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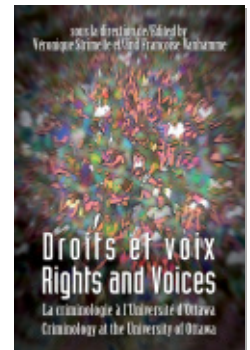
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Forgotten by Criminology: Political Violence and Armed Conflict

by

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INTRODUCTION: CRIMINOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND ARMED CONFLICT

Political violence and armed conflict have traditionally been neglected by criminologists, many of whom consider them to lie outside the range of their discipline (see Rothe *et al.* 2009; and Ruggiero 2006). Overall, criminology has had a tendency to avoid studying atrocities, genocide, human rights violations, crimes against humanity, and war crimes (see Mullins and Rothe 2009). However, since the late 1990s, and particularly since 2001, criminologists have looked beyond terrorism and started to investigate these issues particularly from a perspective that centres on imbalances of social power within societies. Issues relating to political violence and armed conflict are thus seen as impeding or threatening peace and social justice, and therefore as legitimate objects of an alternative criminology that seeks “to advance a progressive agenda favouring disprivileged peoples” (Schwartz and Friedrichs 1994, 221). Thus, criminologists who—as in the mission statement of the Laboratory of Justice Studies and Research at the Department of

Criminology of the University of Ottawa—conceptualize the discipline as focusing on the “rationalities, institutions, practices, and experiences of collective life that impede, threaten and promote social justice” regard political violence and armed conflict as legitimate areas of interest for criminology. Other criminologists have opted to study those issues as they inform us of the processes entailed in the production and social construction of crime and the criminal, and society’s responses at the national and international levels. Political violence and armed conflict also allow these researchers to look at the construction of an international criminal order, and the production and reproduction of the dangerous classes at the national and international levels. Finally, mainstream criminologists embracing a more conservative definition of criminology as the study of crime have also taken up political violence and armed conflict as a legitimate object of criminology, given that, under national and international law alike, many of the same practices and activities, such as robberies, kidnappings, bombings and murders, are commonly defined as criminal actions.

The dearth of criminological literature on political violence and armed conflict is partly influenced by the availability of, and access to, the social actors directly involved in these phenomena (see Balencie and De La Grange 2001). Further, the role of the state in conflict represents an additional challenge for empirical research. The state is generally one of the key players in armed conflict, as quite often it is its existence, its sovereignty, or the integrity of its borders that is threatened, or at least challenged by an opposition (see Rothe *et al.* 1999; Silke 2001; and Zwerman 1992). Therefore the state is directly concerned by the research being conducted, not only at the discursive level—since the type of scholarly narratives or discourses produced might support or weaken its own political discourse—but also at the pragmatic level, since the actual information and/or the players subject to research can be of strategic significance for the state. Conducting empirical research under such circumstances is thus a complex endeavour, involving a certain level of risk in terms of the physical safety of researchers, as well as the potential legal and professional consequences of their access. Obtaining access to clandestine social actors and/or the production of an alternative discourse to the state’s might generate suspicion regarding the loyalties of the researcher (see Zwerman 1992). On the other hand,

the professional and social status of researchers usually grants them a certain degree of protection from possible retaliation by formal social control agencies or by the opposition (see Israel 2004). However, the participants are those who face possible dire consequences from their involvement in the research, particularly if it was not authorized by, or is perceived as detrimental to, the organization or the state. Ensuring the safety of participants is therefore an important issue that further hinders empirical research.

The production of criminological knowledge on the topic is shaped by access to empirical information, which, in turn, is influenced by researchers' standpoints (see Zwerman 1992; and Turk 2004). An analysis of the literature allows us to identify three types of researchers. First, there are those who adopt the point of view of the state, particularly when analyzing terrorism, and are thus granted secondary information produced by formal social control agencies or first-hand information from governmental agencies (see Silke 2001). Zwerman (1992) has called attention to the level of congruency between the assumptions and solutions proposed by the government and those of such researchers. Instead of being academics and intellectuals, terrorist specialists resemble technocrats of violence, sharing the sources and objectives of intelligence offices (see Sommier 2000). Second, there are scholars whose personal experience grants them access to the opposition. Finally, there are those who need to continuously negotiate access, as they are not perceived to be natural allies by either side.

In fact, research is a political enterprise, as Foucault (2003) showed in his analysis of the role of social science and, in particular, criminology as tools of domination (see also Becker 1967; Morgan and Hough 2000; White 2002; Noaks and Wincup 2004; and Piron 2005). Studying political violence and armed conflict is a particularly arduous enterprise when it is conducted through an analytical lens not aligned with the state's discourse (see Wight 2009): indeed, Étienne Balibar (1996) suggests that there is a tacit and implicit proscription on studying violence as a way of dealing with social relations or as a direct consequence of political, historical and social events. In such cases, researchers' work is regarded with suspicion, discredited as being irrelevant, irresponsible, even dangerous, or simply discarded for working on the wrong premise (see White 2002; and Noaks and Wincup 2004).

Notwithstanding the negative reactions that criminological studies using alternative analytical lenses might generate, such research contributes to a better understanding of political violence and armed conflict, and furthers criminology as a discipline. The study of these new areas of the criminological domain has confronted researchers with certain limitations of traditional criminological theories, and encouraged them not only to revise them, but also to discover, adopt and adapt theories from other disciplines. In fact, when studying political crime, criminologists face the challenge of incorporating knowledge, theories, and concepts from international relations, international law, international institutions, history, political science, and economics (see Rothe *et al.* 2009), as well as from philosophy, and from anthropology and other social sciences. This means that criminologists are confronted with the paradox of specializing in a domain within criminology while being required to maintaining an overview of the knowledge produced by a multiplicity of other disciplines. This will be shown by discussing the contributions of research conducted in Peru and Northern Ireland on women involved in anti-establishment armed groups.

1. AN EMPIRICAL AND CRIMINOLOGICAL STUDY OF ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ARMED GROUPS

The scarcity of criminological research on political violence and armed conflict is more prominent with regard to the involvement of women. This is partly due to the fact that researchers seem to share with the general population the erroneous impression that their involvement is irrelevant in terms of numbers, peripheral in terms of roles, and insignificant in terms of their relevance to a proper understanding of anti-establishment armed groups. Despite these assumptions, female involvement is far from being an atypical phenomenon, and is actually a historical and geographical constant (see Cunningham 2003). Yet research on women's involvement in anti-establishment armed groups remains limited to superficial descriptions of the phenomenon or analyses focused solely on gender (for recent examples, see Van Creveld 2002; Gonzales-Perez 2004; Israeli 2004; and Stack-O'Connor 2007). Therefore, an empirical qualitative study of women's involvement was

conducted in order to understand the processes and experiences from the point of view of the social actors themselves, taking gender into consideration, but without making it the focal point of the study.

Life history interviews were conducted with six Peruvian women and five Irish women. The Peruvian women were either from the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), the Maoist organization founded by Abimael Guzmán in 1980, which has continued to be sporadically active despite the arrest of its leaders in 1992 and 1997, or from the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA), inspired by Che Guevara, which became active in 1984, but was dismantled following the arrest of its leadership in 1992. The Irish women had been involved in activities related to Republican organizations defined as “terrorist” by the British and Irish governments between the start of the conflict in Northern Ireland in 1969 and the signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998. The interviewees were linked to five different organizations, and their experiences ranged from three years to more than thirty years of involvement. They had reached different levels within the hierarchies of their organizations, and had played multiple and different roles (combat, internal security, intelligence, transport, logistics, proselytizing, and health care). Some had been or were still imprisoned under sentences varying from three years to life, while others had never been charged and continued, at the time of the interviews, to be involved in armed conflicts.

The use of the snowball sampling technique with multiple lines of referrals allowed us to obtain a diverse and contrasted sample in terms of the trajectories of the participants and the characteristics of their experiences. A multi-angled theoretical framework was developed in order to understand women’s involvement in armed conflicts using both traditional criminological theories (deviant careers and total institutions) as well as non-criminological concepts, such as citizenship and Weber’s conceptualization of the state.

The following section presents the manner in which politics, violence, and the state are conceptualized in this paper, and how this leads us to think in a different way about conflicts between states and anti-establishment armed groups. Then we briefly demonstrate how the concepts of total institution, career, and citizenship represent a useful contribution to the analysis of women’s experience in armed conflicts

not found previously in the literature. Finally, the conclusion highlights how criminology stands to benefit from incorporating political violence and armed conflict as legitimate objects of study. By drawing on theories outside the discipline, criminology can broaden its conceptual range and open up alternatives to traditional criminological analysis.

2. CONCEPTUALIZING POLITICS AND THE STATE: A WEBERIAN PERSPECTIVE

Politics is the striving to share power or to influence the distribution of power (see Weber 1958). A political question is one that relates to the distribution, maintenance or transfer of power, either as means to other aims or for its own sake. Political activity is deciding for others, commanding them, wielding power over them, and affecting the course of events (see Kateb 2000). Violence, or the possibility of it, supports power, as there are political tasks that can be accomplished only by violence (see Weber 1958). Violence is the decisive means of politics, the ultimate means of politics. According to Weber, the fact that politics and violence are intrinsically linked creates ethical problems for politicians, given that the use of violence can result in something positive, while avoiding its use might actually lead to negative consequences. This means that whoever is involved in politics must face the choice between an ethics of responsibility or consequences and an ethics of conviction (see Bruun 2007). Under an ethics of consequences, a politician acts unethically or causes harm for the sake of a good outcome or in order to prevent further harm. This type of ethics implies a demand for action, guided by the knowledge of the external consequences due to a lack of action. Under an ethics of conviction, a politician acts ethically, with ethics as an end in itself, and avoids directly causing harm, despite the possible negative consequences. In other words, the means to a given end are judged only according to their intrinsic value.

With regard to the state, Weber (1958) defines it as being an association of men dominating men through the monopoly of legitimate violence. In other words, modern states are created through a violent process that leads the “winners” to attribute to themselves exclusivity in the use of violence or the authorization of its use. Violence used by

unauthorized actors is not only illegitimate but illegal, and potentially criminal. The monopoly of legitimate violence leads the state to create a rhetorical difference between its own use of violence and the use of violence by others without its authorization. Force becomes the use of violence that enjoys legal protection, whereas violence refers to the illegitimate use of force (see Tilly 2003). The state attributes to itself not only the monopoly of legitimate violence, but also the power to define it through claiming the monopoly of legitimate discourse (see Balibar 1996). Hence, the state also has the power to label organizations and claims as being political and therefore legitimate, or non-political and therefore illegitimate, illegal, and even criminal (see Hall 1974).

This conceptualization of politics and the state allows us to conceive the use of violence in order to obtain or influence power as being in fact a political enterprise. Hence, anti-establishment armed groups and their members can be analyzed as political actors, despite the state's rhetorical attempts to render them non-political.

3. ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ARMED GROUPS AS EMBRYONIC STATES BATTLING CONSOLIDATED STATES

Anti-establishment armed groups construe themselves as being legitimate states of reconfigured or previously existing territory occupied by illegitimate states that have usurped power and are oppressing indigenous or righteous communities. These organizations not only make specific claims with respect to the state, they demand a total transformation of the state or the government in place, and aim to bring down the existing state in order to replace it with a legitimate and just one. In some cases, these claims include demands for a change in the geographical construction of the state by including or excluding certain areas or regions, as in the conflict in Northern Ireland. In other cases, it is the structure and composition of the state that is challenged, and not its geographical boundaries, as in the armed conflict in Peru.

Weber's analysis of the state allows us to conceptualize insurgent organizations as embryonic states embarking on three courses of action that are considered to be the prerogative of consolidated states: using violent strategies to defeat their opponents and consolidate the

monopoly of legitimate violence; drawing on rhetorical and discursive strategies to legitimate their own actions and projects, while at the same time discrediting and delegitimizing the opposition; and undertaking the distribution, maintenance, and/or transfer of power or, simply put, the actual function of governing.

Anti-establishment armed groups deploy violent strategies for various purposes that, combined, are intended to lead to the collapse of the existing state. Once this has been achieved, the embryonic state represented by the anti-establishment armed group obtains and ensures the monopoly of legitimate violence, thus consolidating the organization as the newly constituted state. The violent strategies adopted involve gaining advantage over the adversary by controlling a particular territory, depleting the enemy's material resources and personnel, lowering the morale of the enemy, obtaining and/or protecting the material resources needed to continue the confrontation (such as money, armaments, sustenance, medical supplies, clothing and equipment), generating an image of the organization coherent with its official discourse, and finally, gaining the support and allegiance of the population by "liberating" them or protecting them from their "oppressors."

Interviewees related how the material support provided by part of the population in both conflicts was insufficient to maintain the "war effort," and therefore other strategies needed to be put in place to obtain either resources or the money to pay for them. As one Irish interviewee, Fiona, said:

My time in the [Irish Republican] Army [(IRA)] has been for the betterment of my country, and to deliver my country from oppressors, people who shouldn't be here. I believe that Ireland should be left to the Irish and I am prepared to do anything within my power to make sure that it happens.

Given that the different organizations directly involved in armed conflicts conceptualize themselves as legitimate states, they are fighting for control not only over legitimate violence but also over legitimate discourse. Thus, each party attempts to legitimize their own actions and projects, while at the same time discrediting and delegitimizing the opposition. For example, the MRTA attacked Kentucky Fried Chicken

outlets, as it claimed to be opposed to capitalism; the Shining Path attacked the US Embassy in Lima to demonstrate its “anti-imperialism”; and the Irish Republican Army attacked what it considered as symbols of British rule over the province of Northern Ireland in order to promote its vision of a united Ireland. Press releases were used continuously to accuse the state and its armed forces of terrorizing the population and attacking innocent people. Further, particularly in Northern Ireland, whenever civilians died during an explosion Republican organizations accused the police of not having evacuated the place that was bombed, despite what they said had been ample forewarning. In turn, the police accused the Republican organizations of callously killing civilians and denied having received proper information or enough time to be able to react. In other cases, there have been press releases by different organizations acknowledging mistakes that caused civilians deaths. Despite being uncommon, these strategies serve to present the organization as taking responsibility when things go wrong and thus being worthy of trust that their actions are otherwise legitimate. Anti-establishment armed groups present themselves as using the necessary “force” to fight off the “violence” of the state: interviewees from both Peru and Northern Ireland described state violence in depth and presented it as being at the origin of the conflicts they had taken part in.

Further, anti-establishment armed groups draw on the ethics of consequences or responsibility to justify their use of “force” (see O’Boyle 2002 and Zirakzadeh 2007). They present the use of force as the only viable recourse available to them to put an end to the suffering and death that they attribute to the violence of the state. As Brena, another Irish interviewee, put it:

We fight for a united Ireland. If we could do it through peaceful means, we would, but Britain never got out of anywhere unless she blew out of it, was bombed out of it or pushed out of it. They never leave anywhere peacefully.

Finally, whenever an anti-establishment armed group controls a particular territory or neighbourhood, it attempts to actually take responsibility over it and govern it. According to Alison, another Irish interviewee:

Armed Brits shouldn't be on our streets, the British government shouldn't have a say in what I do, where I go to school, or the tax I pay, or our education system, our health system, our employment system, our rules system. This is Ireland, the British government shouldn't come in and tell us what to do.

This means that the anti-establishment armed group seeks to ensure that issues of health, education, the economy, roads, and so on, are properly dealt with. Peruvian interviewees discussed how the Shining Path dismantled existing governmental structures and replaced them with its own infrastructure, even dictating the curriculum in schools. The organization also seeks to ensure the monopoly of legitimate violence by combating the opposition and disarming members of the community who are not part of the organization. There is also the issue of protecting the population under its control from attacks by the enemy, which may include other non-state actors: Irish interviewees described standing guard and patrolling neighbourhoods to prevent attacks by Loyalist organizations.

The organization also seeks to create and impose a moral and behavioural code that has to be respected not only by its own members, as mentioned by Peruvian interviewees in the case of the Shining Path, but by all members of the community they claim to represent or that has come under their control. In fact the organization attributes to itself a police role and seeks to control antisocial, immoral or criminal behaviour. Peruvian interviewees related instances in which the Shining Path warned members of a community to cease involvement in unacceptable behaviours, and punished repeat offenders by beating or killing them. Irish interviewees also reported that their organizations dealt with the criminal elements in the community they controlled in similar ways (see also Silke 1999). This policing role is essential to the aspirations of anti-establishment armed groups. It demonstrates the existence and nature of the political project that can increase or diminish support from the communities they claim to represent. The interviewees suggested that this kind of policing increased the support of the community in Northern Ireland, but in the Peruvian conflict it actually had a detrimental effect. Armed conflicts, insurgencies or armed struggles can thus be understood as confrontations between consolidated states and

embryonic states. This confrontation is of an existential nature, as the continuity or consolidation of the one depends on the annihilation of the other.

A successful campaign significantly depends not only on the political discourses and violent strategies of the anti-establishment organization, but also on the level of commitment of its members. Anti-establishment armed groups attempt to obtain the required level of commitment from their members through the use of diverse techniques for moulding recruits into “ideal combatants.” The concept of the “total institution” is useful in order to understand this process, as well as the experiences of those involved in these organizations.

4. ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ARMED GROUPS AS TOTAL INSTITUTIONS

According to Erving Goffman, who originated the concept of the “total institution,” such institutions are “forcing houses for changing persons” through a “social reworking” that begins by disposing of the individuals’ social and personal identities (see Goffman 1961a). A total institution is the sum of all the roles we play in our lives, it is socially constructed, and it comprises the results of all our engagements with others through publicly validated performances (see Goffman 1959). Identities are supported by a “presenting culture” that needs to be dismantled through a process of disculturation or untraining, a mortification of the self (see Goffman 1961a).

These mechanisms and processes aim to create a situation where the “inmates” of a total institution are physically, socially and emotionally disconnected from the outside world. This process takes place within a particular physical environment, characterized by a breakdown of barriers between the multiple spheres of life, the creation of barriers to social intercourse with the outside world, constant surveillance of large numbers of people by a few staff separated from the “inmates,” and the transformation of the social role of work. The goal is to render the “inmates” dependent on the institution for the constitution of the self as a “stance-taking entity, a something that takes up a position somewhere between identification with an organization and opposition

to it” (see Goffman 1961a). Given that the self arises from interactions within a physical space, if the institution is able to control the physical space it can have control over the types and forms of interactions that take place, and therefore impose a particular self on its inmates. By refusing to participate in the expected activities, or becoming involved in forbidden activities, the members refuse the “official self” and the “social world available to it” (see Goffman 1961a). This allows inmates to resist the effects of total institutions and to create an alternative identity to the one promoted by the institution.

The interviewees’ discourse showed that anti-establishment armed groups are total institutions occupying four different sites that grant more or less direct and constant control over the members’ bodies. In prisons and military camps, autonomy and self-reliance are extracted from the individual, whereas the lack of direct and constant control in the urban environment gives members a level of autonomy, requiring a higher degree of self-discipline. Prisons and military camps create the physical conditions for anti-establishment armed groups to use mortification techniques as their main tool in the constituting of the self of its members. However, in the urban environment the members are constantly exposed to the outside world. Under these circumstances, it becomes crucial that combatants are able to act in accordance with the rules and needs of the organization without receiving constant and permanent orders to this effect. These organizations not only need to obtain compliance and obedience from their members, they also need to instil in them feelings and emotions that will ensure their commitment, and ingrain an ideological rationale that will allow them to know what is expected of them. As Brena explained: “You were educated in the Republican movement, the principles of the Republican movement, what the Republican movement stood for, and what was expected of you.” The living conditions of combatants, their relations with their comrades, and their daily lives show how the group manages to control the core of its members even though it does not physically control them. A Peruvian interviewee, Yolanda, recalled that

As time passed by I was more and more involved. . . . I did not exist as a person, I existed only as part of the ensemble. They had sucked everything out of me. . . . I didn’t exist because I couldn’t

decide things for myself. I had to be available twenty-four hours a day.

Mortification of the self as a technique is best used when the institution has constant physical control over the body of the individual and is able to isolate it from the outside world. This means that women experienced mortification techniques (see Goffman 1961a) mainly in prisons and military camps, whereas those living in the urban environment mainly experienced structuring conditions (see Coser 1974), such as isolation, ascription of elite status, trials of worthiness, and prestructured rituals. Isolation seeks to weaken existing social ties and prevent the development of new ones. Individuals are thus confined to a particular set of roles, with no alternative line of action. The identity of the member becomes dependent solely on the symbolic universe and identity offered by the “greedy” institution. Members lose what characterized them as individuals and are transformed from autonomous actors into subservient entities. The construction of an elite status around their membership in the organization aims to obtain voluntary compliance from them by promoting feelings of exclusiveness, and creating a division between “us” and “them.” Trials of worthiness serve to monitor, punish, and root out weaker members, while motivating the others to invest time and energy in the organization. Finally, prestructured rituals, such as bringing members together by holding periodic meetings, boost emotional energy, and intensify mutual focus and bonding. Through combinations of these techniques, anti-establishment armed groups generate more or less absolute compliance, and in some cases even dedication and loyalty from their members, whether they have physical control over their bodies or not. As Quela, another Peruvian interviewee, explained: “I was ready to die for the Party. They had taught me that the Party was my family, I had no other family and I lived by it.”

Goffman’s description of total institutions has resulted in a general belief that the transformation of the self requires inmates to live and conduct all of their activities in an enclosed space under the control of the organization. This research suggests, however, that mortification and transformation of the self can be achieved without direct and constant physical control over inmates. The combination of mortification techniques and structural conditions, as well as the

use of a multiplicity of sites, demonstrates that total institutions can function in open spaces, remaining total while appearing not to be. This opens a whole new world of possibilities for the previously enclosed domain of total institutions. The essence of anti-establishment armed groups and other total institutions remains the transformation of the self into a malleable object, allowing the institution to control and dictate its members' behaviour, emotions, thoughts, and actions, in order to be able to use them according to the needs of the institution.

Despite the attempts of anti-establishment armed groups to create the "ideal" combatant, the physical structure, the techniques at the disposal of the organization, and the strategies deployed by the inmates gave rise to three different identities: the vocational combatant, the wavering recruit, and the reluctant conscript (these roles are discussed further in the next section of this paper). By positioning themselves between identifying with the organization and opposing it, interviewees were able to constitute a different self than the one intended by the group and thus create an alternative identity.

Success in the production of a particular identity is not the determining factor in characterizing an organization as a total institution. What makes the concept a relevant analytical tool is the characteristics of the self that the organization attempts to produce, whether successfully or not, and the logic behind the techniques that it mobilizes.

5. CAREERS OF WOMEN IN ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT ARMED GROUPS

The concept of career was particularly useful in the analysis because it made it possible to look at women's involvement in these groups as a dynamic phenomenon changing over time in accordance with their experiences and the evolution of their personal lives, the organization, and the conflict (for a detailed analysis, see Felices-Luna 2008). As part of a symbolic interactionist approach, the concept of career facilitates an interpretative and explanatory analysis of events by looking at the subjective and objective meaning that social actors attribute to their action or inaction, while taking into consideration the objective

constraints imposed by the organization (see Passeron 1989). The biographical trajectories of social actors are thus understood by associating individual action with the institutional milieu, the social structure, and the sociohistorical context.

A career in an anti-establishment armed group can take one of three different forms: vocational, circumstantial or under constraint. A vocational career is characterized by members being aware of the existence of social injustices that afflict their community but that, in their view, cannot be resolved through traditional politics, because the government is the source of the problem, is unable or unwilling to intervene, or is the instigator through the use of violence. The key element is that members are highly motivated, believe deeply in the organization, and want to be part of it. They see themselves as social actors, as politically aware and committed, and as willing to do whatever is required of them in order to build the ideal society. The vocational combatant is a highly motivated member with a solid ideological background, utterly convinced of the need for armed conflict as a strategy to create the necessary changes for the good of society. She is therefore willing to suffer or die for the cause. In the words of the interviewee Zenaida:

I didn't join because it was fashionable at the time. It was something that I felt and that I did consciously. I was sure of myself and utterly convinced of what I was doing. I never did anything hesitantly. . . . I knew the risks. Many people I knew had disappeared or were in prison.

The circumstantial career follows a similar process, but the potential member is not thoroughly convinced either that armed conflict is a viable strategy to bring about change or that the organization itself is best suited to bring about the necessary change. Extraneous circumstances put the potential recruit in a position where they make the decision to become or remain a member of the organization. Those involved due to circumstances presented the identity of the wavering recruit, who believes in the cause proclaimed by the organization but lacks ideological training and firm convictions about the conflict or the organization. One such was Yolanda:

I was really torn because I didn't want people to live in misery and poverty, but in the end I felt that I was compelled to continue only because I had given my word. . . . I wanted to get out, but I couldn't deal with people dying because of me.

Finally, among the interviewees there were some who had been coerced into joining or remaining in an organization. Interestingly, this is a feature of the conflicts in Peru, but was not mentioned by the Irish interviewees and appears to be absent from the literature on the conflict in Northern Ireland. This mode of involvement is associated with the reluctant conscript identity, where belief in the cause, the organization or the ideology is utterly irrelevant, as involvement results from the confluence of people in vulnerable positions with an organization in need of increasing or maintaining its membership. These members were not committed to the organization or to the cause, and attempted to desert it when the opportunity presented itself, though rarely with any success. One Peruvian interviewee, Veronica, said:

You couldn't run away. How could you if they had a security perimeter and you were in the middle of the jungle? The whole area was under the control of the Shining Path. . . . You couldn't escape. . . . One time a guy tried to run away and he was shot.

The manner in which people are involved in armed conflicts and the identity associated with their mode of involvement tend to vary throughout the different stages of a career, from initiation through maintenance or withdrawal. This can be partly understood through the concepts of attachment—or self-identification with the positive identity associated with playing out a particular role (see Goffman 1961b)—and of commitment to the career, with the realization that the individual has too much to lose if they abandon it after investing time, energy, money, and other aspects of their life that are not related to that particular role (see Becker 1964). Levels of attachment and commitment are influenced by the precariousness and danger intrinsic to a career in an armed group, as well as experiences of involvement in a particular organization, the evolution of the career, changing views about the organization, and the evolution of the conflict.

Regardless of the mode of involvement or the evolution of their careers, the interviewees moulded the discourse produced throughout the interviews to attempt to form a coherent vision of their lives and their involvement. Through a process of selection, abstraction, and distortion of elements considered relevant to their purpose, the women presented themselves and their lives (past, present and future) in a way that was useful to their situation at the time of the interviews (see Strauss 1962). The Peruvian interviewees had all withdrawn from their organizations and, to a certain extent, regretted opting for armed conflict or questioned the judiciousness of that choice. They described their experiences in depth and included criticisms of their organizations. In contrast, the Irish interviewees did not regret their involvement, were proud of it, and continued working towards their political project through armed conflict, traditional politics or community work. They dwelled less on their experience, spoke more about their motivations and analyses of the conflict, and presented an overall positive discourse of the organization they had been or were associated with.

While creating this discourse, the interviewees were confronted with dealing with actions or emotions that did not fit with their construction of their life courses, and had a hard time speaking about them. For example, Zenaida, Carey, and Alison were ashamed of having pleaded guilty in court, which appeased their families but went against the principle of their organization requiring that its members should not “recognize” state institutions. On the other hand, Quela, Yolanda, and Verónica were somewhat uncomfortable about the pride they felt about certain actions related to their involvement in the armed struggle. These feelings represent not only a “social” shame, but a private and public recognition of a deficiency or inadequacy in their essence, because their actions or emotions do not correspond to the story they had created around who they are and what their life courses should be. In this regard, the Irish interviewees presented themselves as what Goffman (1961a) calls “success stories,” whereas the Peruvians interviewees alternated between the success story of the vocational combatant and the “sad tale” of the reluctant conscript. Nevertheless, whichever tale was adopted by an interviewee, those who had been vocational combatants needed to reconcile an apparent contradiction between that adopting that role and deciding to withdraw from the

conflict. Ximena, a Peruvian interviewee, described this contradiction candidly:

I feel guilty about all that I put my family through. . . . So I want to make it up to them. But at the same time, things haven't changed. The same conditions that made me want to join the armed struggle are still in place, even worse. . . . I still believe things need to change, I just don't have it in me. . . . I am trying to compensate through my work as a teacher.

A career in an anti-establishment armed group is characterized by being both political and deviant. The interviewees who had been officially labelled "terrorists" did not appear to be stigmatized by their immediate entourage. Either they found favourable reactions from people who appreciated their sacrifices for the community, or they were seen as having been "rehabilitated" through serving their prison sentence and no longer being officially involved in the armed group. Further, the political enterprise underlying the deviant nature of their acts was mobilized to protect their master status by framing their actions, not as deviant, but as congruent with dominating social values, such as the protection of the community and the redress of injustices.

6. WARRIORS AND POLITICIANS: WOMEN AS FULL CITIZENS

Women have traditionally been excluded from involvement in political and military affairs, as these activities are seen as going against the nature of and social roles assigned to women. Those advocating the exclusion of women from these domains mobilize "natural law" or similar concepts to portray them as presenting weaknesses that render them unsuitable for politics and for war (see Dayan-Herzbrun 2000; and Felices-Luna 2007). Women have thus been confined to the private sphere, with limited possibilities for participating in social and political life, particularly decision-making (see Phillips 2000). Nevertheless, when societies are confronted with political violence and armed conflict, women become directly involved in politics and in war. By doing so, women find themselves transgressing three social norms at once, given that they are

becoming involved in politics, taking part in violent activities, and using violence for political purposes, which is considered deviant in itself.

This position is criticized by those who argue that there is no “natural law” rendering women incompetent to take part in political or military activities (see Van Creveld 2002). The differences between men and women are conceived as being socially constructed and not inherent to the sexes (see Dombrowski 1999; and Peniston-Bird 2000). Emmanuel Reynaud (1988) has argued that the presumed incompatibility of women and war is based on an erroneous logic that contrasts an unquestionable biological reality (the difference between the sexes in reproduction) to an aptitude for fighting that varies according to individuals, time and societies.

The lack of a “natural” prohibition on the use of violence by women means that their exclusion from this domain represents in fact the protection of men’s interest in holding the monopoly of the right and duty to protect the community (see Reynaud 1988; and Israel 2000). Given that traditional views on citizenship demand that duties are fulfilled in order to be granted access to the rights associated with it, and that one of the constant and essential responsibilities has been the protection of the community, women’s “natural” exclusion from this task places them as second-class citizens (see O’Connor 1996). Therefore men have a real interest in terms of rights and power in maintaining women’s exclusion, as it places them as half-citizens rendering their oppression and domination easier to maintain.

In contrast, one interviewee, Fiona, declared: “I really think that being in the Army is my basic right.” This statement exemplifies the discourse of those interviewees who attempted to contribute to a political project through their involvement in armed conflict. Those among them who considered themselves feminists struggling to defeat patriarchy presented that struggle as parallel to, and independent of, the armed conflict they chose to engage in. Notwithstanding their intentions, through their sheer involvement in these domains women force society to re-examine traditional social relations based on the gendered division of labour and social structures construed through the division between public and private.

This presents a conundrum for anti-establishment armed groups. On the one hand, they need women to be involved in order to seek

to defeat the state and obtain power. On the other hand, they need to ensure the status quo and the continuation of traditional roles in order to maintain the much-needed support of their communities and the population in general. In order to do this, they need to develop an ideology that allows women to be combatants without substantially transforming social relations, so that women are expected to revert to traditional roles at the end of the conflict. In order to achieve this, the organization presents women's involvement in its activities as active citizenship under the direction and authorization of the organization. Any involvement in these domains without the endorsement of the organization remains in the realm of the deviant. Hence, even though these women have proved their capability and willingness to make the "ultimate sacrifice" for their community and the cause, the end of the conflict generally results in their return to the more traditional roles associated with their status as second-class citizens. An Irish interviewee, Carey, provided an example of this reversion:

About six months ago there was talk about a mural to commemorate ex-prisoners, and the guy I said this to says, "That's a brilliant idea. We're gonna have a wee boy in school uniform, and then we're gonna have him in workman's clothes, then we're gonna have a volunteer of the Republican movement with the IRA, and then something about men in the [Long] Kesh [camp], and then this man in civvies." I said, "That's excellent, but what about the women?" "Good point, yeah, never thought of that."

Despite emphasis in the literature on gender as a significant element in the analysis of women's involvement in anti-establishment armed groups, gender did not appear to be a main concern for the interviewees. Their discourse was structured around presenting themselves as social and political actors, engaged in an active practice of citizenship.

CONCLUSION

Research on political violence and armed conflict forces us to rethink traditional criminological theories and look outside the discipline for

new theories that will contribute to the understanding of these topics. These studies bring the political back into the realm of criminology as a central and unavoidable issue that needs to be conceptualized and theorized. The unintended effect of the development of this domain in criminology has been to reinforce and strengthen the relentless efforts of criminologists studying more widely recognized and accepted criminological themes from a critical perspective. These criminologists focus on the promotion of social justice by discovering power relations and dynamics, and exposing political and economic interests in the creation and application of laws, as well as in social reactions to law-breaking. The analysis produced by these studies, combined with those produced through research on political violence and armed conflict, further the development of a criminology that distances itself from its origins as a tool of the state (see Foucault 1975).

NOTE

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