recognized the importance of bolstering the Indigenous

movement's focus on land recovery. This movement will serve as the foundation for the Emberá Chamí Indigenous communities to resist modern colonialism and the Colombian conflict.

The Colombian ethnographer Luis Guillermo Vasco Uribe, who interviewed and compiled stories from and about Clemente, points out that Clemente was born in Purembara and for decades was the *Cacique* of the Chamí Indigenous group until the communal organization replaced him with the Cabildo governor. Vasco Uribe (2010) describes Clemente Nengarabe as a *Jaibaná*, a wise and great storyteller. Thus, along with struggling to recover their land, Indigenous communities began to organize themselves to claim their rights and to create a formal organization to negotiate with the state and to address landlord, state, and guerrillas' violence. For example, Eduardo, an educative coordinator on the reservation, recounted the following story related to the transition of reclaiming land to forming a new Indigenous organization as well as the influence of other Indigenous organizational experiences in the Emberá Chamí movement:

> EDUARDO: Whoever arrived took a piece of land. For example, you arrived here, and if there is no one here, then you set the limits (of the land) yourself, the one who arrives first gets the big slice. The same thing happened with "*paisas*" but they were more cunning. They were taking the most fertile lands. So, the Indigenous people were left with more unproductive lands.
>
> In my time, there was no Indigenous organization; each one lived in their place, in their territory. But, more or less around 1976, people began to hear that there was already an organization at the national level, the cradle of the Organization was Cauca and Popayán [CRIC], where you began to hear that we had to organize, that an Indigenous reserve had to be formed.
>
> Today it is called the Emberá Chamí unified reservation, which was, previously, an Indigenous reserve given by the government through an administrative act and after that, they began to study land expansion [...] then they thought about creating a single reservation and they were unified. This is where the word of the Embera Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River comes from.

Eduardo's narrative discusses CRIC's influence over the Emberá Chamí social movement organization. CRIC's influence included learning about state laws that

impact Indigenous territory and survival and acquiring land to expand the reservation. Thus, the territory became the axis for Indigenous communities to defend their culture and identity and establish a dialogue with powerful structures like the Colombian state, the private sector, armed groups, and international organizations.

The Emberá Chamí's social organization in Mistrató was influenced by the national Indigenous movement that emerged in Colombia in the early twentieth century and took shape in the 1970s, as well as the presence of the Mother Laura Sisters in the region. Although Indigenous families initially received the Mother Laura missionaries with suspicion because they did not want their children to attend the missionaries' Catholic schools, some leaders later recalled the boarding schools and the presence of the Laura Sisters as a positive influence on their social organization. Cleotilde, one Indigenous leader, explained how the missionary school influenced her personal development as the Laura Sisters mentored her. She reported on this issue in the following way:

> CLEOTILDE: I was a seven-year-old girl and I wanted to study. But, at that time our grandparents and our parents didn't want one to study [...] they were suspicious that the girl would go to school, that's why my father didn't want me to go to study [...] until the time came, and I was old enough. I was very dynamic and studied with the Laura Sisters. I learned from them. That is why they [community] tell me that I speak more than a bachelor [laughs].

Cleotilde acknowledged that her leadership skills were partly developed through her involvement in the Catholic school. She believes that her ability to communicate ideas clearly was honed during her school experience, which helped her guide the community.

In addition, when Cleotilde was asked about who had advised the community to strengthen the Indigenous organization, she noted that "some lawyers advised us, and the Laura Sisters, who have been here our whole lives, also guided us […] they used to say that we have to prepare for when they leave here; we have to run this boarding

school." Thus, despite family resistance in past generations to the schools, the Mother Laura missionaries positively influenced the memory of some current Indigenous leaders. Some leaders even acknowledge that the missionaries were supporters of their social organization.

In this sense, several factors helped the Emberá Chamí's social organization. Some community members recognize the influence of the Laura Sisters, the leadership of leaders from the community like Clemente Nengarabe, and others acknowledge the impact of the movement led by the CRIC. CRIC positioned the principle of territory as an extension of nature linked to the Indigenous people's identity, history, and culture and unfolded a strategy of land recovery by installing numerous Indigenous families on landowners' farms to prepare CRIC to negotiate the land through INCORA. The Emberá Chamí also used part of this strategy in their struggle with the landlords and the state. For example, Matilde, a current leader in the reservation, describes this process in the following words:

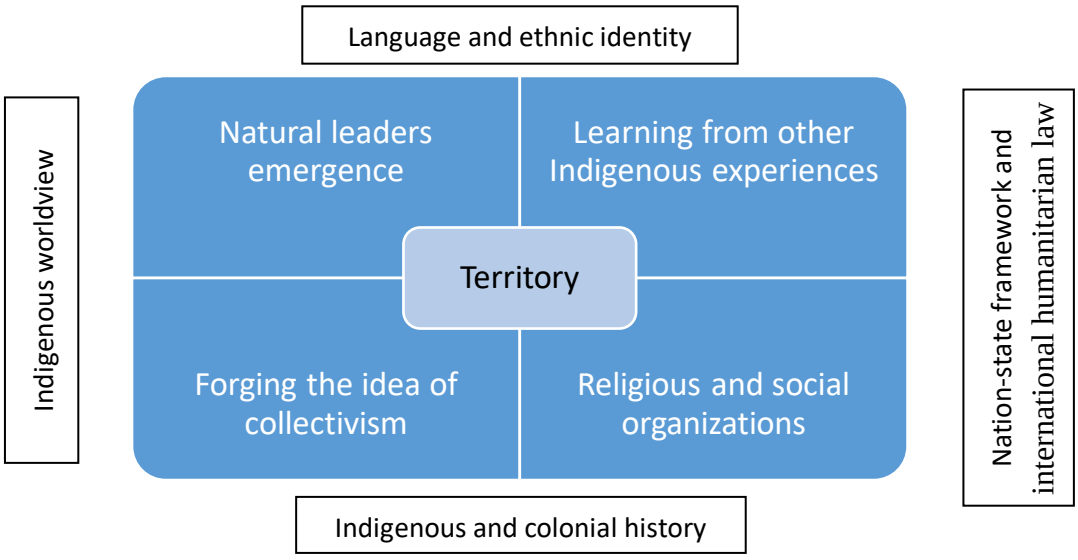
> MATILDE: First of all, it was the Indigenous reservation, and we rescued some elders' wisdom [...] it was like they worked collectively. That time, we did mark very well [the land], we women worked collectively, and several women grazed corn and we live from that to this day.

Matilde articulates that the platform for the Indigenous social organization was to rescue the idea of collectivism despite the implementation of private property and the capitalist system in the first century of the Colombian mainstream. It means that the Emberá Chamí community from Mistrató was consolidating the idea of prioritizing the group over each individual rooted in their Indigenous identity in contrast to the notion of individualism developed within capitalism.

Therefore, Emberá Chamí's modern resistance tactic was underpinned by the idea that territory was important to their identity and well-being and became central to the resistance process. The centrality of territory within the resistance axis was

solidified thanks to the emergence of natural leaders from the community, the influence of religious and social organizations, the learning accrued from other Indigenous social movements' experiences, and the consolidation of the idea of collectivism. All these factors are interconnected to the use of and restoration of language and ethnic identity, the transmission of the history and worldview of the Emberá Chamí, and their learning about the national language and legal framework of the nation-state. Figure 6 below illustrates the relation among modern resistance factors found in the Indigenous Emberá Chamí from Mistrató.

Figure 6. Modern resistance factors



However, the 1980s saw the emergence of the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Colombia (ONIC) as a significant political force. ONIC was established as a political project with the specific aim of defending and safeguarding the special, collective, and cultural rights of Indigenous people. One of ONIC's key objectives was to secure land recovery for Indigenous communities. Through ONIC's political platform, the number of Indigenous reservations increased in the 1980s. Notable among these were the creation of San Lorenzo in the Riosucio town in the

Caldas Department, which was home to Emberá Chamí inhabitants, and the Indigenous reservation of Chamí in the Risaralda Department.

Currently, the Emberá Chamí reservation in Mistrató and Pueblo Rico is called the Emberá Chamí unified reservation on the San Juan River and has 32 settlements. Each settlement has a minor governor, and a council forms the General Assembly, which includes 32 settlement representatives. Around 7,800 Indigenous people are on the reservation, and 500 people are part of the Indigenous Guard. This nonviolent group plays a crucial role in maintaining the community's security, protecting it against violence erupting in the community in its territory. For example, Bernardo is a governor of one of the settlements, and he describes the Indigenous guard in the following manner:

> BERNARDO: The guard, they control settlements where there is theft, where there is gossip, where there is fraud, little problems, personal injuries, all that. When [the] governor is going to have a meeting to solve a problem, he invites the guard. If people [those who has a conflict] did not come to the meeting, the guard goes to bring them. And in the midst of that, [a] sanction is applied. We also have the stocks, which we use to apply a sanction. It can be 24 hours, 36 hours, or 48 hours in the stock, depending on the error that the person committed.

Indigenous guards are third-party intermediaries and facilitators of nonviolent actions and initiatives to protect the community from internal conflicts and armed groups. The Indigenous guard unit is comprised of men, women, boys and girls, and older adults, whose mission is to protect, without the use of weapons, the autonomy of the Indigenous peoples, their territory, culture, authorities, and communities. The guard members receive training related to its mission in human rights, international humanitarian law, and alternative conflict resolution mechanisms. On the other hand, implementing justice in the community depends on the Indigenous Guard, community research, and dialogue. Bernardo describes this process in the following story:

> BERNARDO: Well, the village governor applies [his] authority. Thus, [as] an example, I am a governor. I have to know how I can solve or fix the problems between family members, so they are not going to have serious problems […]. I tell the guard to please bring me so-and-so. Then, all the people come, and we do orientation, and the investigation suddenly begins. What happened? How [did it] happen? Who saw that?
>
> All that and in the middle of that, if it was justified, in the middle of that we apply a sanctions. Let's say, as if it were something minor, 24 hours in the stock. When [it] is has already 24 hours, the guard, the coordinator, and authorities show up before giving him freedom. We give more guidance so that you do not make another mistake later. In other words, if that were the case, we give them guidance and to get out of there they have to pay the guard a fine to get out of the stocks. They have to pay ten thousand pesos for the guard's maintenance.

The Indigenous guard is attached to the justice system. Liliana refers to the justice system on the reservation as transgressors must pay the community back with their time having committed a crime against the community. The justice system refers to repairing the communities located in the reservation with free work. This is what she had to say on the issue:

> LILIANA: That Indigenous justice because if they kill a *compañero* (comrade), innocently, they will [serve a] sentence [of] 15 years now, but that is not to prison. Defeated by the community, no one has to work for free anymore. They (prisoners) are not going to pay what he works. He has to work like this for free, per month, per month, for other communities, he has to go for other communities, even for the 32 governors he has to pay.

The justice vision of Indigenous peoples is linked to their worldviews and relationships in and with the territory. In that sense, it is more characterized by a logic of us and communality (Meza, 2016). In addition, Indigenous justice or *Justicia Propia* is part of the natural law, which is guided by nature's spirits that provide balance and harmony in their community and considers Indigenous people's customs and practices. Natural law proposes axiological values like caring for Mother Earth, living in peace collectively with others, being supportive and respectful, and ensuring that the soil is not removed, explodes, or causes environmental damage. The law also states that people should not steal, tell lies, gossip, or take anyone's life, and men should have only one woman, and

no one should be envious of others. All these values are due to the Indigenous people's compliance with the law of origin (Calderon Castaño, 2018). Consequently, new actors that entered the modern Colombian conflict challenged the Indigenous people's social organization and their attachment to the law of origin. This theme is developed in the following section.

7.3 Colombia's violent conflict's impact on the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River

7.3.1 The cultural and spiritual affectation

The territorial dispute is a central element in the Colombian armed conflict. Legal and illegal armed groups are in Indigenous territories and practice military control. Their presence follows the armed conflict logic grounded in winning strategic regions for confrontation, mobility, and each group's economic activities. The nature of these groups harms communities since they generate violence, create a direct violation of Indigenous people's human rights, and cause deterioration in their ways of life (Osorio Calvo & Satizabal Reyes, 2020).

The 2017 Colombian Commission for the Clarification of the Truth, Coexistence and Non-repetition, which had the mission of revealing the violence and damage caused by the armed conflict to ethnic and Indigenous peoples and their territories, contextualized the presence of armed groups in the Emberá Chamí region as part of the Western Cordillera and Baudó Mountains Corridor. The Corridor has a connection to the Pacific Ocean, as the armed factions turned it into a zone of withdrawal and strategic dispute, constituting itself as an economic enclave for the extraction of gold, platinum,

and wood, as well as for drug trafficking (Comisión para el esclarecimiento de la verdad, la convivencia y la no repetición, 2022).

Between the 1980s and 1990s, the Commission also described that drug trafficking groups like the Medellín Cartel and the Cali Cartel also had a presence in Southern Chocó to control the cocaine traffic in the Norte del Valle, the San Juan River and the Pacific Ocean. Between 1980 and 2000, the presence of the FARC-EP guerilla group was also sporadic as it carried out activities like area recognition and collecting extortion money from the mining enclaves. During the 1990s, the ELN guerilla group ventured into the San Juan River with the Benkos Biohó Front. In 1996, the Peasant Self-Defense Forces of Córdoba and Urabá (ACCU) also arrived at the San Juan and Baudó rivers at the request of the miners, merchants, and transporters to create a paramilitary group. The Pacific Front of the Calima Block also arrived at the region. The presence of these groups in municipalities like Buenaventura, Calima, and El Darién made a hub for drug trafficking activities around the Pacific coast (Comisión para el esclarecimiento de la verdad, la convivencia y la no repetición, 2022).

Stories told by some community members from the Emberá Chamí unified reservation on the San Juan River reflect the violent conflict's impact on the community, including homicides and violence against the Indigenous people's cultural integrity, their authority and territorial autonomy, and the recruitment of children and young people for their armies' units. For example, Pedro is a community member, and he narrated the following story about the presence of illegal armed groups in the Emberá Chamí region and their impact on the cultural integrity and sacred places of the community:

> PEDRO: When the EPL guerrillas entered the territory [it was] complicated. They scared people because you found them armed groups with rifles. You found them in the park, the community was very afraid. Later on, when the

> FARC also arrived, it got even worse. There were fights, bombardments and they damaged many sacred sites in this territory.
>
> This is a sacred territory that we take care of [it], which is the natural resources, the forests. There are sacred sites that have used their powers since ancient times. Suddenly the *Caciques,* the *Jaibanas* or the greatest doctors had their place reserved. They kept their spirits there and no one could touch that. But, when there was combat, bombardment, and bombs exploitation, they had almost blown up that entire sacred site.

Pedro described how the presence of leftist guerrilla groups not only brought fear to the community, but the war between armed groups also destroyed nature, which is essential for the community's spiritual practice. However, Pedro goes beyond describing the material destruction of the Emberá Chamí's sacred sites and territory. He also explains how the sacred sites are related to sickness, displacement, and lack of soil productivity. He continues his story in the following way:

> PEDRO: […] and from that day on, many families ended up with evil spirits. They barely lasted a day or two with spirits and in the middle of that, people were already getting sick.
>
> People saw that this was going to wipe out the whole family, some were also displacing. And also, in the midst of that, the land also was affected.
>
> Just as I told him now, [the] land gave us good food, to plant bananas, it gave us a large bunch of corn, and beans around here; we lost that. Now that is not useful for cultivation, it gives very little.
>
> Now that we have to do here [is] to plant a coffee, we have to use fertilizers that we didn't need before. That was just like that. It costs more now it costs more, it costs more […].

Pedro's story highlights the intricate relationship between the Indigenous Emberá Chamí people and their territory, spirituality, health, justice, and basic human needs. When one aspect of this interconnected system is impacted, it has repercussions for the rest. Even though armed groups may seek to control only the physical territory, their actions have a far-reaching impact on the entire Emberá Chamí community. Alternatively, Bernardo, who is one of the reservation governors, describes how illegal and legal armed groups applied physical assaults and threats. He reported on this issue as follows:

> BERNARDO: Well, from when all the armed groups already entered, until sometimes, the army also kind of beat us and asked us the hard way […]. So if you don't say what they [guerrilla groups] are hiding then you are an infiltrator. Even throwing three charges at one as if he were an infiltrator, knowing that this was not the case.
>
> And the same with the guerrillas. If the armies arrived here, the next day, when they already withdrew, the guerrillas arrived, and they asked as well if the army was here. They said, we feel that you gave them a lot, you collaborated a lot to them; and then, they mistreated you with bad words and even [make] threats [to] you.

Bernardo mentioned that the Emberá Chamí people were caught in the middle of a confrontation between armed groups. These groups were seeking information about Indigenous people, leading to the emergence of Indigenous individuals as potential informants. This situation created a sense of permanent threat and suspicion among the Indigenous people as they were perceived as potential infiltrators of different armed groups. The image of Emberá Chamí as an infiltrator was consolidated by the internal Colombian conflict.

At the same time, however, people also remembered how armed groups undermined their spiritual leaders, the *Jaibanás*. For example, *Jaibanás* are a specialist who controls the spirits and establishes relationships with the various spiritual worlds. A *Jaibaná* can relate to the essentiality of things, making them his allies to heal or attack, and the people consider them to be the "real men" (Vasco Uribe, 1985). The *Jaibanás* are non-hereditary shamans. They learn from experienced teachers about spiritual magic power, from which life, health, and nature are regulated. An essential aspect of the life of the Emberá is their relationship with the "*Jai*" spirits that express themselves through *Jaibanás* that act as conduits for the spirit world. There are three forms of *Jai*, namely *Dojura* (water), *Wandra* (mothers of animals and plants), and *Antumiá* (from the deep jungle). Pedro also refers to the impact of Colombia's armed conflict on the *Jaibanás.* He reflected on the issue in the following story:

> PEDRO: [...] and at that time, many *Jaibanas* also were disappeared, who were the powers that defended our children, who defended our future. Through sudden comments, for example, someone from the community or the armed group tell the group (armed group) here that the *Jaibaná* was a very bad person, people that is doing a lot of damage, and when they said that right there in the afternoon they would disappear, and so, well, many people were already scared.

The Jaibanas' relationship with health, nature, and people balance ensures that they are at the center of any change experienced in community life. In addition, people assert that the Jaibanas could send a good or bad Jai to help or harm people. Therefore, a person can believe that a Jaibaná sent them an evil Jai to hurt them. In this case, that person could go to the illegal armed groups, which were often formed by disaffected community members, to claim revenge as these armed groups in some Indigenous regions implemented "justice" by forcing people to follow their rules. In addition, some militiamen also belonged to the community since armed groups recruited them, and they could use their new armed power to retaliate against any person with whom they had had any conflict. However, we should not consider that the Jaibanás violated by illegal armed groups were done so out of the need to seek revenge. On the contrary, the armed groups' use of violence was also a strategy to undermine theJaibanás leadership in the community.

The community also experienced homicides on their territory. Most of the murder cases were not declared before the national or departmental justice institutions. For example, Jorge, a community member, shared how one of his family members was killed, and the consequences for the family were catastrophic. The continuous threats from the perpetrators not to reveal who committed the murder added to the trauma and fear in the community:

> JORGE: My father-in-law was an elder in the Indigenous guard. He was a guard who controlled and protected the community a lot. And in the year, 2008, we had a great assembly. We were there [as] participants and from that assembly. He was returning home. He ended up walking. They caught him and slit his throat. Along the way, we found the family lying around him. We have not

> declared that, and they [the government] are also waiting to see if suddenly there is an opportunity for the victim's statement. And in those days the whole family came out [as] threatened.
>
> Quite a few men entered the house. They put a rifle on me. So since then we have had many consequences and the family said that [it was] better not [to declare his death], because we were left without a family. And we are thinking of declaring that now the family suffers a lot. The mother-in-law already suffers a lot because you know that husbands are the ones who search for anyone for the family, for food. And when the wife is left alone, she is no longer capable of working the farm. She is no longer capable of trading. And so it continues. So we suffer and it is in every way.

Jorge's narrative depicts the far-reaching impacts of Colombian internal conflict within a family and community following the murder of a family member. The violent and sudden loss of that family member at the hands of an armed group brought about economic hardship, unmet basic human needs, profound sadness, and fear for the family. Many murder cases went unreported due to fears of reprisal from the armed group, leaving the family to grapple with deep grief and a sense of injustice. Unfortunately, the community felt unsupported by the state, as they lacked access to the Colombian justice system to report these crimes. This example illustrates how Indigenous communities faced dual forms of violence – one from illegal armed groups and the other from a political, security, and legal system that failed to safeguard the community and provide them with justice.

Community leaders respond mainly to the armed groups' strategy for controlling the community and their territory. Those leaders who vehemently demanded that the people's rights be protected, and that led to community resistance, became targets of the armed groups. Ultimately, this phenomenon left deep spiritual, social, economic, psychological, and emotional wounds in the Indigenous community.

7.3.2 The struggle for girls and boys: Words, conversation, identity, and rights as weapons

Armed groups recruited Children and young people. This phenomenon remains deep within the community's memory as a harrowing and tragic event. Details about the years when or how many children and youth were recruited are unclear since the participants offered me different information. Nonetheless, Myriam remembers an episode when children were kidnapped from their school by guerrilla groups, and eventually, they escaped and returned to their families with the guerrillas arriving to try to take them back again:

> MYRIAM: Arriving [in the years] 2000 and 2003 our children from education, they [armed groups] forcibly removed them. They said that the young people were theirs, that neither the mother nor the father could not talk about those young people because they [armed groups] were the greatest force. They took about ten children from the Purembara boarding school.
>
> After a year, the children got bored and said no, that it was not easy, that this was not [a] life for them. So [the] children deserted to get out of that life. [The] children asked for collaboration to speak on their behalf. [The] children went to their fathers and thus the guerrillas arrived again and forcefully picked them up and took them away.

Myriam reported how guerrilla groups declared that youth and children were their "ownership." Therefore, the community struggled for their territory, children, and youth. Even though some youth escaped from guerrilla groups, they were once again recruited and taken away from their families and communities to the guerrilla camps.

Cleotilde also refers to the forced recruitment of children and youth from her community. She explains the armed groups' methods to convince children and youth to join their troops. The guerrillas' strategy ranged from offering them a salary to the young people becoming powerful figures dressed in uniforms and having access to arms. Here is her account of the episode in question:

> CLEOTILDE: They conquered girls and boys. They said that it was very good and the boys were delighted with all this.
>
> Because I tell you how you see boys and girls, when you see a person armed, loaded with guns, as well as a jewel, then you fell in love with that.
>
> You lost the lives of your children of the girls. They conquered them by telling them that [it] was very good there, that there is money.

Similarly, Martha recounts how the guerrilla groups recruited children and youth into their units. She outlines the guerrilla strategy of creating the idea that the youth will solve their communities' basic needs, like hunger. She reported on the issue in the following way:

> MARTHA: Lately, they did not respect because girls, boys, and young men were conquered. They said that this weapon is good for you, that in the guerrillas you don't suffer. You eat well. You don't miss resources. We carry money. You don't suffer from hunger, you eat, we eat well. That's what the guerrillas called the boys and, by that time the little boys, they are growing up, [they] got suspicious, which was thanks to our policy.

Cleotilde and Martha's accounts also highlight how guerrilla groups used the expectation of gaining money to recruit youth. This strategy allowed the guerrillas to recruit the youth while disarticulating the sense of collectiveness that the community had built through its territory and ethnic identity.

The community resisted the armed groups by claiming their "words," conversation, identity, and territorial rights. The participants were asked about how they faced homicides, the disappearance of Jaibanás and the forced recruitment of children and youth. For example, Leo revealed how the people tried to follow their young people who were taken up to the mountains by the guerrillas away from their families and communities:

> LEO: After an assembly, people went with all their sticks. They did not have or carry weapons, only a cane and words. Yes, the word was what we called our weapon. They went behind the children and they were not able to get those children out because they directly went very far up the mountain and [we were] not able to locate them. And then, that children, well, they stayed there.

Leo's story underlines the importance of the "word" being considered a "weapon." Words are a peaceful tool used by the Emberá Chamí community to advocate for their rights. When the community faces a coexistence problem, they talk. Listening and talking seem like important nonviolent ways to respect people's lives and existence. Through talking, people acknowledge other people's lives and resolve conflict constructively. Therefore, words are a peace tool deeply rooted within Emberá Chamí culture.

However, nonviolent resistance strategies based on dialogue and political organization of grassroots communities are not unique to Indigenous communities in Colombia. There are several experiences in Colombia and other countries where the logic of violence has been broken by the initiative of the communities (Valenzuela, 2008). For example, rural communities have developed practical and survival initiatives in the face of violent conflicts (Valenzuela, 2008). Communities organize to survive armed violence, rebuild the social fabric affected by war, establish dialogue and communication bases with different armed actors, and use non-confrontational strategies with aggressors, among others. These experiences have consolidated democratic processes at the local level, as has also happened in some Indigenous communities (Valenzuela, 2008).

The following story, told by another community member, Francesca, confirms how the Emberá Charmi people put together the resistance strategy. They went to the guerrillas as mothers to negotiate the release of their children and young people. Many of the youth wanted to leave the guerrilla camp and return with their mothers to their homes:

> FRANCESCA: We, women were not very prepared, some *compañero* [comrade], did not understand. But we prepare ourselves. We are leaders that we have to speak here strongly as children, old women and old men. We went with

> sticks, and we painted our bodies and we went to rescue children there [...] we were 30, 50 women and girls and women and men that went there.
>
> They [the armed people] came out and we talked. That here women [know] our rights that "we are demanding our children be returned to us because you are taking their lives. You must respect our territory."
>
> We spoke everything and so lately them too. They said to [the] children, "well guys, you are going to be with us?" And some cheeky boys said, "you are not my mother, you are not my father, you are not my brother." But, others wanted to go back with the leaders, because "I'm not going to be here losing my life," they said.

Francesca discusses the remarkable courage and determination of the Emberá Charmi, who utilized various cultural identity symbols as nonviolent resistance. When she talks about the community painting their bodies and faces, she means they were asserting their ethnic identity. To face armed groups' youth recruitment, the community affirmed their claim to the young people based on their shared identity. This was their way of telling the armed groups that the children and youth belonged to the community and that by taking them, the armed groups were not just taking individuals. However, they were also destroying a part of the community itself. Their assertion of their ethnic identity also differentiated them from the armed group, signifying that they were not the enemy.

Another central component of the resistance was the pivotal leadership role of women in the community. While women had not been involved in decision-making, they now took on community leadership roles to rescue their children. This cultural change led to the emergence of new leaders within the community. Additionally, the community continued to use their words to confront violence and conflict.

Eduardo also recognizes how the Indigenous community's political organization and conversation strategy was fundamental in their resistance during the cycle of contemporary violence. The Indigenous people negotiated with the guerrillas about the release of their children and the removal of the violent group from their territory:

> EDUARDO: Well, since there is a political organization of Indigenous peoples and there are special powers, they had to sit down and talk. "Sir, come here, you are taking the Indigenous youth, let's talk, what are we going to do?" We cannot allow that, because they wanted to seize the entire territory. If the Indigenous organization didn't get their act together, I think it would have happened like it did in the colonial era, the conquest, we don't know where they had thrown us. But there the Indigenous resisted, resisted.
>
> Through his politics, through his special rules. So they said, "okay, so we're going to respect you, you have your organization, but you also have to respect us." But we said, "we respect, but you cannot be here in the territory. Because you are hurting us, you attack us. The army attacks us because we are infiltrators that because we help, then the other kills and then you kill us."

That said, ONIC went to the international level to expose the challenges facing Colombia's Indigenous people due to the armed conflict, the guerrilla's usurpation of their land, and the acculturation process carried out via the nation-state. As a result of ONIC's advocacy at the international level, many international discourses, particularly on human rights, were adapted to Colombia's Indigenous people's political, social and cultural practices (Acosta García, 2012, p. 76). In this sense, the human rights discourse and their philosophy of good living have been intertwined and have become a social and political tool of Indigenous people's resistance in Colombia.

In contrast, Liliana describes how a women-led community group attempted to rescue their children and youth from armed groups. However, the story indicates that only a few forced-recruited children survived the battles. The women unsuccessfully advocated for their children and left the meeting empty handed:

> LILANA: They [the armed groups] came to the community once again, they held a meeting. We said that these children belong to the community. Children were minors, and they had no right to violate these children's rights [...] they said "no, because they went to the guerrillas, and they already belonged to them, and they could not desert." That day almost the majority were women, but we had not [a] great force.
>
> Only I was speaking in favor of the community facing [the] guerrillas to defend those young people. Other women were scared [...] they could not be released. Unfortunately, some were already killed, some disappeared and some children who had deserted and left this reservation went to the municipality, believing in the trail, hiding in the mountains, and thus reaching the town. Those children so far there will barely be three or four children alive.

However, the women organized and attempted to rescue their children for the community and the Jaibanás. The respondents' stories highlight women's resilience and leadership skills in resisting violence. The women's confrontation with the guerrillas was a turning point in the development of women's organizations and their crucial leadership role in the community. Most of their story's reference that these women were not strengthened overall, yet they received the strength to face the armed groups, defend their rights, and protect the community. Their actions are an excellent example of their resilience and resistance tactics. For example, Elizabeth refers to the women's role in rescuing their traditional doctors, the Jaibanás. They went to the guerrilla's camp and nonviolently negotiated their release. This is what Elizabeth had to say on the issue:

> ELIZABETH: In 2006, the guerrillas took *Jaibanás*. So, women in an assembly made decisions, we said that women today have to go to collect that member of the community because they are traditional doctors who favors our territory.
>
> The women in one night, made a decision at 5:00 in the morning. We walked on foot, reaching the guerrilla camp with sticks facing the guerrillas and thus the women faced [the] guerrillas, so, voice to voice, they respected us and we, women rescued them.

The women became aware of their new role in the context of the violence threatening their community, and from that point onward, they began to guide local community resistance. For example, Claudia makes it known that the women had no choice but to become leaders of the resistance movement, or their local traditional leadership roles would be taken away from them:

> CLAUDIA: Well, in a dialogue with the guerrillas, well, in 1995, women still had no knowledge. Women had no strength. We barely spoke Spanish. So, when we started from 1995 to 2006, we women said "no, we have to confront them and if we women do not confront them, they are taking away our leading role and we women have to lead." And so many, many people came through the women. I was leading it. I was leading a lot with them, with the community.

In this sense, resilience and nonviolent resistance interconnect as a process (Sou, 2021; Bourbeau & Ryan, 2018). The women demonstrated resilience characteristics when they faced sudden tragic events and experiences due to the violent conflict among

armed groups in their territory, demonstrating their coping and adaptation skills. Simultaneously, while women adapted to their new reality, they became aware of their choices and acted as leaders to transform that violent reality. Their behaviour exemplifies what some scholars call "resilient resistance" (Bourbeau & Ryan, 2018, p. 231). In this case, women took up traditional men's roles as community leaders. As a result, women bear increased responsibility for bringing the community together, saving spiritual lives, and defending their territory.

This change in women's roles represents an adaptation of gender roles to keep up with community life as part of women's/community resilience. The women not only adapted to the new socially violent context, but they also moved women's leadership roles in the community forward since they assumed the role of social and political leadership and kept communal networks in place at a particular moment when the community needed them the most. "Resilient resistance entails an effort to adapt, make do, get on, or work with what is at hand" (Sou, 2021, p. 16).

However, taking on this new leadership resulted in the guerilla members intimidating the women leaders. For example, Miriam is an Emberá Chamí leader who faced armed groups and struggled for community and territorial autonomy. She narrates how she underwent her nonviolent struggles against armed groups and how these confrontations resulted in threats and guerrilla pressure:

> MIRIAM: That year was very hard because the guerrillas came to run over the community very hard. They came making decisions. And when they began to speak about their mandate, they already owned the reservation, they made a statute, which is like a mandate.
>
> To lead and confront the guerrillas, I met with [local] governors and we, women said "no, that autonomy is us as Indigenous owners of the territory because we take care of our mother earth defending our memory, defending our language" and then, they scolded me.
>
> I did not know what plan they were making. Once, all the guerrillas with 400 militiamen went up this road to the mountains to meet there. So at this time they ran down and I was in the house, sitting and watching. Then they would look at me and run.

> I thought, why they look at me so much? And then the next day, a lady arrived. She came to talk, she said, "I came for you. They say that yesterday they held a meeting, the FARC guerrillas in the mountains, who made a plan for you. [They] gave you three days to shoot you."
>
> And she told me, "look what you are going to do with this word." My husband told me that we have to retire because they gave you three days. To me and [the] other three leaders. I told them "no, that they have to come kill me at my house, that they would destroy me with my family."

Miriam also narrates how she and other leaders gathered and went to meet the guerrilla group. In that meeting, she expressed that even though she was terrified, she got the strength to defend herself using an autonomy and rights discourse and how, in the end, the armed group left her alive because of her courage and strength. The stories mentioned above are stories of resilience, resistance, community strength and courage, and having a solid organization and women leaders that intertwine with Indigenous people's identity, culture, political recognition, and territorial attachment so Indigenous communities could face the guerrilla's violence.

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7.3.3 Contemporary violence and conflicts

Presently, the notable change observed on the reservation concerning the armed conflict is evident in the fact that the continuous presence of armed groups has diminished there, and the Indigenous community's social organization to resist the violence has strengthened. For example, Pedro is a local community leader who notes that there is currently no violent political conflict involving guerrillas or paramilitary groups. He

asserts that the community is organized and has progressed in controlling the situation. Pedro also emphasizes that people do not leave the community today because of guerrilla violence. They only leave due to other issues:

> PEDRO: Well at this moment, we as a community are very organized, when there is no conflict here there is some strength, [and] there is progress in our community. Each community has its controls, it has its coordination and that is how we work.
>
> Of course there are problems in the community, but it is because suddenly there are people who do not work the farm and are thinking only of the government.
>
> They think like that. Some leave, of course, but a problem like before that happened with the conflict, now that doesn't exist. People don't leave because of the conflict, but [they leave] like [if there is] any other problem with the community and because they don't want to pay a fine or punishment.

However, despite the Indigenous people's use of their resistance processes, the 2016 peace agreements between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrillas and the strengthening of their social organization, the Unified Chamí Indigenous reservation on the San Juan River faces several different conflicts. These include internal political tensions between Indigenous leaders, threats to social leaders, and the implementation of projects that affect natural resources and the territory.

In the past decade, internal tensions within the leadership of the Indigenous social organization on the reservation have resulted in a "division" among those leaders regarding the management of resources allocated to the reservation. The protracted conflict necessitated intervention from institutions like the Ombudsman's Office of the Department of Risaralda (Marín Echeverry, 2020). For example, Leopoldo is a local social leader. He notes that the allocation of resources provided by the state causes corruption and may be a part of the state's strategy to create conflict among Indigenous leaders so that the state can control them:

> LEOPOLDO: The problems of the Indigenous organization are personal interests. There are many personal interests and mostly for money. What the state did was cause harm since it gave the resources to a group of people. They say they send an amount of money and then you will see how they spend it. But

> then, the one who is the authority in the reservation always wants to monopolize everything and does not address our problems.
>
> Then some begin to say that they are not giving it to us, they are not subsidizing housing, etc. So rather we are going to form an independent group, we are also going to organize another different authority. Then that forms a conflict, a social problem internally and politically it forms a problem for the organization.

Leopoldo's narrative indicates that the state, in a certain way, has undermined the social and political organization of the Indigenous people to the extent that it has not generated adequate mechanisms to avoid conflict over economic resources. However, the community is aware of these tensions and seeks ways to resolve them with inclusive participation mechanisms. Internal conflicts can become scenarios for weakening or strengthening the organization. For example, Luz is a community leader. He avows that these conflicts will always exist, and the community must come together to resolve them:

> LUZ: We cannot say that the government is going to end conflict, [and] we are going to seek peace. But I believe that there will never be peace, because conflict always exists in the community.... They are going to hold a large assembly in this month of December where we will [be able] to debate this problem, [of] what is happening in the organization.

Luz's point of conflict view somehow denotes a positive aspect of conflict since she acknowledges the idea that conflict is something natural and permanent in a group of people. Therefore, the community holds tightly to its social organization to resolve tensions and conflicts and preserve harmony and coexistence. In this sense, conflict can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the community's social organization.

Another challenge impacting the community is the threats directed at its social leaders. These threats are documented by the organization's media outlets and are reported to the ONIC. The community has observed individuals from outside the community inquiring about its leaders. Moreover, there have been incidents of theft perpetrated by outsiders, which the community perceives to be both personal and

organizational threats. Tragically, the continuous murder of community leaders has been reported to the federal justice department like the 2008 killing of Hugo González Bernaza, with no perpetrators ever brought to justice to date (ONIC, 2018).

Finally, conflicts over potential infrastructure projects have also sparked tensions between Indigenous communities and national and departmental government bodies. The Indigenous social organizations have raised concerns about proposals to widen roads traversing the reservation, manage water resources for mining purposes, and build hydroelectric plants, amongst other endeavours (ONIC, 2018). Typically, the community advocates for community consultations to be conducted before government-led projects are initiated. They also seek community involvement in expanding the reservation and executing educational and healthcare initiatives while ensuring the preservation of Indigenous cultural and spiritual values.

7.4 Key findings

Chapter Seven highlighted the evolution of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí community's socio-political landscape amidst the transition from external colonialism under the Spanish Empire to internal colonialism facilitated by the Colombian Republic. With establishing a novel power framework within the Colombian state, renewed discourses regarding Indigenous communities started to surface, molding the incipient dynamic between these communities and the nation-state. Consequently, a contemporary Indigenous Emberá Chamí social movement arose, strategically mobilized to contest the Colombian state's oppressive actions, promote integration, and assert their entitlements. Further, the Indigenous Emberá Chamí populations embarked on sustaining their movement by appropriating cultural and spiritual tenets and human

rights discourses, thereby bolstering their ethnic identity and significance within the mobilization.

The narratives encompassed herein delineate a trajectory marked by struggles for land, identity preservation, resilience, and resistance against forces of assimilation and violence. The elucidated narratives detailed community efforts to resist and confront violence within their territory. In particular, the respondents emphasized the adverse impacts of violence on the cultural and spiritual heritage of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí people. They also reported on incidents involving the recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups like leftist guerrillas while also examining the strategies employed by the Emberá Chamí community to mitigate this violent phenomenon.

The chapter examines Indigenous responses to colonization and subsequent state-sponsored initiatives by examining the multifaceted dynamics shaping the Emberá Chamí's social movements and their enduring quest for autonomy and cultural preservation. Eight key findings emerged inductively from the 18 social leaders' interviews.

First, the consolidation of the Colombian Republic ushered in a new paradigm shift for the Emberá Chamí people as they transitioned from confronting external colonialism under the Spanish Empire to facing internal colonialism orchestrated by the Colombian state. This shift was spurred by waves of migration from the Antioquia and Caldas Departments, driven by capitalist economic imperatives to appropriate productive land within the Emberá people's territories. Internal migration caused a shortage of available land, which led to competition between mestizo colonists and Indigenous communities over land ownership. Unfortunately, Indigenous people were at

a disadvantage in this competition because government authorities supported mestizo migration to the region.

According to some of the participants' stories, during the time of paisa migration to the land of the Emberá Chamí, the Indigenous people were violently and deceitfully expelled from their territory. For example, Indigenous people were forced to exchange their land for salt and shotguns because they did not value money. These methodologies evoke parallels to those employed by the Spaniards during the conquest and colonial era. As a result, the Indigenous people had to settle in peripheral areas and start "clearing" new territories to establish themselves and maintain their way of life.

Second, the ensuing land usurpation by outsiders relegated the Indigenous people and the peasants to the status of labourers, perpetuating an instrumentalized stereotypical image of Indigenous individuals as mere "knock-down bush machines." One of the reasons the paisas migrated to the Emberá Chamí's territory was because the Indigenous people had already improved and worked on their territories. Hence, the migrants only had to arrive and start agriculture and livestock processes by forcing out the Emberá Chamí and taking over the already available land.

Moreover, the paisa settlers used the knowledge of the Indigenous people regarding their territory to take over their land. Whenever the Indigenous people moved to new areas and cleared the land to settle there, the paisa migration followed to appropriate more land. Consequently, the Emberá Chamí people underwent a transformation in their image from being seen as "knock-down bush machines" to becoming labourers and terrajeros. The idea of terrajeros extended to other Indigenous groups in Colombia as well. After the paisa migration established a new economic order in the Emberá Chamí region, the Emberá Chamí began working as labourers and terrajero son the farms of the new landowners. This negative portrayal reflects the

recalibration of colonial enterprises within the context of internal colonization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Third, the Indigenous peoples responded to land usurpation and colonial incursions. The Indigenous communities, including the Emberá Chamí, strategically deployed a legal discourse against the state and engaged with Colombian politicians to assert their rights and reclaim their ancestral lands. In this sense, Law 89, issued in 1890, played an important role. Although Law 89 reduced Indigenous people to the status of minors and savages and promoted the dissolution of Indigenous reservations, it also provided Indigenous communities with the possibility of maintaining their territories if they demonstrated communal coexistence and maintained their cultural identity. From this legal framework emerged Indigenous leaders like Manuel Quintín Lame, who later inspired the creation of the Indigenous social movement within the Indigenous Nasa community (CRIC).

Drawing inspiration from the organizational framework of the Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC), Indigenous leaders like Clemente Nengarabe also emerged as stalwarts in the fight for land restitution and the revitalization of the Emberá Chamí's socio-cultural and political institutions.

When the Indigenous Emberá Chamí communities reclaimed portions of their stolen land through legal avenues and formal governmental channels like INCORA, they pivoted towards creating a collective Indigenous political organization. Central to this endeavour was the formal recognition of their reservations, like the unified Chamí Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River, to assert control over their land and safeguard their subsistence, culture, and spiritual values. The influence of external Indigenous social movements, government institutions like INCORA, and essential role

models like the Laura Mother Sisters further buoyed this struggle to recognize and preserve their Indigenous identity.

Fourth, the Emberá Chamí Indigenous social movement was consolidated as the official representative to advocate for the rights of the people. It was underpinned by a return to ancestral cultural practices, collective labour, and agricultural traditions, which fortified their identity amidst external pressures. In this sense, "cultural identity and attachment strategies foster the natural resiliencies within the Indigenous people" (Cormier, 2020, p. 353). Additionally, establishing the Indigenous guard as mediators in intra-community conflicts exemplified a nonviolent method for community protection, marking a departure from the Indigenous community's use of violent tactics during the conquest and colonization period to use nonviolent practices in the modern era exclusively.

Training in human rights, international humanitarian laws, and conflict resolution methods is central to strengthening the Indigenous Guard social movement. In this way, Colombian Indigenous communities, including the Emberá Chamí, navigate different spheres that provide them with resistance tools. For example, the people's return to Emberá Chamí culture, memory and identity and the appropriation of the philosophy of buen vivir is articulated with the regulations issued by the government to face any conflicts that arise in the community. At the same time, they also use discourses of human rights and international laws as central elements in their struggles with the state.

Fifth, the Indigenous social movement includes the strengthening of their justice system. The Indigenous justice paradigm embodies a logic centred on collective identity and communal living. Indigenous justice, or Justicia Propia, is rooted in natural law guided by nature's spirits, fostering equilibrium and harmony within their communities

while respecting Indigenous customs and traditions. Natural law advocates for Indigenous people's core values like earth stewardship, peaceful coexistence with others, solidarity and respect, and preserving the land from exploitation or environmental harm. These values stem from Indigenous adherence to the principles of original law. An example of the Emberá Chamí justice system is that the offenders must pay the affected community back with free work while the elders' words guide them.

Sixth, between 1980 and 2000, the Emberá Chamí territory was used as a corridor for armed illegal actors that connected the country to the Pacific Ocean. The Emberá Chamí region was a zone of withdrawal and conducive to creating an economic enclave for armed actors to extract gold, platinum, and wood, as well as for drug trafficking. Both illegal and legal activities also inflicted severe damage to sacred sites and natural resources, disrupting communal harmony and endangering cultural and spiritual practices.

Despite the resilience of the Indigenous social movement, the Emberá Chamí community faced existential threats during periods of armed conflict. In this scenario emerged a new Indigenous image as "infiltrators" amidst the turmoil, underscoring the gravity of external threats to the Emberá Chamí's cultural integrity and community cohesion. For example, participants' stories relate to how sacred sites were bombed or destroyed by combatants and how essential figures needed for the establishment of harmony in the territory, like the Jaibanas, were threatened and murdered by armed groups.

Seventh, Indigenous children and youth became targets for recruitment by armed groups, posing a formidable challenge to community stability. The community particularly remembers the kidnapping of children by armed groups at the Puermbará

boarding school in the early 2000s. This incident remains in community memory as one of the most tragic events in the community's history.

However, armed groups not only use force to recruit children into their organizations, but they also persuade them to join by offering them money, food and social power over other people.

Nevertheless, the community's resilient resistance, rooted in their cultural identity and territorial rights, served as a counterstrategy against the armed group's recruitment efforts. Legal and institutional instruments acquired through the Indigenous social movement also bolstered their resistance against armed groups, providing a framework for asserting their rights amidst a campaign of violence and marginalization.

In addition, the participants report that the use of words or conversations, the call to community assemblies as well as the collective search for people kidnapped by armed groups were the nonviolent tools they used to confront the violence to which they were subjected.

Eighth, the emergence of the Indigenous Embera Chamí women as key leaders within the community's social fabric was instrumental in transforming many conflicts. Their roles, previously underreported and underestimated, evolved in response to the exigencies of armed conflict, with their resilient resistance and maternal characters driving them to the forefront of efforts to combat violence and protect their communities. This paradigm shift in gender dynamics underscores the evolving nature of Indigenous leadership and resilient resistance amidst adversity within the unified Chamí Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River.

Women could assume the discourse of autonomy, human rights, and buen vivir as resilient resistance and leadership mechanisms. The women's stories narrate their fears when facing armed groups, but at the same time, they highlight the strength that

emerges from the impulse to rescue their children and to protect their territory that is embedded within their stories of weaknesses, strengths, resistance, and struggles.

The word is a potent tool in the Indigenous world and emerges from these stories of resistance as a nonviolent mechanism women use to contest powerful actors. Through the word, one corrects, one is guided, and one is taught. The word fosters community living and enables justice and reconciliation to take place. When the women recounted their nonviolent strategies for confronting armed violence, they pointed out their usage of words to negotiate with the armed groups. Elizabeth and Miriam's stories exemplify how, through dialogue, they earned respect from armed groups and even managed to rescue some of their children from them.

The use of words or dialogue is essential in the Indigenous worldview and practices. That is why decisions about the community are made in large assemblies, where the community can express its ideas always within the context of identity and the protection of the territory and peoples' rights as well as the Buen vivir.

7.5 Conclusion

The consolidation of the Colombian Republic involved several structural transformations, including the implementation of a capitalist economic system, the creation of Colombian citizenship, and internal migration, among others. This historical context intertwined with the socio-political trajectory of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí community, covering the transition from external colonialism under the Spanish Empire to internal colonialism facilitated by the Colombian Republic. The narratives explored in Chapter Seven illuminate a journey fraught with struggles over land, identity preservation, and resistance against assimilation and violence, shedding light on the

multifaceted dynamics shaping Emberá Chamí social movements and their enduring pursuit of autonomy and cultural preservation.

Moreover, migration and Colombia's capitalist necessities resulted in the relegation of the Indigenous Emberá Chamí to the status of labourers, perpetuating an instrumentalized image that underscored the recalibration of colonial enterprises during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Later, inspired by the organizational framework of the Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC), the Emberá Chamí communities deployed a series of legal discourses to assert their rights and reclaim their ancestral lands amidst land usurpation and colonial incursions by external forces. The Emberá Chamí's Indigenous social movement, rooted in return to ancestral cultural practices and collective labour, served to fortify their identity amidst external pressures.

Despite the resilience demonstrated by the Indigenous social movement, the Emberá Chamí community also faced existential threats during periods of armed conflict, leading to severe damage to their sacred sites and natural resources. In this context, a new Indigenous image emerged as the people were framed by the state and armed groups as "infiltrators," which implied that several new challenges underscored the gravity of external threats to their cultural integrity and community cohesion.

One relevant point to mention here is the Indigenous Emberá Chamí's struggle to protect their children and youth. The struggle was initially evident with the incursion of religious communities into the Emberá Chamí's territory using socialization control instruments like schools. Since the first part of the twentieth century, Indigenous families resisted that their children had to attend Catholic schools run by religious people since they did not see any benefit for the community. In contrast, they viewed the colonial schools as agents of acculturation.

In the second part of the twentieth century, armed actors also began to recruit young people to expand their military power, which led to a nonviolent reaction from the community to rescue the young people using nonviolent means. Subsequently, the struggle to look after their children and young people changed their focus. It means that Emberá Chamí families were no longer struggling with Catholic schools regarding their children's socialization as they now had a new actor to contend with, namely, Colombia's armed groups.

Finally, the emergence of Indigenous Emberá Chamí women as key leaders within the community's social fabric underscores the evolving nature of Indigenous leadership and resilience amidst adversity. Women's leadership roles were previously ignored, yet they have evolved in response to the proliferation of armed conflict, positioning themselves at the very forefront of women's efforts to combat violence and protect their communities.

In essence, the findings presented in Chapter Seven illuminate the intricate interplay between historical forces, cultural resilience, and contemporary challenges faced by the Emberá Chamí community. They provide valuable insights into their enduring quest for autonomy and cultural preservation within the unified Chamí Indigenous reservation of the San Juan River.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

Chapter eight encapsulates the profound significance of the key findings that emerged organically from the research. It not only delves into the study's limitations but also paves the way for future research. The three preceding qualitative chapters unveiled the significant themes and sub-themes, enriched by the diverse perspectives of Spanish conquerors and colonizers, specialized scholars focusing on the Emberá Chamí, and the poignant stories of Emberá Chamí participants. These narratives shed light on the state's strategy of dominance and the resistance tactics employed during four distinct historical periods, including the Spaniards' conquest and colonization, the birth of the Colombian Republic, and the modern Colombian conflict.

The main objective of this study was to identify the specific cultural, social, and political elements that characterized the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people and their ancestor's resistance. These elements include their language, traditional practices, social structures, and their unique worldview. In this sense, this thesis, compiled from a plurality of voices and stories, helps us to understand the processes of Spanish and settler colonization and domination in the past and present, as well as the violent and nonviolent actions and practices used by excluded and repressed Indigenous communities to ensure their survival in very adverse contexts.

Therefore, the research findings are not just a contribution to the PACS literature, but a potential catalyst for transformation. By analyzing conflicts from a decolonial, critical, and emancipatory perspective, and incorporating elements from Southern theories, the local turn, Indigenous theories, and theories of resistance, this research has

the power to reshape our understanding of conflict. The findings underscore the agency of Indigenous people in their conflict contexts, the imperative to understand their characteristics from their history of struggle, and the necessity of including their culture, wisdom, justice system, and worldviews in their stories.

The conclusions chapter is a culmination of the overall key findings, summarizing the fundamental outcomes from the participants' stories and document analysis. It also serves as a call to action, outlining future research prospects and inviting the academic community to contribute to the ongoing exploration of these crucial topics.

8.2 Overall key findings

De Certeau (1996) noted that strategy is the "calculation of relations of forces that becomes possible from the moment in which a subject of will and power is susceptible to isolating himself from an environment" (p. xlix). In other words, this strategy notion refers to a power structure, which is a place that reasserts itself as a distinctive rational place that encompasses political, economic, scientific, and cultural dimensions. From this sense of rationality, the power structure develops its relational system of forces and tries to impose its determinations on the external, with otherness.

Consequently, a keyword in this research is otherness, a materialization of the power structure's rationality. It is possible to access the notion of the other through the images reflected in people's narratives and stories. In this sense, the images found of the Embera Chamí Indigenous people and their ancestors are part of the colonial power structure's strategy of domination during different historical periods. Over five centuries, the stories surrounding the Embera Chamí have varied. The negative images and stereotypes about this Indigenous group, as well as the conquistador's and settler's practices to "civilize" them, have changed since the time of the well-known debate

between the Dominican priest Fr. Bartolomé de las Casa and the priest Fr. Juan Ginés de Sepulveda who argued about the human or savage condition of the Indigenous people in America in the sixteenth century.

The construction of the Other arose from social representations that emerged from within a specific context. This is why each image of the Emberá Chamí has its historical contextual analysis. It is what De Certeau (1996) called a rational place that isolates the power and the colonial structure from a particular environment. In other words, the images of the Other are intertwined with history and context. The images of the Other change in substance and form, and those changes are directly related to the ideologies prevailing in different eras in the Emberá Chamí's territory. The Other, in this case, the Emberá Chamí and their ancestors, is perceived as distinct and having either a positive or negative evaluation depending on who is observing them (Barabas, 2000). The observers in this study are the colonial power and the Colombian nation-state.

This study does not claim that its findings are an exhaustive history of the Emberá Chamí Indigenous groups. The findings arise from a composition of colonial strategies, the Emberá Chamí, and their ancestors' resistance tactics found in the historical and scholarly documents and emerging from the 18 participants' stories. Narratives and stories are complex and varied. While other scholarly analyses touch on Emberá Chamí resistance, they focus on different topics rather than making it the center of their research. This thesis aims to address this gap by providing a detailed analysis of Emberá Chamí's resistance utilizing information from scholarly documents and interviews with community members. Extra information also emerged from historical records not found in other scholars' analyses of the Embera Chamí. On the other hand, the research participants have in common their experiences, knowledge, and wisdom as members of the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River that has been affected by

the Colombian armed conflict. This context also influenced their choice of resistance methods.

Therefore, the thesis reflects on the Emberá Chamí's complex history of resistance, changes, and fluctuations. The research also focuses on the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River and the Emberá Chamí ancestors because it represents a territory that Emberá Chamí groups have navigated long before the Spaniard's arrival. Thus, the key findings are organized into three groups. The first group relates to the emerging images that were part of imperialism, colonialism, and a nation-state strategy to administer and control the Indigenous Emberá. A second group focuses on the Indigenous Emberá Chamí and their ancestors' resistance tactics during the same eras. A third finding group summarizes the Emberá Chamí women's agency during nonviolent confrontations with FARC guerrillas as they decided to take on a direct and dangerous leadership role during an adverse conflict.

8.2.1 The Emberá Chami people: From barbarians to infiltrators

The creation of towns and villas characterized the first part of the Spanish conquest to organize the colonial enterprise and homogenize and dominate the Indigenous population. The homogenization strategy implied converting Indigenous groups to Christianity and being ruled by the Spanish administration. However, this strategy faced resistance from Indigenous groups. For example, the Emberá Chamí's ancestors defended their territory, confronting the Spanish advance with war. When the war stratagems did not work, they fled, sometimes using methods like what we today call "guerrilla warfare." The Emberá Chamí also created alliances with other Indigenous groups and the Spaniards, and they often betrayed those alliances. These methods were also used by other Indigenous groups located in the region (diverse groups considered

under the ethnonym Karib), who were bellicose people who resisted Spanish territorial appropriation.

The ideological context of the Spanish conquest was characterized by the debate concerning the legal status of the Indigenous population, which was attached to the discussion of Spanish legal rights to control the newly conquered territories. In practice, the conquerers depicted by encomenderos, merchants, and people who sought glory, adventure, power and wealth framed the Indigenous people as bellicose and barbaric people to be controlled and that justified the settlers' use of war against them. The "barbarian" status of the Indigenous people was consolidated when the term "Chocó" was used to refer to the Emberá Chamí's ancestors as savages, terrorists, and cruel people.

However, the barbarian image was used not only to justify war against the Emberá Chamí's Indigenous ancestors but also to justify the need for creating new settlements to receive the Spanish Crown's privileges and move forward with the conquest campaign to reach the mining territories to provide much-needed gold for the Spanish empire. Thus, the "barbarian" image framing of the Emberá Chamí by the conquistadores was instrumental in the conqueror's efforts to achieve their goals. The "barbarian" represented the opposite of the "civilized" Spanish Catholics who lived in the developing towns and villages in America. The reproduction of the barbarian image placed the conquerors in a position of superiority and hegemony over the Emberá Chamí.

The "barbarian" image brought by the Spaniards to America included a series of negative racist stereotypes about Indigenous peoples. The stereotyping was connected to the conquistador's contempt for what they perceived as inferior Indigenous people that they saw as sub-human or non-human. The ideological construction of the barbarian as

a pagan whose soul was damned and, therefore, semi-human was accompanied by the prejudice of "inferior nature" and "subordination to the superior race" derived from the Aristotelian theory of human inequality (Barabas, 2000).

Later, in the transition from the conquest period to the colonial system, the Spaniard's strategy was characterized by a more "peaceful indoctrination" of the Indigenous people to impose spiritual, moral, and ethical domination to domesticate and enslave them. The strategy of creating towns and villages in the Tatamá and Chocó regions was maintained and expanded, yet their role changed to emphasize their use for an intensive acculturation process. The new territorial conception of domination comes from the idea of a "religious community," and Dominicans supported this ideology regarding the human nature of Indigenous people that began to materialize in the Emberá territory. Therefore, even when the Spanish conquerors promoted the "barbarian" image of the Emberá Chamí, it transitioned into new images. One of the new images that emerged at that time for the Emberá Chamí was that they were "peasants." The Spanish constructed this image in the context of those "new communities" where the exchange of goods and food between the Indigenous people, the colonizers, and the mine workers was typical. In this way, the Emberá Chamí's ancestors became food providers for these communities.

On the other hand, in the seventeenth century, the images of the Emberá Chamí as "beasts of burden" and "people from the bush" were also consolidated. Those images were constructed so Indigenous people could carry merchandise and materials to gold miners and sustain the mining economy. During this epoch, the Chocó region was exploited as a central mining region to support Spain's bankrupt empire. Moreover, the evangelization process also intensified during this time as the Indigenous people fled to the mountains to escape the religious orders that wanted to evangelize them. The

context of the settler colonial conflict also included corruption, sharp power territorial disputes, and intense smuggling operations that left the Indigenous Emberá Chamí in the middle of a critical political context.

During the political development of the Colombian Republic, the implementation of new laws and the country's insertion into the global capitalist liberal system stimulated internal migrations to colonize peripheral land. Thus, it is possible to find four specific images of the Emberá Chamí people, namely as Indigenous "minors," as Indigenous "peasants, peons and terrajeros," "knock down bush machines," and Indigenous "proletarians."

For example, Law 89 of 1890 provided the status of minors to Indigenous people. In Article 40 of this Law, it was written that:

> The Indigenous people assimilated by this Law to the condition of minors, for the management of their portions in the reservations, may sell these subject to the rules prescribed by common law for the sale of real estate to those under twenty-one years of age. Consequently, a judicial license must be requested, justifying the need or usefulness. Once the permit is obtained, the sale will be made at public auction in accordance with the provisions of the judicial procedure (Law 89, 1890).

On the other hand, the local internal colonizers and settlers implemented a new economic and social dynamic that turned the Indigenous Emberá Chamí people into new images and roles like "peasants, peons and terrajeros." In addition, the internal colonization process also transformed the Emberá Chamí into "knock down bush machines" since they were used to clearing land for agriculture and cattle raising. This instrumental construction of the Emberá Chamí fits within the internal colonial enterprise. That said, implementing capitalism and the migration phenomenon created a

new social class in the new country of the proletarians. In this sense, the image of the Indigenous people as peasants and peons overlaps with the images of "the Indigenous as proletarian."

Finally, the findings also allow us to locate a last image of oppression constructed by the power structures that impact the Emberá Chamí in terms of the incursion of the armed state-guerrillas conflict into their territory, namely, that of "the Indigenous as infiltrators." However, this category was not used exclusively by armed groups to refer to Indigenous people since it is also found among different groups affected by the Colombian conflict. However, it is essential to highlight that in terms of the Emberá Chamí people, it also served as a strategy of oppression, control, and justification for the use of violence.

8.2.2 Indigenous resistance tactics

During the conquest and colonial period, the Spanish Empire sought to implement a process known as ""the pacification"" of Indigenous peoples in the Americas. Ultimately, pacification entailed the domination of Indigenous peoples through subjugation and the imposition of Catholicism and Spanish cultural and administrative norms on them. Consequently, pacification constituted a form of violence that sought to erase the cultural distinctiveness and identities of Indigenous peoples. It consolidated the conquistadores'conquistadores' power, established monopolies over the use of violence, created bureaucratic institutions, and asserted the colonial authority that essentially became the framework of domination later adopted by modern national states (Iñiguez, 2017). However, despite the Spanish Empire'sEmpire's extensive efforts to pacify the natives, the pacification process was inherently limited and faced significant resistance from the Indigenous people.

In this case, resistance is not a confrontation between two forces depicted by resisters and the dominant. Instead, resistance relies on the agency of subjugation, accommodation, and entanglement (Iñiguez, 2017, p. 40). Subjugated populations experience different strategies of domination from the power structure, obligating them to adapt to the adverse context to survive while having agency as their means to resist oppression so that within this framework, an agency of subjugation could involve violent and nonviolent behaviour (Iñiguez, 2017, p. 41). The research findings for the first analyzed conquest and colonization epoch are framed within this idea.

The Emberá Chamí's ancestors fought against the Spanish conquerors in the sixteenth century. Initially, they defended their territory using the practices available to them. Later, they employed guerrilla tactics against the conquistadores, which involved ambushing Spanish exploratory and commercial expeditions along roads and retreating into the bush. Additionally, they formed alliances with other Indigenous groups to resist the Spanish. Some of these alliances were forged with rival Indigenous groups. As the Spanish conquest progressed, certain groups of the Emberá Chamí'sChamí's ancestors also formed strategic alliances with the Spaniards; however, some of these alliances ended in the Emberá Chamí betraying the Spanish.

In this regard, the historian Montoya Gúzman (2008) analyzed the resistance of the Indigenous groups of the Pacific during the conquest era, pointing out that these Indigenous groups maintained wars and intense rivalries continuously, even during the conquest and colonization period. That is, they were involved in civil wars with other Indigenous groups in which they did not hesitate to request help from the Spanish or to accompany them in punishing other Indigenous groups. The Spanish exploited this ethnic fault line as part of its divide-and-rule strategy in the colony.

The transition from conquest to colonization in the seventeenth century was marked by what is termed ““peaceful indoctrination,”” where there were also processes of identity transformation among individuals in Indigenous groups, like their adoption of Spanish names and surnames. This identity shift contributed to the weakening of resistance among the Emberá Chamí’sChamí’s ancestors. Both violent and nonviolent forms of Emberá Chamí resistance were observed during this period. Violent resistance resembled actions seen during the conquest, involving attacks on towns and villages, while nonviolent resistance entailed using the courts to leverage ““civil rights”” granted by the Spanish Crown.

At the same time, the Emberá Chamí’sChamí’s ancestors developed nonviolent resistance tactics during colonization that can be framed within the elements around the tactic articulated by De Certeau (1996). In this case, the colonizers did not completely dominate the Emberá Chamí’sChamí’s ancestors. Therefore, some gaps emerged that allowed the Indigenous ““forms of adaptation”” to creatively use the norms, spaces, practices, and symbols imposed on them by the colonial power in their favour. Indigenous action was based on the ““opportunity”” given by the power structure that created gaps that they could exploit. In this case, the Emberá Chamí ancestors used their agency and ““played”” with events to create opportunities for their resistance to Spanish oppression.

They capitalized on the strength of the colonial power. An illustration of their nonviolent resistance is when Indigenous people ceased fulfilling their civic duties, like providing food to workers, as a tactic to exert pressure on the settlers from Spain. Another example is the utilization of the rights acquired through residing in towns and villages to lodge complaints with the power structure regarding the violence inflicted on

them by the colonizers and refusing to pay tithes to the Catholic Church and have their children take part in the mass.

Further, the practice of fleeing from Spanish settlements and forming alliances with other Indigenous groups also persisted at that time. Additionally, priests encountered challenges in their efforts to evangelize Indigenous people, as they resisted embracing Christian beliefs and continued to adhere to their spiritual and cultural practices. Preserving their culture became a form of resistance. This idea aligns with Cormier'sCormier's (2020) reflection that strategies of cultural identity and attachment enhance Indigenous communities'communities' innate resilience.

Apart from the cultural elements that were part of the Indigenous people'speople's resistance strategy, the social dynamics of the Emberá Chamí'sChamí's ancestors also contributed to the dynamics of their resistance against the Spanish. For example, although the Indigenous groups had a fixed territory, the bohios and the crops moved periodically within a short radius. This permanent mobilization made it challenging to confine them to the towns and villages, making it difficult for the church to convert them to Catholicism.

Thus far, it can be inferred from the thesis findings that a pivotal component of Emberá Chamí resistance lay in their distancing from the established power structures. Despite the settler'ssettler's colonial tactics aiming to confine Indigenous communities within towns and villages to regulate their behaviours, as well as coexistence patterns and cultural and spiritual practices, which subsequently led to acculturation and assimilation processes, these same strategies were later repurposed by the Indigenous people as resistance tools to assert their rights. However, what indeed prevented the complete subjugation of these communities was their deliberate avoidance of these power structures while preserving their culture. This pattern persisted into the period of

the creation of the Republic of Colombia. The Indigenous communities did not entirely disengage from the dynamics of the nation-state, yet their social movements advocated for their self-determination.

During the Colombian Republic period, the Emberá Chamí people employed a tactic akin to using civil rights during the colonial era by leveraging laws issued by the nation-state to safeguard their territory. Despite initial setbacks from various stratagems employed by the internal colonizers and settlers, the Emberá Chamí initially experienced limited success and suffered substantial territorial losses. Nonetheless, the emergence of a new Indigenous social movement spearheaded by CRIC inspired the Emberá Chamí to familiarize themselves with the nation-state'snation-state's language and laws and bolster their social movement aimed at reclaiming the lost territories. An emerging leader of this decolonial process was the Indigenous individual Clemente Nengarabe, who helped lay the foundations for the emergence of the Emberá Indigenous movement on the reservation.

Moreover, the National Indigenous organization ONIC adopted international human rights discourses interconnected with Sumac Kawsay's political, social, and cultural freedom philosophy. By adopting the codes and technical language of the nation-state's law and human rights, Indigenous people became a "subject of the law" recognized by the dominant culture. Consequently, the Indigenous people began to be legitimately accepted in political and social circles, from the local to the international levels, since they began to communicate with the language of law and human rights and use their philosophy and wisdom.

Like their forebears, the Emberá Chamí capitalized on the political openings afforded to them by the Colombian state. Drawing from Michel de Certeau's Certeau's framework, this can be construed as a mode of readapting to the environment. The

social milieu and power dynamics created opportunities, facilitating diverse actions and power structures to emerge within organizations and in their interactions with external entities (Osorio, 2011). Examples of this context of political opportunities are the International Conference of Non-governmental Organizations on Discrimination against the Indigenous Peoples of America in 1977, the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 of 1989. Within the national framework, the context of political opportunities as a prelude to the emergence of an Indigenous social movement is noticeable in Law 80 of 1890. Although this law stimulated the division of the Indigenous reservations into smaller land units for their commercialization (Velásquez Ruiz, 2017), it also recognized the existence of these reservations if the Indigenous communities could demonstrate that they lived and coexisted in these territories (Yamá Taimal, 2012). So it defined Indigenous people as legal individuals (Rappaport, 2005).

The Cauca and national Indigenous social movements influenced the case of the Emberá Chami unified reservation on the San Juan River. Still, some leaders and community members acknowledge the influence of the Laura Sisters school teachers in consolidating their social movement and the possibility of negotiating land with the government through institutions like INCORA.

That said, culture and social dynamics also influenced Indigenous people's resistance processes. In the context of the Republic of Colombia, it was the same as the Indigenous people returning to their cultural and spiritual values as elements of their identity that strengthened the Indigenous social movement. In rescuing their cultural and spiritual values, the sumac kawsay's discourse from the memory of the Indigenous communities of the Andes plays an important role. Among the fundamental values in

the sumac kawsay philosophy are equity, sustainability, and environmental harmony, providing a basis for self-determination via ancestral traditions.

Therefore, strengthening ethnic identity is intertwined with the capacity for the resistance of Indigenous communities against the state. Prior research underscores the importance of preserving ethnic groups' identity to achieve equitable recognition and status alongside other social groups (Chavez, 2019). Collective identity is cultivated through everyday interactions and catalyzes self-organizational endeavours aimed at peacebuilding. Indigenous groups' identity is forged within the narratives of history and lived experiences. Moreover, collective identities are shaped by dynamic processes involving interactions between historical events, discourse strategies, and group-specific practices that distinguish them from others (Chavez, 2019).

Table 3 below summarizes the Indigenous people's images and their resistance tactics for each era.

Table 3. Indigenous images and Indigenous resistance tactics

Indigenous Embera Chamí and their ancestor's image	**Resistance tactic**	**Time frame**
Barbarian and brave	Open war against the Spaniards, flight, "guerrilla war," alliances and betrayals	First part of the Conquest
Peasants and Uncivilized	Attacking towns, claiming rights, stop fulfilling their role as food providers	Transition from conquest to colonization
Beasts of burden, people from the bush	Complain to the power structure, flight, maintaining Indigenous spiritual and cultural ways, stopping the supply of food.	Colonialism
Peasants, peons or *terrajeros*; minors; knock down bush machines; and proletarian.	Appealing to the law to claim their rights	Colombian republicanism

Indigenous people as infiltrators	Indigenous social movement, collective identity, *Sumac Kawsay* philosophy	Colombian conflict

8.2.3 A shift in women's agency and leadership

A unique finding from this study can be found in the stories of the Emberá Chamí women on the reservation. The leadership of the Emberá Chamí women in the Chamí unified Indigenous reservation of the Rio San Juan described in this thesis occurred during the Colombian armed conflict between the state and guerrilla groups. In this context, the armed groups undermined the cultural, social, economic, and spiritual dynamics of the Emberá community.

The intervention of the armed conflict in the territory since 1980 dismantled local community dynamics through the forced recruitment of minors and the displacement of the Emberá Chamí from their ancestral homes. It undermined the moral, spiritual, physical, and psychological health of the Emberá Chamí. However, despite the adverse situation, the community once again found resistance mechanisms for their survival. These resistance methods occurred through discourse and using words, rights, and ethnic identity.

The thesis research focused on recruiting children and young people by armed groups. This situation led to the development of a new leadership cadre led by the Emberá women, who, with nonviolent tactics, set out to rescue their children. The women's actions represented a turning point in their leadership in the community. The stories told to me by the study participants indicated that before the armed conflict arrived at the reservation, the women did not have much prominence in the decision-making process and were not visible as leaders. However, because the women decided to go to the guerrillas' camps to confront the leaders of the armed groups and request

the return of their children, it allowed them to be later seen in the community as a fundamental axis of crucial leadership within the Emberá Chamí Indigenous movement.

These events forged the natural emergence of new leadership and an awareness of the peacebuilding role of women within the community. The main tactic the women implemented in conflict situations was characterized by what the communities call the use of the word. The use of the word by the women made sense from the discourse of ethnic rights, territory, and cultural identity. Women's strength was found mainly in their perceived vulnerability and weakness. Therefore, the resilient resistance the Emberá women displayed was based on their supposed weakness that later became their strength. Thus, the shift in women's leadership can be understood by what Abal (2007) noted as "resistance is exercised by the cunning of the weak" (p. 4).

Now, despite the resistance processes evidenced in this study, the advancement of Indigenous rights, and the strengthening of Indigenous people's social organization, the colonial structures that were embedded in exclusion, racism, drug trafficking, extensive mining, acculturation processes, extensive livestock farming, monocultures, corruption, and political manipulation remain in the society to this day.

8.3 Recommendations for future research

This doctoral research represents a crucial step in comprehending the fluctuation and changes of Indigenous resistance efforts in Colombia. It facilitates an in-depth examination of the relation between diverse resistance methods and power strategies employed by the colonizers, settlers, and Indigenous people during the conquest, colonial, and modern-day eras. By investigating the evolution of Indigenous people's tactical resistance procedures, ranging from nonviolent to violent methods or a

combination thereof, we can gain deeper insights into the dynamics of resistance and their outcomes within complex and conflict-ridden contexts.

It is imperative to conduct comparative case studies establishing differences and similarities in resistance processes developed by diverse Indigenous groups. Indigenous communities, despite currently employing social movements that dialogue with each other and incorporate common philosophies and rights discourses into their strategies that give meaning to their mobilizations, are different in historical contexts and have complex dynamics. Therefore, comparing these Indigenous resistance strategies would contribute to a greater understanding of settler colonial conflicts from a critical and emancipatory perspective.

On the other hand, the findings from this research indicate a shift in the agency of the Emberá Chamí women. Within the adverse context of the recent armed conflict between the state and guerrilla groups in Colombia that spilled over onto the reservation, the Emberá women were spontaneously resilient and generated new leaders that today help to energize and strengthen the local and national Indigenous movement. Future studies must follow a line of research incorporating gender and feminist perspectives in PACS with Indigenous theories that empower us to delve deeper into the mechanisms that helped activate the resilience of the Emberá Chamí woman and their subsequent positioning as key peacebuilding activists and leaders within their community.

In addition, the thesis helps us to understand the construction of social images as a cognitive strategy for colonizers and settler actions to subjugate others. In this sense, future research could continue investigating the relationship between the settler control strategy and its construction of Indigenous people via social images. In this way, we can dive deeper into a psychological mechanism that assists in justifying and perpetuating

the colonial settler strategy to control and subdue the other. In other words, the image of the other can be a mechanism that justifies the colonial settler domination strategy and, at the same time, feeds and sustains it. Thus, historical and comparative studies can be a crucial research strategy that allows us to dig deeper into this topic.

8.4 Conclusion

Conflict analysis and peacebuilding necessitate a precise understanding of power dynamics, discrimination, acculturation, oppression, and various forms of exclusion of marginalized groups like Indigenous people, as these factors influence conflict dynamics and the potential for peacebuilding. These settler colonial dynamics are often manifested in the dialectical relationship between power control strategies and tactics of resistance. This relationship can be best understood when it is integrated into critical and emancipatory theoretical frameworks, critical theories from the Global South, and the local perspective where the voices, agency, and worldviews of the oppressed can contribute to our understanding of difference-nuanced conflict frameworks and for understanding the elements that are necessary for creating the prospects for peaceful coexistence.

The thesis concludes by identifying, organizing, and historically situating a group of stereotypical images consolidated from spheres of power and aiding in guiding and justifying different control strategies over oppressed people. Additionally, the research compiles a range of resistance methods implemented by the Emberá Chamí and their ancestors, spanning from direct warfare and “guerrilla tactics” to nonviolent resistance methods like utilizing civil norms to assert their rights. The research indicates that the Emberá Chamí Indigenous people have adapted to their contexts and utilized both Indigenous and settler strategies and tactics to resist oppression. An especially

crucial and intriguing issue uncovered in the findings relates to the emergence of Indigenous leadership and agency amidst adversity, exemplified by the Emberá Chamí women. The role of Indigenous women in peacebuilding warrants further investigation and exploration to understand the underlying mechanisms behind the emergence of their agency.

Finally, the historical data and the experiences and knowledge of the 18 participants can bring visibility to Colombia's Indigenous struggles. The thesis aims to serve as an instrument for strengthening cultural identity, historical memory, social organization, and peacebuilding among the Indigenous Emberá Chamí community.

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Appendix A. Research questions to elicit stories

Themes:

A) Effects of the colonial process, the independency period, the internal migration, and the Colombian armed conflict in the Embera Chami community.

B) Territorial Conflict.

C) Strategies to face oppression and conflict

D) Views of peacebuilding

Theme A – Effects of the colonial process, the independency period, the internal migration, and the Colombian armed conflict in the Embera Chami community

a. Tell me about the history of the Embera Chami Indigenous community.

b. Why and how did Embera Chami community get into this territory?

c. Where did Community reside before coming to this territory?

d. Tell me a story that you remember the most about the traditional Embera Chami Indigenous community

e. Can you tell me stories of the Embera Chami past?

f. How has the armed conflict affected the community?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

g. Can you tell me a story that you remember in relation to the armed conflict?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

Theme B – Territorial conflict

a. Is the community having any problems living in this territory?

b. Are the community experiencing problems with their neighbours that are related to the territory?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

c. What barriers do you face or have faced with regards to sharing this territory with your neighbours?

i. Can you give me an example of that?
ii. Can you tell me more about that?

Theme C – Peacebuilding and social justice strategies to face oppression and conflict

a. Have you or any member of your community been discriminated against?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

b. How have you dealt with discrimination?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

c. How has the community organized to face territorial problems?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

d. Tell me a story about how the community has survived conflicts

Theme D - Views of peacebuilding

a. What benefits have you experienced from the Colombian peace process?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

b. What barriers have you faced during the Colombian peace process?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

c. How has the Colombian peace process addressed local issues?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you give me an example of that?

d. How do you resolve conflicts within the community?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

e. How would you describe conflict, and how would you describe peace?
    i. Can you give me an example of that?
    ii. Can you tell me more about that?

Appendix B. Analytical sheet for document analysis

Code:

Bibliographic description:

Key words:

Description of the content:

Conclusions:

Specific contributions to the research question: