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The democratic contributions of political parties that were linked to former armed groups

Maria Ghanem

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**The democratic contributions of political
parties that were linked to former
armed groups.**

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Université Lumière Lyon 2
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THE DEMOCRATIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF POLITICAL
PARTIES THAT WERE LINKED TO FORMER ARMED
GROUPS

Thesis for the Degree of Doctor in Political Science

Presented and defended on January 30, 2023

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Dedication

To Issam, Patrick, Bruno, and Mark

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Since the early 2000s, a substantial number of studies have looked at political parties with an armed history and observed their behavior as they transitioned from the combat zone to the political battlefield. Some focused on the challenges and implications of this transformation, others studied the impact of the organizational legacy and political experience of these groups on their post-war performance. The way conflicts end, the circumstances during which the peace agreements are signed and the content of the latter were also the subject of many studies. Other considerations such as international involvement, ideological evolution, and intra-party dynamics were also included in the discussions.¹

It has become a common expectation in most of the scholarly work that a successful rebel-to-party transformation be inextricably linked to the electoral success of the political organization that emerges from this transition. Some scholars have attempted to nuance this assumption and make a distinction between electoral success and other qualitative successes that characterized the former armed groups in the context of their transformation processes. This includes Dudouet's establishment of a scale including different stages and steps, classifying post-insurgent political parties from a "minimal" to an "optimal" level of transformation. The renunciation of force and acceptance of the basic principles of democratic competition being at the lower end of the spectrum, and internal democracy, institutional sustainability and political influence at the national level being at the higher end of the scale.² This type of gradation was also adopted by de Zeeuw who developed indicators to sort out rebel-to-party transformation according to four degrees of structural and attitudinal changes: full, partial, façade, and failed transformation.³ These fine distinctions, however relevant, are based on the notion that party survival is an essential component of a

¹ See review of literature in next chapter

² Dudouet, V., Planta, K., & Giessmann, H. J. (2016). *The political transformation of armed and banned groups. Lessons learned and implications for international support.*

³ DeZeeuw. (2007). *Understanding the Political Transformation of Rebel Movements.* Lynne Rienner Publishers.

successful transformation. We ask the following question: is a post-insurgent party that doesn't survive after having renounced the armed struggle considered a failed experience?

A notable example of this type of party is the AD M-19. Emerging in Colombia in 1973 as an urban middle-class guerrilla, the M-19 channeled popular discontent and promoted a socialist nationalist ideology.⁴ In 1989, after decades of armed conflict, the armed insurgency demobilized and, along with other demobilized forces and political groupings, formed a political party to be known as the *Alianza Democrática M-19* (Democratic Alliance M-19) or AD M-19.⁵ While tremendously successful at the start of its political journey, the AD M-19 slowly faded away and failed to establish itself as a durable political force.⁶ Nevertheless, as an embryonic political movement, the AD M-19 played a role of major importance in Colombia's history. Barely a few months after its creation, the fledgling party became a driving force behind and participated in the drafting of a new Constitution that brought groundbreaking changes to the country's legal framework.⁷ The AD M-19 experience raises the question of whether its success as a party that emerged from conflict should be linked to its institutional survival or rather to its ability to bring about positive change and contribute to an improved democracy that extends beyond its rebel-to-party transformation.

The assessment of post-insurgent parties' contribution to democracy, when available, is scarce. Scholars who have approached this topic have mostly focused their attention on these parties' democratic practices within their organizations. Most would report that while democracy consistently figured as a recurrent theme in their discourses, these parties' internal practices demonstrated the exact opposite (Ibarra & Puig 2007; Manning, 2007; Ishiyama & Batta, 2011; Sindre, 2016; Allison 2018; Wade, 2007). Moreover, whenever these

⁴ Dudouet, V. (2009). *From War to Politics: Resistance/Liberation Movements in Transition*

⁵ Boudon, L. (2001). Colombia's M-19 Democratic Alliance. A case Study in New-Party Self-Destruction. *Library of Congress*, 28(1), 73-92.

⁶ Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue).

⁷ Novoa, A. (2018b). *Interview* [Interview].

parties ascended to power, they tended to drift towards the single-party system model. As Deonandan puts it, “While revolutions are fought for greater democracy, what has been observed...is that most of the revolutionaries who gained power, be it by insurrection or negotiation, tend towards one-party dominance.”⁸ The examples of Eritrea, Angola, Mozambique, Guyana, and South Africa, where one-party dominance characterizes the political structures bear witness to this argument. The war-to-peace literature attributed this practice either to the ruling parties’ eagerness to retain control of the State apparatus, or to the racial influence on voting patterns.⁹ While these disappointing assessments mostly evaluate the parties’ conduct (both internally or as ruling organizations), very little attention was paid to these parties’ performances as promoters of citizens’ wellbeing and democracy advocates. The goal of this study is to take a deeper look into the post-conflict behavior of political parties with an armed group history to gauge the depth of their commitment to democratic norms and practices and the extent to which their legislative and advocacy efforts were actually geared towards the improvement of citizens’ wellbeing on a democratic level.

One of the objectives of this thesis is to assess the worthiness of peace negotiations with armed groups and the extent to which these groups’ participation into political life offsets the social, economic and emotional costs of negotiating peace with the enemy. Peace negotiations are generally long and costly, and require sacrifices from the populations that have suffered the atrocities of war. Even when properly pursued, amnesties and other measures of transitional justice are often controversial and are perceived as an insufficient remedy to those whose rights have been violated or who have lost loved ones. Furthermore, in many cases, peace agreements entail social, political, economic or geographic sacrifices that never fully satisfy the demands of the parties on either end of the negotiating table. This research assesses the value of these efforts beyond the suspension of hostilities by looking at former armed groups’ new roles as agents for change, their contributions to improving

⁸ Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹ Ibid.

people's quality of life and the achievement of democratic ends. In particular, it examines these new actors' efforts to contribute to an improved access to basic needs, the advancement of human rights, better access to justice, peaceful coexistence, and an improved political representation.

A central finding of this study is that these groups' wartime values determine the way in which they lead their peacetime political life. Therefore, as political actors, former combatants would be likely to advocate for measures that remedy past grievances but also push for other policies that are in line with their core values. I argue that, when the groups' initial and wartime demands were driven by humanitarian needs and democratic principles, these parties' participation in political life is conducive to positive change regardless of their ability to pass the test of survival as political entities. Unlike their traditional counterparts, these revamped political actors are generally driven by an urge to deliver and a strong desire to bring solutions to the problems that triggered their armed struggles.

GOAL AND STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The goal of this thesis is to study the democratic achievements of the Democratic Alliance M-19 (AD M-19) in Colombia, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador, the Lebanese Forces (LF) in Lebanon and the Sinn Féin (SF) in Ireland. In particular, the study assesses these parties' contributions to improving people's wellbeing and to the promotion of democracy. The thesis also looks at the factors that might have helped or hindered these groups' actions before, during, and after the transition to determine those that would have contributed the most to these achievements. The analysis applies the *most different system design*, the four cases chosen differing in almost all respects except for the fact that they were all linked to organizations with an armed history. To investigate the above proposition, I examined the contemporary literature and conducted 50 interviews with former and current members of those parties and other stakeholders. The dissertation is organized into seven chapters as follows.

Chapter 1 outlines the motivations for the development of the research, maps out the existing literature, presents the methodology, and provides a justification for the selection of cases. It shows that most of the pre-existing literature that is concerned with political parties formerly linked to armed groups deals with the challenges of the war-to-peace transition as well as the implications of structural factors such as political experience, organizational legacy, and ideological framework on the evolution of these parties. It also establishes that far fewer studies focus on these parties' long-lasting contribution to improving the democratic experience of the countries where they come into being. My thesis argues that a deeper look into these actors' long-term accomplishments, lasting beyond the moment of political reconversion, can help us better evaluate the success of this transition not so much in terms of party success, but rather in terms of these parties' roles as forces that positively contribute to the societies where they emerge. This chapter presents the conceptual difference between party success and party achievements, and introduces the methodology which uses the *most different systems design*. This part also includes the justification for the case selection which was based on my interest in examining the long-lasting achievements rather than institutional performance of this type of parties. This led me to select cases with diverse levels of electoral success, ranging from a resounding success such as the FMLN -a party that won control of the Salvadoran government- to a political party that ceased to exist a few years after it surfaced -namely the AD M-19. I argue that despite these differences in electoral performance, as political forces, these movements were all driven to make meaningful changes and push the limits of the democratization process in their respective countries.

Chapter 2 evaluates the parties' achievements as drivers of change. It assesses these parties' roles in promoting democratic practices and expanding the boundaries of democratic governance. These include, among other things, leading the efforts to promote human rights in general and women's rights in particular; advocating for the protection of key freedoms; helping foster a more vibrant civil society; promoting free and fair elections; and helping advance a more independent judiciary. In this section I argue that these important contributions, not necessarily tied to the parties' electoral successes, are political successes that didn't receive their fair share of recognition in the post-insurgent parties' literature.

Chapters 3 and 4 test my hypothesis using cross-sectional data, and study the role of a set of dependent variables that may have helped determine these parties' behaviors as democracy promoters in the post-war period. Chapter 3 examines the role of exogenous factors that are beyond the control of the parties but that might have directly or indirectly influenced those parties' performance and/or achievements. Factors considered include the peace agreement and the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); the electoral system in place and the political environment in the countries where these parties emerge; the parties' local and regional alliances; the extent to which they receive international support; and their previous political experience. This section determines that third-party financial support played a key role in helping those parties survive as political entities. This finding is important as it informs us that while the weight of such a factor was important for party survival, the absence of it didn't affect the parties' performance as agents of change. Chapter 4 is a comparative analysis of the internal functioning of the four cases under review. In particular, this chapter looks into the parties' internal democracy and inclusiveness; the methods used for leadership selection; the parties' internal discipline; the inclusion of women, youth, and minorities; the parties' internal cohesion; the way in which they communicate with the electorate and other stakeholders; the parties' finances; and the role of leadership. This part concludes that leadership, political experience, ethnic appeal, and party discipline significantly contributed to the electoral success of those parties and their survival as political entities. However, and similar to the observation made in the previous section, these findings confirm that the absence of these features didn't hinder these parties' abilities to bring about positive changes at the national level.

Chapter 5 looks at ideological evolution of these parties and the way in which this evolution might have influenced their behavior in the postwar period. This section finds that for the most part, the parties emerged from the war-to-peace transition with no clear definitions of their ideologies and that their ideological positions considerably altered over the years. Nonetheless, a thorough review of these groups' wartime ideological commitments shows that, despite adapting their ideologies to fit the needs of the post-war context, as political parties, these groups remained devoted to the core values that triggered, accompanied, and

shaped their armed struggles. These core values remained at the center of the parties' political fights, and were clearly reflected in their peacetime political, legislative, and advocacy projects. Chapter 6 explores these parties' political legacies and contemporary dynamics. It sheds a particular light on the fact that party achievements were not contingent upon electoral success or party survival. Finally, chapter 7 concludes while looking at other similar experiences across the world.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

POLITICAL PARTIES

Much ink has been spilled on the analysis of political parties and more specifically on the question of the nature of their institutionalization. In 'Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties', Ostrogorski (1902) observed the role of political parties in the organization of democracy and sought to understand how this political instrument imposed itself as the representative regime expanded. He was interested in the actors of these organizations as well as the methods used by them, drawing on the examples of England and the United States. Ostrogorski shed light on the problematic nature of modern parties and analyzed their influence over city life. He highlighted the perverse effects linked to their development -such as manipulation of popular will and recourse to corruption- and their role in undermining public debate and true democracy.¹⁰

Michels' (1912) famous 'iron law of oligarchy' represented the tendency of political party leaders to stay in power to the detriment of the interests of party members. Michels questioned the viability of democracy, noting that political parties, although born from the establishment of democracy and conceived as privileged instruments of its development, quickly become oligarchic organizations endangering the very essence of democracy. The analysis of Ostrogorski and Michels, putting forward the hypothesis that modern parties tend to favor their own interests rather than those of their members or their constituents, would influence many subsequent studies.¹¹

In a classic study, '*Les Partis Politiques*' [Political Parties], Maurice Duverger (1951) produced a synthetic analysis of political parties defining the field of research for several decades to come. Duverger linked party ideology to its structure and explained the nature of

¹⁰ Ostrogorski, M. (1902). *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties* Macmillan Co.

¹¹ Michels, R. (1999). *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. Routledge.

a nation's party system by that of its electoral system. According to Duverger, the nature of the organization of political parties plays a central role in the definition of parties, and is more determinant than these parties' platform or the class of their membership. The author also opposed *cadre parties* -seeking to bring together the notables without worrying about the multiplication of members- and *mass parties* which seek to attract militants. In his party analysis, Duverger singled out communism and fascism as separate categories distinguished from others parties by deep centralization and strict discipline.¹²

After Duverger, a large number of studies have focused on the classification of parties according to specific typologies. In 1964, Samuel Eldersveld put forward the notion of 'stratarchical party', inspired by American models and based on electoral efficiency. This model gives each stratum of the organization the means to develop its own program, its funding, and the choice of candidates with a great deal of autonomy.¹³

Otto Kirchheimer's concept of 'catch-all party' (1966) is one of the most often cited theories in contemporary research on political parties. The thesis argues that mass integration parties, once maintained by economic class or religious affiliation, have evolved into a new type of party, known as 'catch-all'. This change, according to Kirchheimer, came as a result of changing social conditions after World War II during the post-industrial period. According to Kirchheimer, 'catch-all' parties are distinguished by their size from the large traditional parties, by their pursuit of votes to the detriment of an ideology, their centrist and often incoherent platforms, representing parties designed to appeal to a growing public, and by their elitist style of organization.¹⁴

In a book considered to be the most complete and recognized approach in the classification of party systems 'Parties and Party Systems', Giovanni Sartori (1976) analyzed the history of

¹² Duverger, M. (1969). *Les Partis Politiques* (7th ed. ed.). Librairie Armand Colin.

¹³ Eldersveld, S. (1964). *Political Parties; a Behavioral Analysis*
Rand McNally.

¹⁴ Kirchheimer, O. (2015). The transformation of the Western European Party Systems
In J. La Palombara & M. Weiner (Eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development*. Princeton
University Press.

political parties and the relationships they build between them to form a party system. Drawing on a rigorous methodology, he conducted an in-depth examination of the notion and justification of political parties and developed a sharp critique of the various models of partisan competition.¹⁵

A large number of studies have documented changes in the structure, composition and financing of political parties. Several of them noted a reduction in the number of supporters and concluded that the erosion of party loyalty indicated problems with the well-functioning of democracy, caused by public rejection and linked to the poor performance of political parties. Others challenged this assumption focusing attention on party resiliency. For example, relying on documents and reports from various parties in European countries, Richard Katz and Peter Mair (1995) challenged the notion of 'party decline', arguing that political parties are increasingly able to control their environment and defend themselves from pressures for political change. The emergence of 'cartel parties' they argued, contributed to the stability of the party system in Western European democracies. According to the authors, the 'cartel party' is distinguished from other types of parties by its symbiotic relationship with the state, which enables it to ensure its own survival despite its growing disconnection from society. The authors concluded that since the 1960s, the role of political parties in Western democracies had evolved to adapt to the new reality.¹⁶ But while this body of work presents a categorization of political parties and an analysis of their structures and relationship to other stakeholders, it pays little attention to those parties' overall achievements as political institutions.

¹⁵Sartori, G. (1976). *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶ Katz, R., & Mair, P. (1995). Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party
Party Politics, 1(1), 5-28.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN EMERGING DEMOCRACIES

Despite the wide availability of resources on parties and party systems gathered from the experience of advanced democracies mainly in Western Europe, the study of parties and party systems that have developed in emerging democracies remains limited. In the context of democratic openness, a renewed interest in political participation led to a surge of political parties with a large variety of ideological inclinations. According to Crotty (1993), the experiences of emerging democracies required new approaches to parties and political party systems however, studies tended to be either broad theories or too limited in scope, often focusing on a single aspect of party behavior in a country or region. Trying to remedy this shortcoming, Crotty endeavored to study political parties across six different developing democracies and found that these parties furthered the control of the state, contributing to the consolidation of authoritarian regimes.¹⁷

Other authors studied party representation and party fragmentation in new democracies. For example, analyzing party competition mostly in post-communist parties, Bielasiak found that, despite some cross-national variations, “party fragmentation, weak political actors and floating constituencies,” were the main drivers of ineffective representation.¹⁸ The continuous burgeoning of political parties in emerging democracies was the subject of a study by Tavits who concluded that this occurrence came as a result of the relatively low cost of entry on the political scene, and the high level of electoral volatility.¹⁹ While many of these ventures died down, several germinated and made their mark on the road to democracy.

¹⁷ Crotty, W. (1993). Notes on the Study of Political Parties in the Third World. *The American Review of Politics*, 14, 659-694.

¹⁸ Bielasiak, J. (2005). Party Competition in emerging democracies: representation and effectiveness in post-communism and beyond. *Democratization*, 12(3), 331-356.

¹⁹ Tavits, M. (2013). *Post-Communist Democracies and Party Organization* Cambridge University Press.

Regardless of their strength or viability as political institutions, these political parties would, in some cases, open the way for an improved democracy in numerous ways.

POLITICAL PARTIES WITH AN ARMED HISTORY

GENERAL OVERVIEW

A recent and growing literature was concerned with the political parties that have evolved from armed groups to political organizations. Numerous studies focused on the transition into political life and the challenges and implications of the transformation from war to peace (Manning 2004 & 2019;²⁰ Garibay, 2005;²¹ DeZeeuw, 2007;²² Deonandan et al. 2007;²³ Nindorera, 2007;²⁴ Malaquias, 2007;²⁵ Manning and Smith, 2016;²⁶ Dudouet, 2012;²⁷

²⁰ Manning, C. (2004). Armed Opposition Groups into Political Parties: Comparing Bosnia, Kosovo, and Mozambique. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 39, 54-76. , Manning, C. (2019). Electoral Performance by Post-Rebel Parties *Government and Opposition*, 54(3), 415-453.

²¹ Garibay, D. (2005a). De la lutte armée a la lutte électorale, itinéraires divergents d'une trajectoire insolite. Une comparaison à partir des cas centraméricains et colombiens. *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 12, 170. , Garibay, D. (2005b). Del Conflicto Interno a la Polarización Electoral Diez Años de Elecciones en el Salvador (1994-2004). *Trace*, 48, 30-45. , Garibay, D. (2005c). Del Conflicto Interno a la Polarización Electoral, Diez Años de Elecciones en el Salvador (1994-2004). *Trace*, 48, 30-45.

²² DeZeeuw. (2007). *Understanding the Political Transformation of Rebel Movements*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

²³ Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁴ Nindorera, W. (2007). *Burundi: The Deficient Transformation of the CNDD-FDD*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

²⁵ Malaquias, A. (2007b). *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties; Cases from Latin America and Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁶ Manning, C., & Smith, I. (2016). Political party formation by former armed opposition groups after civil war. *Democratization*, 23(6), 972-989.

²⁷ Dudouet, V. (2012). Intra-Party Dynamics and the Political Transformation of Non-State Armed Groups. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 6(1), 96-108.

Dudouet et al., 2016;²⁸ Söderström 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020;²⁹ Wilson and Carroll, 2007³⁰). Others looked into the influence that organizational legacy and political experience have had on the development and electoral success of such parties (Manning, 1998³¹; Allison, 2006³²; Allison and Allison, 2010;³³ Deonandan et al., 2007;³⁴ Ishiyama and Batta 2011³⁵; Lyons, 2016³⁶; Sindre, 2016³⁷; Sindre and Söderström, 2016³⁸; Wade 2007³⁹; Manning and Smith, 2016⁴⁰). The study of the relationship between the way conflicts end, the peace agreement, and the future development of these parties has also been the focus of many scholarly papers

²⁸ Dudouet, V., Planta, K., & Giessmann, H. J. (2016). *The political transformation of armed and banned groups. Lessons learned and implications for international support.*

²⁹ Söderström, J. (2015). *Peacebuilding and Ex-Combatants: Political Reintegration in Liberia* Routledge. , Söderström, J. (2016). The Resilient, the Remobilized and the Removed: Party Mobilization among Former M19 Combatants. *Civil Wars*, 18(2), 214-233. , Söderström, J. (2019). The Gendered Impact of Crime on Political Knowledge: How Crime Impacts Cognition among Citizens in Sub-Sahara Africa. *Democracy and Security*, 16(2), 105-122. , Söderström, J. (2020). *Living Politics After War, Ex-Combatants and Veterans Coming Home.* Manchester University Press.

³⁰ Wilson, S., & Carroll, L. A. (2007). The Colombian Contradiction: Lessons Drawn from Guerrilla Experiments in Demobilization and Electoralism

In *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties* (pp. 81-106).

³¹ Manning, C. (1998b). Constructing opposition in Mozambique: Renamo as political party. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24(1), 161-189.

³² Allison, M. E. (2006). The Transition from Armed Opposition to Electoral Opposition in Central America. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 48(4), 137-162.

³³ Allison, M. E., & Allison, M. E. (2010). The Legacy of Violence on Post-Civil War Elections: The Case of El Salvador. *St Comp Int Dev*, 45, 104-124.

³⁴ Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

³⁵ Ishiyama, J., & Batta, A. (2011). Swords into plowshares: The organizational transformation of rebel groups into political parties. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44(4), 369-379.

³⁶ Lyons, T. (2016). From Victorious Rebels to Strong Authoritarian Parties: Prospects for Post-War Democratization. *Democratization*, 3(6), 1026-1041.

³⁷ Sindre, G. M. (2016). Internal Party Democracy in Former Rebel Parties. *Party Politics*, 22(4), 501-511.

³⁸ Sindre, G. M., & Söderström, J. (2016). Understanding armed groups and party politics. *Civil Wars*, 18:2.

³⁹ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN.* Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁴⁰ Manning, C., & Smith, I. (2016). Political party formation by former armed opposition groups after civil war. *Democratization*, 23(6), 972-989.

(Young, 2007⁴¹; Lyons, 2013⁴²; Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz, 2016⁴³; Stedman⁴⁴; Martí I Puig & Santiuste Cué, 2006⁴⁵). Regional and international involvement were also included in the discussion (Manning, 2007⁴⁶; Nindorera, 2007⁴⁷; Guistozzi, 2007⁴⁸). Many studies focused on the ideological evolution and programmatic messages of this type of parties (Curtis and Sindre, 2019⁴⁹; Kalyvas, 1996⁵⁰; Manning 1998⁵¹; Collier & Hoeffler, 2000⁵²; Fearon & Laitin, 2003⁵³; Weinstein, 2007⁵⁴; Nindorera, 2007⁵⁵; Schwedler, 2007⁵⁶; Tezcür, 2010⁵⁷; Sanín &

⁴¹ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁴² Lyons, T. (2013). *The Importance of Winning: Victorious Insurgent Groups and Post-Conflict Politics*.

⁴³ Söderberg Kovacs, M., & Hatz, S. (2016). Rebel-to-party transformations in civil war peace processes 1975-2011. *Democratization*, 23(6), 990-1008.

⁴⁴ Stedman, S. J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security*, 22(2), 5-53.

⁴⁵ Martí I Puig, S., & Santiuste Cué, S. (2006). ¿Cuáles son las diferencias entre las elites políticas de la izquierda y la derecha? In *La Izquierda Revolucionaria en Centroamérica: De la Lucha Armada a la Participación Electoral*. Catarata.

⁴⁶ Manning, C. (2007b). Party-building on the heels of war: el Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo and Mozambique. *Democratization*, 14(2).

⁴⁷ Nindorera, W. (2007). *Burundi: The Deficient Transformation of the CNDD-FDD*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁴⁸ Guistozzi, A. *Ibid. Afghanistan: Political Parties or Militia Fronts?*

⁴⁹ Curtis, D. E. A., & Sindre, G. M. (2019). Transforming State Visions: Ideology and Ideas in Armed Groups Turned Political Parties - Introduction to Special Issue 54(3), 387-414.

⁵⁰ Kalyvas, S. (1997). The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe. *German Politics and Society*, 15(4 (45)), 119-122.

⁵¹ Manning, C. (1998a). Citizen Views of Peace Building and Political Transition in Angola, 1997. *New England Journal of Public Policy*, 14(1), 161-178. , Manning, C. (1998b). Constructing opposition in Mozambique: Renamo as political party. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24(1), 161-189.

⁵² Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56, 563-595.

⁵³ Fearon, J., & Laitin, D. (2003). Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *The American Political Science Review*, 97(1), 75-90.

⁵⁴ Weinstein, M. (2007). *The Left's Long Road to Power in Uruguay* Palgrave Macmillan.

⁵⁵ Nindorera, W. (2007). *Burundi: The Deficient Transformation of the CNDD-FDD*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁵⁶ Schwedler, J. (2007). Democratization, Inclusion and the Moderation of Islamist Parties *Democratization*, 50, 56-61.

⁵⁷ Tezcür, G. (2010). The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of the Islamic Political Actors. *Party Politics*, 16(1), 69-88.

Wood 2014⁵⁸; Berti, 2019⁵⁹; Burihabwa & Curtis 2019⁶⁰; Chemouni & Mugiraneza 2019⁶¹; Richards and Vincent, 2008⁶²; Curtis and Sindre, 2019⁶³; Ishiyama, 2019⁶⁴). Alongside these works, some insights into the internal functioning of post-conflict political parties can be gathered from a collection of studies on the intra-party dynamics of these groups once they become political actors (Wade, 2007⁶⁵; Ibarra and Puig, 2007⁶⁶; Manning, 2007⁶⁷; Sindre and Söderström, 2016⁶⁸; Sindre, 2016⁶⁹, Allison, 2016⁷⁰; Ishiyama and Batta, 2011⁷¹, Sprenkels, 2019⁷²). Finally, some attention was devoted to these parties' overall contribution to long-term political peace and stability (Marshall and Ishiyama, 2016⁷³; Suazo, 2013⁷⁴).

⁵⁸ Gutiérrez Sanín, F., & Jean Wood, E. (2014). Ideology in civil war: Instrumental adoption and beyond. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(2), 213-226.

⁵⁹ Berti, B. (2019). Rebel Groups between Adaptation and Ideological Continuity: The Impact of Sustained Political Participation. *Government and Opposition*, 54(3), 513-535.

⁶⁰ Burihabwa, N., & Curtis, D. Ibid. The Limits of Resistance Ideology? The CNDD-FDD and the Legacies of Governance in Burundi. 559-583.

⁶¹ Chemouni, B., & Mugiraneza, A. (2020). Ideology and interests in the Rwandan patriotic front: Singing the struggle in pre-genocide Rwanda *African Affairs*, 119(474), 115-140.

⁶² Richards, P., & Vincent, J. (2008). *Sierra Leone: Marginalization of the RUF*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

⁶³ Curtis, D. E. A., & Sindre, G. M. (2019). Transforming State Visions: Ideology and Ideas in Armed Groups Turned Political Parties - Introduction to Special Issue *54(3)*, 387-414.

⁶⁴ Ishiyama, J. (2019). Identity Change and Rebel Party Political Success *Government and Opposition*, 54(3), 454-484.

⁶⁵ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁶⁶ Ibarra, C. F., & Puig, S. M. (2007). *Guatemala: From the Guerrilla Struggle to a Divided Left* Palgrave Macmillan.

⁶⁷ Manning, C. (2007b). Party-building on the heels of war: el Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo and Mozambique. *Democratization*, 14(2).

⁶⁸ Sindre, G. M., & Söderström, J. (2016). Understanding armed groups and party politics. *Civil Wars*, 18:2.

⁶⁹ Sindre, G. M. (2016). Internal Party Democracy in Former Rebel Parties. *Party Politics*, 22(4), 501-511.

⁷⁰ Allison, M. (2016). The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit: The Long Collapse. *Democratization*, 23(6), 1-17.

⁷¹ Ishiyama, J., & Batta, A. (2011). Swords into plowshares: The organizational transformation of rebel groups into political parties. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44(4), 369-379.

⁷² Sprenkels, R. (2019a). Ambivalent Moderation: The FMLN's Ideological Accommodation to Post-War Politics in El Salvador *Government and Opposition*, 54(3), 536-558.

⁷³ Marshall, M. C., & Ishiyama, J. (2016). Does Political Inclusion of Rebel Parties Promote Peace after Civil Conflict? *Democratization*, 23(6), 1009-1025.

⁷⁴ Suazo, A. (2013). Tools of Change: Long Term Inclusion in Peace Processes Tools of Change: Long-Term Inclusion in Peace Proce. Ibid., 28.

According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, between 1975 and 2011 a total of 216 peace agreements were concluded between warring parties attempting to move the fight from the battlefield to the ballot box. During that same period of time, about one third of armed groups entering negotiated peace agreements transformed into political parties.⁷⁵ The success of those parties however was far from guaranteed. While some of them succeeded in sustaining themselves over time, many others failed to reach this goal.⁷⁶

The body of literature on the nature of this transition and its implications mostly focuses on the factors influencing this transformation. Some scholars studied democratic perceptions (Martí I Puig & Santiuste Cué, 2006), the conflict settlement (de Zeeuw, 2007), post-war transition (Dudouet, 2012), domestic and regional contexts (de Zeeuw, 2007; Nindorera, 2007; Dudouet 2016), and international involvement (De Zeeuw 2009) as determining factors in these parties' full participation in electoral politics. Other researchers believed that a successful transition mostly depended on the extent to which *not doing so* (Manning, 2004 & 2019) or remaining overconnected to the context of the transition (Garibay 2005) threatened these parties' organizational survival.

TRANSITION CONDITIONS AND ADAPTATION

Surveying parliamentary elites of El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, Martí I Puig & Santiuste Cué analyzed their views of the democratic political systems and compared them to those of their political opponents. De Zeeuw distinguished two determining factors in the rebel-to-party transformation, conflict settlement, and domestic and regional contexts. Recognizing the complexity of the non-linear transformation, he classified it into different degrees: successful, partially successful, facade, and failed transformations. Evaluating the experiences of Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Nepal, Aceh, El Salvador, Colombia, and South Africa, Dudouet highlighted the importance of retaining cohesive coordination and

⁷⁵ Söderberg Kovacs, M., & Hatz, S. (2016). Rebel-to-party transformations in civil war peace processes 1975-2011. *Ibid.*, 23(6), 990-1008.

⁷⁶ Högladh, S. (2012). *Peace Agreements 1975-2011: Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset*.

maintaining effective communication during post-war transitions to prevent internal splits and disaffection and ensure collective ownership of the process. Dudouet emphasized the crucial support that organizations like the UN could bring to the political transformation processes.

Reviewing the challenges facing the transformation of armed movements to political parties, Nindorera and De Zeeuw assessed the role of international actors in the process of rebel group transformation and highlighted the important role of regional and international involvement (Nindorera) while discussing the reasons behind the inadequate performance of international programs (De Zeeuw). Comparing the experiences of the Kosovo Liberation Army, the Croatian Democratic Union, and the Serbian Democratic Party in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Renamo in Mozambique, Manning argued that much of these parties' commitment to post-war political settlement is determined by the unique challenges and circumstances they face during this transition. The author determined that full participation usually occurs when these parties feel a threat to their organizational survival. Studying the rebel-to-party experiences in Central America and Colombia, Garibay argued that these parties' ability to succeed overtime is determined by their aptitude to disconnect from context that defined the transition period, namely the legacies of the armed struggle and peace negotiations. Manning pointed out to the importance of transitional elections as a vehicle for long-term integration of post-insurgent parties into political life. The author argued that post-insurgent parties' participation in the first post-war elections is a crucial undertaking as it helps anchor them in political life. The study also pointed out to the importance of organizational and environmental factors in electoral outcomes. The journeys, experiences and political reintegration of former combatants, were the subject of several Söderström publications where she documented the process of coming home. Söderström highlighted the importance of bringing serious attention to ex-combatants as they learn citizenship practices and help mend the relationship with the state.

WARTIME CONDITIONS AND STATE CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to the above-mentioned elements, characteristics of the war, its length and intensity (Malaquias, 2007; Manning and Smith, 2016); and the democratic strength of the country (Manning and Smith, 2016) are spelled out as determinant factors. The persistence of the armed conflict (Wilson and Carroll, 2007) as well as the grievances, achievements, and political commitment of former combatants also received special attention (Söderstrom, 2015, 2019, 2020).

Manning and Smith reported that former armed groups' future success is shaped by the characteristics of the war and the way it unfolds. Allison further argued that wartime success, the number of combatants, popular support during the conflict, and ability of rebels to capture and control territory helped explain these groups' future performance as political parties. According to Lyons, the length of the armed struggle and geographical coverage also contribute to post-conflict electoral success. Looking at Angola's experience, Malaquias determined that the length and violence of the conflicts, and the way these factors relate to the country's history, conditions the party's seizure and ultimate consolidation of power. Examining the Colombian experience, Wilson and Carroll observed that the persistence of the armed conflict in Colombia, despite negotiated agreements with several guerrillas, has hindered Colombian revolutionaries' electoral success and full participation in the country's democratic life.

INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY AND POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Case studies on the impact of the organizational legacy and political experience have emphasized the importance of the institutional history of the emerging parties. For example, focusing on the evolution of Hezbollah and Hamas, Berti (2016) argued that legacies such as ideology, practices and institutions, but also relationship with the state shape these parties' political trajectories. Manning and Smith along with some others, also established that political experience was a determinant of success. Explaining the successful transformation of the FMLN in El Salvador, Wade posited that prior experience with political organizing through political parties or labor unions facilitated these groups' transition into political life.

Comparing the experiences of African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in Zambia, Muriaas et al (2016) found that armed history works in favor of governing parties, helping them build a strongly institutionalized party. Using the Communist Party of Nepal as a case study, Ishiyama and Batta (2011) showed how the internal dynamics within the party were largely determined by the interaction between the characteristics of the rebel group and the external political environment. According to Sindre (2016), even when formal procedures required intraparty democracy, the organizational legacies of decentralized wartime command structures influenced the post-insurgent parties ruling styles, making them less likely to be inclusive in their decision-making process.

CONFLICT SETTLEMENT

The way conflicts end as well as conflict resolution methods and agreements have also been the focus of many studies. The role of the peace agreements, including their shortcomings and the role they play in ensuring a smooth transition were explored by several authors (Young, 2007; Lyons 2013 & 2016; Kovacs and Hatz 2016). In his study of Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), Young pointed out to the shortcomings of a peace agreement that despite being presented as "comprehensive" left many problems unsolved and skipped important issues to be discussed after the agreement was signed. Kovacs and Hatz on the other hand, in their review of rebel-to-party provisions in peace agreements, found that the agreements' provisions played a rather insignificant role and made little difference in the expected outcomes. The relationship between war termination and post-conflict regimes was the subject of Lyon's comparative study of the victorious Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), Uganda's National Revolutionary Army (NRA), and Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Lyons showed how victorious rebels often tend to transform into authoritarian parties. In another examination of war to peace transitions, the same author argued that peace implementation was more likely to succeed when the process is flexible on deadlines and milestones and when it prioritizes the demilitarization of politics.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Several authors have looked at regional developments as well as regional and international involvement to measure the extent to which these factors impact the development of former warring parties (Manning, 2007; Nindorera, 2007; Giustozzi, 2007). Analyzing the experiences of El Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo and Mozambique, Manning studied the influence of international actors and presented the role they played in shaping the outcomes of these transitions. Nindorera's study of the CNDD-FDD in Burundi also examined the constructive role of regional and international involvement. In similar fashion, Giustozzi shed light on the failings of a fragmented international intervention in Afghanistan.

IDEOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

Many scholars turned their attention to the ideological position and ideological evolution of these groups, and their possible impact on the parties' overall performance (Kalyvas, 1996; Manning 1998; Collier & Hoeffler, 2000; Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Weinstein 2007; Nindorera, 2007; Schwedler, 2007; Tezcür, 2010; Sanín & Wood 2014; Berti, 2019; Burihabwa & Curtis 2019; Chemouni & Mugiraneza 2019; Curtis and Sindre, 2019; Ishiyama 2019; Sindre 2019; Sprenkels, 2019). Downplaying the role of ideas in civil wars Collier and Hoeffler argued that greed was more likely to cause conflict than actual grievances. Greed, they argued, represented by financial opportunities for capturing resources, is what made rebellion attractive and rendered it more viable. Along the same lines, Fearon and Laitin found that the root causes of civil wars in ethnically or religiously diverse countries, stemmed from social and economic conditions rather than from ethnic or religious peculiarities. The authors argued that poverty, instability, rough terrain, and large populations were the factors most likely to drive social unrest and inspire insurgencies, mobilized along ethnic lines.

By contrast, Sanín and Wood considered that ideology plays an essential role in armed groups' behavior and that it mattered in both instrumental and normative ways. Ideology they argued, helps create cohesion amongst heterogenous members with sometimes different values and beliefs, it also helps shape and constrain armed groups' actions even at

the cost of strategic benefits. Translating and analyzing songs that supported the Rwandan's Patriotic Front (RPF) during its early days, Chemouni and Mugiraneza pointed out to the enduring impact of ideas that motivated armed groups during the war. Unveiling the armed group's wartime visions, the authors found that while the RPF ideology was used as an instrument to create legitimacy, it also drove policies that reflected deep rooted ideas from the past. Looking at the experience of Renamo in Mozambique, Manning brought to light the importance of ideology (or lack of) in these groups' war-to-peace transition. The author described the metamorphosis of Renamo –famously known for being an armed organization without political program– and the efforts it exerted to construct the political core that it lacked. Other authors focused on electoral participation and its ability to contribute to the ideological moderation of radical groups.

Examining the three dimensions of inclusion (elections, cooperation and moderation) of Islamist groups in the Middle East, Schwedler showed how political inclusion is likely to moderate the views of extremist actors in general terms. Schwedler noted however that this moderation doesn't eliminate all forms of radicalism since the new political actors typically retain their normative commitments. In his study of confessional parties in six European countries, Kalyvas analyzed the Christian Democratic parties' phenomenon, and the relationship between these parties' religious pedigree and their evolution as successful, democratic, and secular parties. The author highlighted the pragmatic disposition of these parties and the way in which self-interest constrained their choices and led to decisions that altered their initial predisposition in a permanent way. Weinstein's 2007 study of the Tupumaros showed how the road to power in Uruguay involved ideological compromises and the endorsement of a more pragmatic and moderate approach. Looking at the political and ideological evolutions of Hamas (Palestine) and Hezbollah (Lebanon), Berti observed that both organizations developed a political discourse that reconciled a radical ideological platform with the needs of their sociopolitical environment. By stretching the interpretation of their constitutive ideological platforms both were able to maximize their political gains. In his study of the FMLN post-war ideology, Sprenkels posited that, torn between intra-party tensions about ideological definitions and the need to attract centrist voters, the FMLN adopted political positions that conflicted with the party's ideological commitments. This

paradoxical process was described by the author as ‘ambivalent moderation’ which ultimately weakened its contributions to democratization. Curtis and Sindre explored the variation in the role of ideology in former rebel parties and the extent to which ideological rebranding affected post-war politics. Studying the transformation of Aceh Party, the Serb Democratic Party, and the Tamil National Alliance, Sindre found that the programmatic message that former rebel groups mobilized around, played an important role in forging more peaceful inter-ethnic relations after war. Similarly, Nindorera identified ideological weakness as one of the main obstacles to the effective transformation of the CNDD-FDD in Burundi. Contesting previous arguments that the absence of progressive ideas led CNDD-FDD to adopt authoritarian governance practices, Curtis and Burihabwa argued that progressive and inclusive ideas did exist but were sidelined by hardliners who were able to gain control of the party by use of force. The authors explained that earlier research, focusing on either the CNDD-FDD’s lack of a clear ideology, ethnic outbidding, or on the role of international and regional actors, failed to take into account the internal dynamics that determined the party’s behavior once in office.

At the same time, other studies showed how domesticating extremism, especially in undemocratic systems of government, undermined democratic transformation. Comparing Islamic political actors in Iran and Turkey, Tezcür found that while moderation helped produce Muslim reformers, it remained an advantage in disguise. Examining the effects of identity change on party success after the end of civil wars, Ishiyama concluded that name changes carried much less significance than renunciation of violence in future party performance.

INTERNAL FUNCTIONING

The internal functioning of rebel groups once they become political actors, including their organizational structures, and intra-party dynamics, were also the subject of many studies. Authors looked at political cleavages (Ibarra & Puig 2007; Manning, 2007; Ishiyama & Batta, 2011; Sindre, 2016), organizational and institutional factors (Allison, 2018), as well as internal democracy (Wade, 2007), and their possible impact on party evolution. Looking at

the experience of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Ishiyama & Batta used pre-existing literature on rebel group-to-party transformation to understand the internal dynamics of the party. The authors found that the former rebel group's own features as well as the external political environment created political cleavages that generated "centripetal pressures" leading to major reorganizational changes. Ishiyama & Batta described the divisions that emerged when the party split between those who supported electoral pragmatism and those who opposed ideological accommodation. Similarly, Ibarra and Puig illustrated the dangers posed by internal divisions and ideological ambiguity on the Guatemalan former guerrillas. These internal struggles they argued imperiled the very existence of these post-conflict movements. Examining the cases of El Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo and Mozambique, Manning investigated the challenges faced by these parties' leaders while trying to balance adaptation to the democratic games and internal organizational dynamics. The author described the party leaders' struggles to retain control of their parties while contesting elections following the rules of democratic competition. Looking at the impact of organizational and institutional factors, Allison tried to understand the reasons behind the URNG's poor performance as a political party. He concluded that in addition to unfavorable electoral rules, the size of the organization, internal divisions, lack of political experience, and a poor relationship with civil society played a determining role in the party's underachievement. In a 2007 study on the FMLN, Wade determined that while political experience of some of its leaders helped transform the former guerrilla into one of the most successful political parties of its kind, internal disputes and lack of internal democracy also hampered further advancement. Finally, looking at ex-combatants' political mobilization in Aceh and East Timor, Sindre argued that former rebel group members greatly influenced the party's evolution in the post-conflict period. Sindre observed that former rebel group members exerted influence on intra-party dynamics and on post-conflict policy formulation.

INCLUSION

Lastly, some attention has been paid to the impact of the inclusion of former rebel parties in the peace negotiations and to this involvement's effect on a long-lasting peace. For example,

Roy Licklider⁷⁷ argued that in order to promote peace duration, all important players had to be included in the process as far in advance as possible. Similarly, investigating the effects of inclusive strategies in peace agreements, Suazo (2013) found that including former rebel parties in the process of governance after the conclusion of the peace process positively impacted long-term peace prospects.⁷⁸ Suazo's argument was echoed by Marshall and Ishiyama (2016) who, examining the extent to which the inclusion of these parties in the democratic process contributed to a durable peace in the aftermath of civil wars, found that this active involvement greatly reduced the likelihood of recurrence of conflict.⁷⁹ The exclusion of important stakeholders -such as peace opponents or disgruntled partisans- from the peace process was explored by Stedman who highlighted the role played by international actors in preserving peace.⁸⁰

While this recent scholarly literature has focused its attention on the reasons behind the political success of parties with an armed history, and the impact of the inclusion of former rebel parties on a lasting peace, the study of such parties' role as agents of change and their contribution to an improved democracy has largely been ignored.

I aim to contribute to the literature on post-insurgent political parties through examining the role of the Sinn Féin, the Lebanese Forces, the AD M-19, and the FMLN, as forces driving meaningful progress in the democratic practices at the national level. This effort seeks to both evaluate the worthiness of engaging in peace processes with armed groups, and deepen the understanding of these transformed entities, outside the framework of pure electoral success.

Before going any further I would like to clarify that of the four cases presented in this thesis, only the Colombian party first saw the light as an armed group with no previous political

⁷⁷ Licklider, R. (1993). *Stopping the Killing, How Civil Wars End*. New York University Press.

⁷⁸ Suazo, A. (2013). Tools of Change: Long Term Inclusion in Peace Processes Tools of Change: Long-Term Inclusion in Peace Proce. *Democratization*, 28.

⁷⁹ Marshall, M. C., & Ishiyama, J. (2016). Does Political Inclusion of Rebel Parties Promote Peace after Civil Conflict? *Ibid.*, 23(6), 1009-1025.

⁸⁰ Stedman, S. J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security*, 22(2), 5-53.

presence. The three other political parties under review had had various degrees of political involvement before the emergence of the armed groups that would eventually end their armed activities upon signature of a peace agreement. Most notably, founded in 1905, the Sinn Féin party far preceded that of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the armed group that the party was for a long time associated with. Established some eight years later, the *Óglaigh na hÉireann* (renamed IRA at the start of the insurrection of Easter 1916), was born in response to the formation of an antithetical force, the Ulster Unionist Force, a militia loyal to the Ulster Unionist party. This sequence had significant consequences on the subsequent development of the party as well as the relationship between the two entities before and after the signature of the agreement. In the cases of the FMLN and the Lebanese Forces, both armed groups emerged as military wings of pre-existing political organizations such as the Communist Party in El Salvador or the Kataeb Party in Lebanon. Nonetheless, the armed expressions of those foundational parties would evolve into separate entities with distinct trajectories. Even if the initial groups that constituted them often remained relevant, these new entities evolved into full-blown organizations that would negotiate a peace settlement and transform themselves into distinct post-war political actors.

METHODOLOGY

TERMINOLOGY

PARTY SUCCESS V/S PARTY ACHIEVEMENTS

The most distinctive aspect of this research is its focus on the political parties as agents of change. Rather than looking at these parties' electoral successes, I will focus my attention on their broader achievements. Firstly, and to avoid any confusion, I would like to highlight the conceptual distinction that I draw between party success and party achievements. For the purpose of this study, party success will refer to the parties' performance as political institutions and their ability to survive beyond two electoral cycles. Thus, party success will pertain to the parties' electoral victories and their ability to maintain or increase their vote

share and support base overtime, thereby to remain as significant players on the political arena. Party success will be considered as one of the independent variables under review. Party achievements on the other hand will refer to these movements' contribution to the wellbeing of citizens and the democratization processes in their respective countries. These achievements would be long-lasting legacies that would endure even after/if those parties lose popularity, leave power, or cease to exist.

OTHER CLARIFICATIONS

Throughout the thesis I will be using different sentences to refer to party achievements. Those will include: 'contribution to the wellbeing of citizens', 'democratic achievements', 'improved democracy', and 'positive change'. I will also refer to the parties studied and their transformation using different expressions that might sometimes miss the subtle differences between the parties but nonetheless capture the general similarities between those cases. These expressions include, 'post-insurgent parties', 'former armed groups', and 'rebel-to-party transformation'. In particular, these qualifications might not accurately describe the Sinn Féin that was never an armed party itself but rather the political wing of an armed party.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

While the concept of democracy generally refers to the 'rule of the people', consensus over the definition of the term was never reached. Over the years, a number of scholars have attempted to establish a clear description of what it entails or how it should look like. In a seminal work on democracy and the ideal system of government, John Stuart Mill (1861) argued that, unlike under aristocratic or monarchic rules, democratic governments force decision-makers to share the political power with ordinary citizens, whose rights and interests of citizens are best preserved under this form of government.⁸¹ Schumpeter's very influential definition in the early 1940s stripped the term of its egalitarian character claiming that democracy was a control system where political elites use elections to obtain power.⁸²

⁸¹ Mill, J. S. (1861). *Considerations on Representative Government*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511783128>

⁸² Schumpeter, J. (1943). *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. G. Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Sartori's 'theory of democracy' (1987) pushed Schumpeter's classic elitist conception to extremes underlining the deceptive nature of democracy, describing it as a system that claims to represent the will of the majority when in fact it ensures the rule of a minority.⁸³ Attempting to define an ideal type of democracy, Dahl (1972) developed the concept of *Polyarchy*, defined as a set of institutional arrangements that permits political participation and public contestation by a great number of actors including community organizations and civil associations.⁸⁴ In 'The End of The Transition Paradigm' Thomas Carothers (2002) observed that, as they moved away from authoritarianism, many developing countries entered a political 'grey zone' where a number of conditions challenge the old assumptions of successful democratization. Carothers suggested the development of new models to assist countries going through the democratic transition.⁸⁵

Other scholars tried to understand why some countries were more likely to adopt democratic practices than others. For example, comparing the experiences of several Latin American countries, Pérez-Liñán and Scott Mainwaring (2013) developed the concept of 'regime legacies', highlighting the idea that a strong history of democracy is conducive to more democratic countries in the modern era. Powerful actors' political preferences and transnational forces are also pointed out as important factors explaining regime outcomes.⁸⁶ Some economists have argued that economic growth promoted democracy and vice-versa. For example, Lipset (1959) believed that democracy was the direct result of economic growth and that nations with a significant degree of industrialization and high levels of education had a greater chance of sustaining democracy than their less developed counterparts.⁸⁷ Related to these findings, Przeworski (2000) found that while democracies are much more likely to survive in wealthy societies, democratic systems of government

⁸³ Sartori, G. (1987). *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham House Publishers.

⁸⁴ Dahl, R. (1972). *Polyarchy, Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press.

⁸⁵ Carothers, T. (2002). The End of the Transition Paradigm. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1).

⁸⁶ Anibal, P.-L., & Mainwaring, S. (2013). Regime Legacies and Levels of Democracy: Evidence from Latin America. *Comparative Politics*, 45(4), 379-397.

⁸⁷ Lipset, S. M. (1959). Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *The American Political Science Review*, 53(1), 69-105.

have no impact on the economic development or economic equality.⁸⁸ Acemoglu et al. (2019) estimated that countries that transitioned from nondemocracy to democracy increased their GDP per capita by about 20 percent more than countries that remain a nondemocracy in the next 25 years following their transition.⁸⁹ Amartya Sen (1999) would argue that democratic practices, which are intricately connected to freedom, are conducive to general welfare. Multiparty democracies with free elections and free press he contended, forced policy-makers to be more responsive to the population.⁹⁰

Consensus over the definition of democracy being so difficult to reach, a general agreement over its measurement is even more difficult to obtain.⁹¹ A number of institutions have dedicated themselves to evaluating and ranking countries' levels of democracy however, consensus on what to measure and how to measure it could not be reached either. In fact, it is fairly common that these institutions' reports reach different outcomes. Providing data from eight leading organizations dedicated to measuring democracy, *Our World in Data* pointed out to the fact that these institutions often come to different conclusions in their assessments. According to *Our World in Data* differences stem from the way democracy is characterized and scored, the complexity of the spectrum used, the years and number of countries covered, the assessment of the characteristics of democracy, the approaches used to measure democracy, the precision of the assessments, the comparability across countries and time, and other factors that lead to different scoring models.⁹² When attempting to measure democracy, two of the most frequently used organizations are Freedom House and Polity IV. Despite being primarily interested in measuring freedom in the world, Freedom House's results are often considered benchmarks of democracy as they observe political rights and civil liberties according to a number of subcategories. Polity IV in turn, observes

⁸⁸ Przeworski, A. (2000). *Democracy and Development; Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. Cambridge University Press.

⁸⁹ Acemoglu, D., Naidu, S., Restrepo, P., & Robinson, J. (2019). Democracy Does Cause Growth. *Journal of Political Economy*, 127(1).

⁹⁰ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Anchor Books, a division of Random House Inc.

⁹¹ Coppedge, M., Gerring, J., Altman, D., Bernhard, M., Fish, S., Hicken, A., . . . Teorell, J. (2011). Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach. *Perspective on Politics*, 9(2), 247-267.

⁹² Herre, B. (2022). *Democracy data: how do researchers identify which countries are democratic?*

competitiveness and openness of executive recruitment, constraints on executive power, regulation and competitiveness of participation. According to Högström, despite aiming at similar outcomes, these two institutions' ranking of countries' levels of democracy widely differs, the diverging results being a reflection of their diverging ways of measuring their construct.⁹³ Additionally, a number of scholars, pointed out to these institutions' political bias. In particular, Freedom House's ratings have often been criticized for granting better scores to countries that have closer relations with the United States⁹⁴ and for oversimplifying complex issues, reducing important questions to simple classifications.⁹⁵ Furthermore, Cooley and Snyder argued that these organizations' rankings had adverse consequences on the states being graded. Reacting to their own rankings, governments felt compelled to devise strategies to respond to what they perceived as public judgments. According to the authors, these reactions often influence policymakers to make poor choices that lead to inadequate public policy outcomes.⁹⁶

POINT OF REFERENCE

The definition, description, and factors leading to democracy being so inconclusive, examining the four political parties' contribution to democracy became a daunting task. Against this background, I have decided to use as benchmark what I considered as the most universal approach to describing fair representation and the effective enjoyment of human rights, the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Adopted by the UN General Assembly on the 10th of December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights -initially conceived with the goal of preventing that atrocities like those of Second World War happen again-

⁹³ Högström, J. (2013). Does the Choice of Democracy Measure Matter? Comparisons between the Two Leading Democracy Indices, Freedom House and Polity IV. *Government and Opposition*, 48(2), 201-221. <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2012.10>

⁹⁴ Steiner, N. (2014). Comparing Freedom House Democracy Scores to Alternative Indices and Testing for Political Bias: Are US Allies Rated as More Democratic by Freedom House? *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis Research and Practice*, 18(4), 1-21.

⁹⁵ Lozovsky, I. (2016). Freedom by the Number. *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/29/freedom-by-the-numbers-freedom-house-in-the-world/>

⁹⁶ Cooley, A., & Snyder, J. (2016). *Ranking the World Grading States as a Tool of Global Governance* Cambridge University Press.

seemed like the right point of reference. This choice appeared to be especially suitable since my thesis is looking at different cases having emerged in different parts of the world with different backgrounds and cultural values. Composed by members with distinct political, cultural and religious backgrounds, the Commission that drafted the declaration epitomized universal values the way no other document had ever done so before. Co-drafted by French, Lebanese, Chinese, and Canadian nationals, and chaired by an American, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights was based on a common ground that transcended local cultures, beliefs, and traditions.⁹⁷ From this perspective, I chose to examine the four political parties' ability to promote such universal values, thus defending the rights of citizens in a manner that transcended the democratic conditions and socio-cultural backgrounds of the countries where they emerged.

It should be pointed out that the above-mentioned considerations do not necessarily imply that the political parties under review had adopted the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as their guiding principle as they crafted policies. In fact -and although there would often be explicit references to the various UN conventions in programs and legislations- in many instances, these parties might very well have been unaware of the connection between the policies they were promoting and the principles of the declaration. Nonetheless, while reviewing the legislations, advocacy, and policy programs put forward by these parties, I have used these guidelines as benchmarks to measure their contribution to democracy.

I mainly relied on the International Bill of Human Rights -which consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its two Optional Protocols. Considered the ultimate reference for promoting human dignity and rights, these documents guided my evaluation of these parties' policies and contributions to the societies where they emerged. I also considered the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations

⁹⁷ UN Website. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights: History of the Declaration*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/udhr/history-of-the-declaration>

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and other instruments and declarations such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, United Nations Principles for Older Persons, the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the declaration on strengthening international cooperation in the prevention of and fight against corruption during times of emergencies and crisis response and recovery.

In particular, I evaluated these parties' contribution to the promotion of measures that would enable both men and women to: enjoy all human rights (art. 3 of both ICESCR and ICCPR), the rights to work (art. 6 of ICESCR); enjoy just and favorable conditions of work (art. 7 of ICESCR); form and join trade unions (art. 8 of ICESCR); gain access to social security, including social insurance (art. 9 of ICESCR); receive the widest possible protection and assistance for the family, especially mothers, children and young persons (art. 10 of ICESCR); gain access to an adequate standard of living (art. 11 of ICESCR); enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (art. 12 of ICESCR); gain access to education (arts. 13 and 14 of ICESCR); and take part in cultural life (art. 15 of ICESCR). I also looked at the parties' contributions to: protecting citizens from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 7 of ICCPR); ensuring that no one is held in slavery or in servitude, or required to perform forced or compulsory labor (art. 8 of ICCPR); guaranteeing that no one is subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention (art. 9 of ICCPR); and ensuring that all persons deprived of their liberty are treated with humanity (art. 10 of ICCPR). I also looked at these parties' contributions to: promoting the equality of all persons before the courts and tribunals and for guarantees in criminal and civil proceedings (art. 14 of ICCPR), prohibiting retroactive criminal legislation (art. 15 of ICCPR); promoting the recognition of everyone, everywhere as a person before the law (art. 16 of ICCPR); and campaigning for the prohibition of arbitrary or unlawful interference with an individual's privacy, family, home or correspondence, and of unlawful attacks on honor and reputation (art. 17 of ICCPR). I also observed these groups' contribution to the protection of the rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (art. 18 of ICCPR) and to freedom of opinion and expression (art. 19

of ICCPR). In addition, I examined these parties' contributions to: fighting propaganda for war and of any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence (art. 20 of ICCPR); promoting the right of peaceful assembly (art. 21 of ICCPR) and the right to freedom of association (art. 22 of ICCPR); supporting the right of men and women of marriageable age to marry and to found a family, and the principle of equality of rights and responsibilities of spouses as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution (art. 23 of ICCPR). Also were taken into consideration, these parties' efforts to promote the protection of the rights of children (art. 24 of ICCPR); and the recognition of the right of every citizen to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to vote and to be elected, and to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country (art. 25 of ICCPR). Finally, I looked at their work in: ensuring that all persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law (art. 26 of ICCPR); and calling for protection of the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in the territories of States parties (art. 27 of ICCPR). In addition to the aforementioned criteria, I also considered these parties' efforts to lobby for more transparency and promote a more informed and engaged citizenry, as well as the role they played in increasing the political weight and active role of often-disempowered groups such as women, youth and minorities.

Answering this research question empirically, required information on the histories and trajectories of those parties to find out the extent to which the organizational legacy and future development of the parties contributed to the desired outcome. It's important to note that I didn't anticipate that these parties' contributions revolutionize the democratic systems in the countries where they emerged, but rather contribute in some measure to an improved quality of life, and to the betterment of human wellbeing and individual welfare. Party achievements were organized in a systematic manner according to the international covenants in Annex II.

METHODOLOGY

I would like to acknowledge a change in direction during the course of my investigation. This work started off in an exploratory mode, wanting to research the internal functioning of political parties with links to previous armed groups and the internal operations' influence on the parties' electoral success. But as I learned about these parties' roles in expanding the boundaries of democratic governance, I decided to shift to a different research design, investigating the actual grounds that led to that common outcome. This thesis utilizes the methodology of the *most different systems design*. This strategy is centered on comparing very different cases that yield the same outcome. It allows the researcher to identify a commonality between otherwise different cases and thus identify the independent variable that is causing the same outcome.⁹⁸

The initial assumption is that the four political parties chosen are different in a number of respects. They are located in different continents, they have quite different grievances, they fought with different methods, their peace agreements are substantially distinct, and their experiences as political parties vary significantly. Furthermore, each one of these cases exhibits a notable singularity. Unlike the other three cases the FMLN won state power through the electoral route. Of all three cases, the AD M-19 is the only party that wasn't even able to survive and disappeared barely three years after its inception. A feature very unique to Sinn Féin is the fact that it started its journey as a political party way before the Good Friday agreement was signed, and even preceded the formation of the armed group. Finally, and not to be disregarded, the Lebanese Forces, unlike most insurgent parties, stands out as a party that claims "resistance" rather than "revolutionary" origins. LF never embraced socialism as a preferred political system but was rather to the right of the political spectrum. Unlike the three other cases whose revolutionary goals aimed at achieving redistributive

⁹⁸ Steinmetz, J. (2021). Comparative Politics. In *Politics, Power, and Purpose: An Orientation to Political Science*.

social policies and securing economic policies favoring the poor and working classes, the LF militia represented a section of the population that was relatively privileged and the armed group's agenda evolved around concepts of freedom, sovereignty and liberation from occupying forces.

In other words, the past history and post-conflict evolution of these parties cannot at first sight, explain the fact that they all yielded similar results. Further investigation consisted in testing step by step this assumption in the course of a cross-systemic research. I sifted through the variables existing between the four cases and isolated those that are similar, since similar variables between the cases may in fact be the causal agent that is producing that same outcome. I asked the following question: *What was sufficiently common among these parties to convert them into agents for positive change at the national level irrespective of their locations, past history, institutional differences, and degrees of success?*

Based upon the aforementioned theoretical model, the following hypothesis was formulated: *there is a positive correlation between rebel-to-party transformation with a sincere commitment to engage in democratic practices and an improved democracy.* This hypothesis claims that the armed groups' renunciation of violence with a clear intention to join the democratic battlefield leads to these parties playing a leading role in the promotion of social wellbeing and improved democratic practices. As a first step I identified the dependent variable. I then established the independent variables, one of which is similar across all cases and six that varied from case to case. I singled out the dependent and independent variables as follows:

- Dependent (outcome) variable: *An improved democracy*
- Similar independent variable: *Rebel to party transformation*
- Different independent variables: *The peace agreement and the process that follows; the electoral system and electoral performance; the political environment; alliances and international support; previous political experience; internal democracy and inclusiveness including leadership selection and party discipline, and inclusion of women, youth, and*

minorities; internal cohesion; communication with the electorate and other stakeholders; finances; role of leadership; and ideology.

The samples studied are derived from four cases with very distinct histories, fighting for different causes and having had dissimilar experiences as political parties. My hypothesis presumes that these groups' particularities are irrelevant in explaining the dependent variable and that the only explanation for this common outcome is these parties' rejection of the armed struggle and commitment to exclusive political activity. When I noticed common ground within these particularities, I studied these particularities.

My investigation consisted in replicating some parts of previous studies to examine the impact of the war-to-peace transition and its challenges, the internal functioning of these parties, as well as more independent variables collected from the previously mentioned scholarly writings. The bulk of my research however, relied on in person interviews with members, former members and dissidents of the parties studied, as well as other stakeholders. A total of 50 interviews were conducted in Lebanon, Ireland, Colombia, and El Salvador. The complete list of interviewees can be found in Annex I.

LIMITATIONS

This approach is not without its own limitations. The most obvious is that I am looking at a relatively limited number of political parties and it would be important to examine other comparable cases especially those that (similar to the AD M-19) were not able to survive as political entities, the case of the AD M-19 being notably unique for its resounding failure and remarkable achievements. Additionally, I am aware of the fact that these parties' accomplishments, in many cases, might not have translated into clear-cut tangible changes. For instance, many of the achievements identified, such as the legislative proposals presented and lobbied for by the FMLN, the Lebanese Forces, and Sinn Féin, failed to reach their full potential. In many cases, these proposals were never ratified by parliament or were modified to suit certain interests before adoption, let alone the cases where the enacted laws

didn't end up being applied equally to everyone. Nevertheless, while it is not always clear how things would unfold, I believe that these political players pushed the envelope of democratic norms through awareness raising and in ways that positively influenced the society as whole.

It's important to note that, for the purpose of this study, I deliberately chose to only observe the actions, moves and activities that pertain to my scope of work as delineated above. It has often been brought to my attention by interviewees, especially those that are in disagreement with the parties under review, that these groups' violent past stains their postwar achievements. Some of these claims contend that these parties' contributions to the betterment of society should be dismissed as the harm that was generated as a consequence of their armed history far exceeds the benefits that ensued from their contributions as political actors. While I acknowledge that these claims merit academic attention, I chose not to delve into these considerations.

It is to be noted that the interviewees' contributions and analysis was undoubtedly conditioned by their parties' situation at the time of the interview. That is, most of the FMLN members were interviewed while the party was still in power in El Salvador; the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin interviewees were approached at a time when their parties were rising opposition parties, and the AD M-19 former members were met almost four decades after their party had fallen apart. In this context, the quality of the information collected from the interviewees varied considerably from one case to the other. In particular, the former AD M-19 interviewees were remarkably transparent and critical vis a vis the (now extinct) party. With the benefit of distance and hindsight, the Colombian interlocutors shared information that was shaped by a critical reflection with little interest in defending past failures and drawbacks. They identified problems at their core and offered a critical perspective that allowed for a nuanced evaluation of the rise and fall of the party. In contrast, the other three cases' interviewees, not unexpectedly, spoke in support of their parties' actions and decisions. It should also be noted that interviewing Sinn Féin members was particularly difficult. Gaining access to interviewees was the greatest challenge. Part of it was probably fault of mine as, not being fully aware of the criminal repercussions of uncovering past links

to the IRA, I presented my work without clarifying the fact that the thesis' goal wasn't to uncover any past connection to the IRA in any shape or form. That might have deterred people from sharing information and talking freely about their experience, fearing that the interviews would touch upon issues that they were uncomfortable talking about. It later became clear to me that, because there is no amnesty for troubles-era crimes, people who were even remotely connected to the IRA watched their words carefully. The Lebanese Forces and the FMLN interviewees on the other hand, showed great enthusiasm and were happy to meet and share information about their parties' inner workings and respective experiences.

CASE SELECTION

A comparative case study approach was selected as the best way to evaluate these parties' achievements. I used three criteria to select the participating parties, one of which is a unifying one across all cases while the two others greatly differed from one case to the other. The two last criteria would serve to demonstrate that irrespective of how these parties evolved, they all produced the same outcome.

The first criterion is the war-to-peace transition. I chose parties that had a long experience of militant violent struggle against the state or sub-national structures of authority and that had all embarked on a peace process that resulted in a peace accord. These parties would also participate in the post-settlement reconstruction of their society and engage in conventional politics. All four parties contested elections and could count, at various points in time, a considerable number of local and national elected representatives. They also were all, at some point, part of the parliamentary opposition, and had at least one significant electoral victory that energized their parties and undoubtedly fostered self-confidence and credibility. Second, I selected cases that had achieved different degrees of effectiveness in their political development and that had gone through dissimilar transition processes. These cases range from a very successful transformation such as that of the FMLN -that rose to become El Salvador's ruling party- to a major setback as was the case of the AD M-19 that

ceased to exist only a few years after its establishment. Lastly, and to ensure cultural diversity, I chose cases that are geographically spread across distinct parts of the world, enabling an exploration of the cultural and geopolitical factors affecting the transformation of protracted conflicts from different parts of the globe (Middle East, Europe, Central America and South America).

Bearing in mind these considerations, the following four organizations were selected:

- AD M-19 (Colombia): A former guerrilla organization that successfully transitioned from an armed group to a political party, initially with great success. After contributing to the drafting of a new Constitution for Colombia, the party slowly lost popular support, before completely disappearing, a mere 4 years after its emergence.
- Sinn Fein (Northern Ireland): A political party that operated in parallel with a military action for many years. After signing a peace agreement, the party fully committed to peaceful political action, witnessing a gradual growth in popularity until it became the most popular party both North and South of Ireland;
- Lebanese Forces (Lebanon): Fought as the main resistance militia within the Christian-dominated Lebanese front during the civil war. The militia's demobilization was followed by an 11-year ban from political activities. Upon resumption of partisan life, the party gathered momentum and rose to become the largest Christian party in Parliament;
- FMLN (El Salvador): entered the political arena after a decade-long armed insurrection. The party grew slowly but steadily, remaining in opposition for several years before becoming the strongest faction in the National Assembly. The FMLN eventually won two presidential terms before suffering rebuke after 10 years in power.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRATIC AGITATORS: A FIERCE FIGHT ON THE POLITICAL BATTLEFIELD

INTRODUCTION

As political parties, the former armed groups considered in this study moved away from the war mindset and committed to peaceful political life in significant ways. Definitely turning the page of armed conflict, they gradually acquired the skills needed to compromise, and unconditionally embraced the rules of democratic life. Despite varying in their electoral performance, all four parties actively participated in public life and achieved many successes on the political battlefield. Their achievements span from helping reform the constitution, to drafting legislations aimed at advancing and protecting democracy and human rights. The revamped organizations also advocated for improved democratic practices and helped advance citizens' wellbeing in a number of ways. Adopting a peace-driven discourse, all four political players arguably promoted reconciliation at the national level. As a political party, the former M-19 guerrilla played a leading role in the drafting of a new Constitution for Colombia, one that embraced tenets of international law and consecrated the principles of human rights. Sinn Féin became a staunch advocate for the principles of equality and strived to protect citizens' rights, including women, children and minorities. The Lebanese Forces campaigned for human rights issues, promoting legislation that aimed to protect women and children. The party also promoted transparency and judicial independence. And finally, as a ruling party, the FMLN instituted important reforms that improved human rights, education, health, and judicial independence. It also created opportunities for the vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.

It's important to note that, the promotion of democracy the way it unfolded might not have been an explicit objective of the armed movements that were linked to the four parties studied. While often having democracy-compatible goals and demands, it would be difficult to argue that any non-state armed insurgency's actions or modus of operandi are in keeping

with the tenets of democracy as commonly understood. The four cases covered in my study are no exception to that rule however, as political parties, they have acted in manners that have furthered democracy in unequivocal ways. In their new role as peaceful political players, party leaders often struggled to iron out wartime differences but managed to reinvent themselves as relevant political forces. As they embraced the rules of electoral participation, these new political actors were compelled to find a mainstream political ideology that suited the new post-war setting, and to moderate their views to influence election results in their favor. It is essential to mention that the democratic achievements of these parties don't absolve their misconducts or botched policies -that I deliberately chose not to scrutinize- but shed light on an aspect that is often overlooked in the analysis of post-insurgent parties' post-war performance.

AD-M19

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Up until 1990, the Colombian political regime was a two-party system characterized by an “oligarchical structure of power” between the Liberal and the Conservative parties. In 1956, threatened by the brief military leadership of General Rojas Pinilla, both parties held talks and came to an agreement that would organize their political relationship for the next three presidential terms, later extended to four terms. Known as the National front, the agreement -signed by rival political leaders on July 20, 1957- stipulated that the two parties would share power for the following 16 years. Under the terms of the agreement the presidency was to alternate between representatives of the two parties, and a system of parity between both parties would be established in all local and national level legislative and administrative posts.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Hoskin, G. (1979). Belief Systems of Colombian Political Party Activists. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 21(4), 481-504.

Despite the changes resulting from the new political regime, both parties adjusted to the new system and were able to maintain their power monopoly. With time however, the clientelistic dynamics that defined the relationship between political parties and the local population -based on the exchange of services for political support- started to erode and generated a legitimacy crisis within the regime. While the political power was able to absorb discontent, loss of credibility in political institutions generated an atmosphere that fostered frustration and stimulated violence.¹⁰⁰ It is in this context that Colombia's insurgent movements mainly, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) saw the light in the early 1960s.¹⁰¹ In the 1980s, guerrilla violence was amplified by the appearance of the drug trafficking phenomenon and its growing influence on all sectors of society. In addition to financing guerrilla and paramilitary operations, the drug lords' enormous resources promoted an atmosphere of chaos and brutality that characterized the conflict.¹⁰²

The M-19 movement appeared in Colombia in 1973 as an urban middle-class guerrilla, channeling popular discontent and promoting a socialist nationalist ideology. Since its inception the armed group affirmed its commitment to strengthening democracy and building a national identity based on Colombia's past history. Emerging as part of what had been called the second generation of guerrillas that had surfaced in the 1970s and 1980s, the M-19 was named after the fateful date of April 19, 1970. On that date, General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla had been elected to the presidency but his election was said to be stolen by fraudulent means. Drawing together frustrated militants, the M-19 initially comprised FARC and other guerrilla dissidents, ANAPO (Popular National Alliance) militants, Christian groups, university students, and various political groups. In its early stages, the group undertook highly symbolic actions that captured the nation's attention such as the stealing of the sword

¹⁰⁰ Ladrón de Guevara, A. D. (1990). Proceso Electoral y Democracia en Colombia: Las Elecciones de Marzo y Mayo de 1990. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 52(4), 99-125.

¹⁰¹ Rabasa, A. (2007). Counterinsurgency Study Paper 4, Colombia (1963-Present). In *Money in the Bank: Lessons Learned from Past Counterinsurgency (COIN) Operations* (pp. 59-68).

¹⁰² Dávila Ladrón de Guevara, A. (1990). Proceso Electoral y Democracia en Colombia: Las Elecciones de Marzo y Mayo de 1990. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 52(4), 99-125.

of Simón Bolívar from the *Quinta de Bolívar* Museum, drawing similarities between the struggle for Colombia's independence and its own aspirations. The M-19 defined itself as "non-dogmatic" and made sure to distance itself from Marxism-Leninism, contending that its main interests were rooted in political rather than ideological concerns. Unlike the traditional left, M-19's posture was nationalistic and advocated the enjoyment of life rather than sacrifice for the cause. Distinguishing itself from other contemporaneous guerrillas famed for their unyielding ideologies or internal purges, the M-19 encouraged debates and welcomed political proposals from a wide range of perspectives. M-19's main strategy was to undertake bold operations with high publicity and large political impact. Amongst the most famous were the theft of more than 5,700 weapons from a military garrison in the north of Bogotá on New Year's Eve of 1979; the two-month long Dominican Embassy siege in 1980 where a commando of the M-19 captured fifteen ambassadors, including the American, before flying to safety in Cuba; or the 1985 siege of the Palace of Justice to prosecute the government for its failure to deliver on its promises, a highly controversial action that substantially reduced the popularity of the group.¹⁰³ After decades of political and military conflicts, the M-19 guerrilla handed in arms and agreed to cease all military operations after signing a peace deal in 1990. Upon demobilization, the group transformed into a political party that would peacefully participate in political life and contribute to bringing forward important changes including the historic reform of the Colombian constitution.

Upon disarming, the M-19 merged with other political groupings and with smaller demobilized armed forces who were also looking for ways to enter the political debate through peaceful means. The demilitarized movement formed a political party, the *Alianza Democrática M-19* (Democratic Alliance M-19 or AD M-19).¹⁰⁴ Two days after demobilizing and a few weeks before creating its own party, the former armed group participated in elections astonishing the nation with remarkable results. However, while the movement's

¹⁰³ Grabe, V. (2010). M-19: De la Lucha Armada a la Renuncia a la Violencia. *IV Jornadas internacionales sobre terrorismo los finales del terrorismo: lecciones desde la perspectiva comparada*, 1-33.

¹⁰⁴ Boudon, L. (2001). Colombia's M-19 Democratic Alliance. A case Study in New-Party Self-Destruction. *Library of Congress*, 28(1), 73-92.

debut in politics was full of promise, the AD M-19 failed to establish itself as a political force and gradually lost steam during subsequent elections. Despite important achievements, the newly formed party was not able to organize itself to create the necessary bases which would have enabled it to remain relevant as a political force. The AD M-19's political life faced a number of challenges including reintegration issues, inability to devise a clear ideology, lack of cohesion, insufficient funding, and lack of political experience. Having joined forces with other leftist movements, the new party lacked the discipline that usually characterizes parties with an armed history. The party's insufficient political experience, its diffused identity, and its members' poor understanding of the *clientelistic* influences on the Colombian electoral system, crippled its stature as a viable political alternative.¹⁰⁵ Evolving in an eccentric way with little discipline and weak leadership, the AD M-19 slowly disintegrated and ultimately dispersed. Nevertheless, the *Alianza Democrática's* relevance as a political movement far transcends its lifetime as a political party. Fully embracing democratic principles, the movement played an important role in the political process of the 1990s, a period that is considered a turning point in Colombian history. With the active contribution of the party, a new Constitution bringing fundamental and much-needed changes saw the light in 1991.

The institutional reform that was embodied in the Constitutional Assembly (*Constituyente*) was a national undertaking that resulted from a series of developments that were years in the making. The call for a Constituent Assembly as a formula to reform the Colombian Constitution was brought to the political debate on several occasions between 1977 and 1988.¹⁰⁶ A number of reformist Colombian presidents, aware of the crucial role played by urban swing voters in presidential elections, had been eager to bring about reforms that would satisfy their demands. According to Nielson and Shugart, urban voters were growing increasingly frustrated with the political system whose legislature -elected by institutional rules that overrepresented rural voters- was unresponsive to their needs. Several Presidents

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Dávila Ladrón de Guevara, A. (1990). Proceso Electoral y Democracia en Colombia: Las Elecciones de Marzo y Mayo de 1990. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 52(4), 99-125.

attempted to modify policy to respond to the demands of urban voters but their efforts were repeatedly thwarted by congressional majorities. Last of which was President Barco's unsuccessful effort to pass a constitutional amendment in 1988, that would have allowed a reform of the Constitution through a referendum. The student movement that emerged in 1990 was immediately perceived as a unique opportunity for change. Encouraged by President Barco and then-Minister of government Gaviria, the movement sponsored an unofficial plebiscite on the day of the congressional elections in March 1990. The initiative was capitalized on by the President who, using his state-of-siege powers, decreed an "official" referendum to allow for a special Constituent Assembly to reform the constitution, along with the May 1990 presidential elections. Shugart reported that, albeit unconstitutional, the decree was upheld by the Supreme Court on the grounds that the decision was taken during a national emergency.¹⁰⁷

The M-19's role in that process was multifaceted. The guerrilla's demobilization and decision to join the political process triggered an enthusiasm and a commotion that, along with other forces, would lead to the Constituent Assembly. But according to Nielson and Shugart the M-19's inclusion in that process was also part of a larger scheme. The authors reported that, eager to ensure that the Constituent Assembly included members whose interests diverged from those of members of congress who were likely to oppose their project, Gaviria and some party leaders strategically tied the constitutional reform project to the demobilization of the guerrilla. Gaviria reckoned that, just like the reformist leaders in the Liberal party, the demobilized M-19 representatives would favor changes that would be in line with their vision of a political system, one that would bypass rampant clientelism and corruption that served regional interests and instead, ensure a greater participation of urban voters.¹⁰⁸ Whatever the reasons that led to that development, the Constitutional Assembly represented a decisive moment in the country's history. This national watershed was symbolized by the inclusion of two former nemesis in the collegial presidency of the Assembly, M-19 leader

¹⁰⁷ Nielson, D., & Shugart Soberg, M. (1999). Constitutional change in Colombia: Policy adjustment through institutional reform. *Comparative Political Studies*, 32(3), 313-341.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Antonio Navarro, and member of the National Salvation Movement (*Movimiento de Salvación Nacional-MSN*) Alvaro Gómez, an undisputed enemy of the M-19, having been kidnapped by the guerrilla in 1988. Dávila Ladrón de Guevara reported that the collaboration between the two men with clear signs of camaraderie served as an illustration of both men's genuine desire to renounce hatred and build a new political order.¹⁰⁹

CONTRIBUTION TO DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

On August 24, 1990, barely a few months after the creation of the AD M-19, the Government of President César Gaviria Trujillo convened a National Constitutional Assembly, calling for the election of 70 members to be tasked with reforming the Colombian Constitution. In a historic ballot, on December 5, 1990, Colombian citizens elected the members of that Assembly, including 18 members of the AD M-19, making it the second biggest component of the Assembly.¹¹⁰ Receiving 27.14 percent of the vote, a share regarded as outstanding for the newly disarmed movement,¹¹¹ the former insurgent group was immediately granted national recognition, above all when one of its main leaders, Antonio Navarro Wolff, was elected co-president of the National Constitutional Assembly.¹¹² Considered 'the most important attempt at democratization of the country in its Republican period'¹¹³ the 1991 constitution was dubbed the 'Human Rights Constitution' as it embraced tenets of

¹⁰⁹ Dávila Ladrón de Guevara, A. (1990). Proceso Electoral y Democracia en Colombia: Las Elecciones de Marzo y Mayo de 1990. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 52(4), 99-125.

¹¹⁰ The Assembly was composed of the Partido Liberal (25); the Alianza Democrática M-19 (18); the Movimiento de Salvación Nacional (11); the Partido Social Conservador (5); the independent Conservative Party slates (4); the Unión Patriótica (2); the Indigenous Movement (2); the Evangelical Movement (2); the Esperanza, Paz y Libertad (2); the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (1); and the Movimiento Indígena Quintín Lame (1). These last two assembly members were elected but did not have the right to vote in the Assembly.

¹¹¹ Fox, D., Gallón-Giraldo, G., & Stetson, A. (2010). Lessons of the Colombian Constitutional Reform of 1991; Toward the Securing of Peace and Reconciliation? In L. Miller & L. Aucoin (Eds.), *Framing the State in Times of Transition* (pp. 467-482).

¹¹² Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH). (1993). *Country Report, Colombia*.

¹¹³ Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue.

international law that guaranteed human, economic, and social rights.¹¹⁴ For the first time in Colombia's annals, the deep-rooted bipartisanship of Colombian politics was ruptured making space for new players.

A DRAFT TO MAKE HISTORY

In preparation for the Constituent Assembly meetings, the newly formed party convened roundtable discussions and drafted its own version of a new Constitution (*Borrador de una Nueva Constitución*) outlining its vision of a renewed Colombia. The draft document's content laid the foundations for an 'authentic, democratic coexistence',¹¹⁵ and suggested articles that were rooted in the principles of tolerance and pluralism, while respecting regional, ethnic, and cultural diversity. The draft constitution suggested articles that guaranteed the right to form unions, the right for health protection and social security, and the right to education, housing and property ownership. It also included a number of articles pertaining to human rights calling for the establishment of an ombudsman for the protection of human rights and fundamental guarantees, the creation of an Attorney General's Office, the protection of ethnic minorities' rights, a ban on death penalty, and the prohibition of cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment. A special section was dedicated to political rights including citizens' right to hold their representatives accountable, and the strengthening of the rights of parties in opposition. It is noteworthy that the draft constitution also included a section on freedom of enterprise and private initiative in a market-based economy, practiced within the limits of common good. Moreover, the draft called for consumer protection and recommended separation of powers. It also requested a two-round electoral system for the President, asking that the election of the Vice President be on the same ticket as the President, and calling for the right for popular recall of governors and mayors' terms in office.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ constitutionnet.org. *Constitutional History of Colombia*

¹¹⁵ AD M-19 Draft of a New Constitution for Colombia, Discussion Document, February-March 1991

¹¹⁶ AD M-19. (1991). *Seminarios Regionales De Convocatoria al Congreso Nacional, Borrador de una Nueva Constitución para Colombia, Documento de Discusión, Febrero-Marzo de 1991.*

A NEW CONSTITUTION

After 6 months of deliberations, on July 5, 1991, a new Colombian Constitution was enacted. Entering into force on July 6 1991, the new national charter consisted of 13 chapters, 380 articles and 59 transitory provisions. The new Constitution included many of the articles that the AD M-19 had suggested in their own draft version. Amongst other, articles that dealt with the protection and promotion of human and social rights such as the creation of a Human Rights Ombudsman's office, the creation of an Attorney General's Office, the protection of ethnic minorities, the promotion of gender equality, the revocation of mandate of elected officials, the reform of the electoral system for the election of the President, and the establishment of a position of Vice President, to be elected along with the President.¹¹⁷ In its final version, the new Constitution gave international human rights laws superior status over domestic laws and protected citizens from human rights abuses, strengthening control over those in power. It established several mechanisms to protect those rights, clearly indicating that certain absolute rights cannot be suspended even during a declared state of emergency. The Constitution also defined political rights and the proper way to exercise them, making room for a meaningful opposition, and regulating the function and responsibilities of political parties.¹¹⁸

To protect citizens from human rights abuses, the new Constitution called for, among other things, the creation of a Human Rights Ombudsman¹¹⁹ (*Defensoría del pueblo*), expeditious recourse to the courts (*acción de tutela*)¹²⁰, popular actions, and the restriction of the State's ability to impose states of exception.¹²¹ The creation of a Human Rights Ombudsman under the supervision of the attorney general, aimed to monitor the protection and development of human rights. The ombudsman would enjoy far-reaching authority with an ability to file claims, provide human rights education, and promote legislation that enhance the human rights' environment. The ombudsman and the attorney general's broad powers included the

¹¹⁷ Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH). (1993). *Country Report, Colombia*.

¹¹⁸ CIDH, I.-A. C. o. H. R. (1993). *Country Report, Colombia*.

¹¹⁹ Article 282 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²⁰ Article 86 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²¹ Article 215 of the Colombian Constitution

right to demand information from any authority, without limitation, as long as these demands comply with local laws or the Constitution. The expeditious recourse to the courts, allowed any Colombian citizen the right to seek judicial judgment if he or she felt that one of their fundamental rights had been threatened or violated by actions or omissions of public officials, as well as to force compliance with legal or administrative rulings. The expeditious recourse to the courts enabled people to seek judicial protection or the protection of collective rights and interests. The provision restricting the State's ability to impose states of exception and limiting their duration, scope and extent, safeguarded the sanctity of fundamental human rights and liberties.¹²² In addition, the new national charter instituted religious freedom¹²³ and strengthened respect for minorities' rights including reserved seats in Congress for indigenous and Afro-descendant population.¹²⁴ Moreover, it established the two-round system for the election of the President, with a runoff to be held between the top two candidates if no candidate receives a majority of the vote in the first round.¹²⁵ The document also restored the office of Vice-President and defined the election of the Vice-President, by popular vote, on the same ticket as the president.¹²⁶

In addition, the new Constitution established a constitutional court to determine the constitutionality of laws and treaties; encouraged peace promotion through provisions that facilitated peace negotiations; adopted a new regime for political parties; encouraged popular participation in political life; and reduced the power of the presidency to restore balance between all three branches of government.¹²⁷ As a result of the new Constitution,

¹²² Human Rights Watch (HRW). (1992). *Human Rights Watch World Report 1992 - Colombia - December 1990-February 1992*. https://www.hrw.org/reports/1992/WR92/AMW-04.htm#P259_96870

¹²³ Article 19 & Article 42 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²⁴ Article 171, Article 176 & Article 246 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²⁵ Article 190 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²⁶ Articles 202-205 of the Colombian Constitution

¹²⁷ Fox, D., Gallón-Giraldo, G., & Stetson, A. (2010). Lessons of the Colombian Constitutional Reform of 1991; Toward the Securing of Peace and Reconciliation? In L. Miller & L. Aucoin (Eds.), *Framing the State in Times of Transition* (pp. 467-482).

the state of emergency, in place for most of the past four decades, was lifted leaving Colombians free of civil liberties restrictions.¹²⁸

Other important reforms pertained to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies' elections. Concerning the latter, the number of seats per district was reduced which made it harder to win seats with a limited number of votes, making clientelism less easy to utilize. The new Constitution also transformed the Senate from a body representing regional districts to one elected from a single nationwide 100-seat district. This move disposed of malapportionment rendering Senators more accountable to voters on a national level, and more responsive to voters demands, in particular urban electors who felt less represented in the past. The new regulations disconnected the two houses' interests which ultimately resulted in greater attention to citizens' needs.¹²⁹

Most of the constitutional reforms that were introduced with the Constituent Assembly were anchored in international human rights law. In a bid to enrich the conversations and activate the debates, a number of high profile international non-governmental organizations took part in the deliberations. High officials from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch shared their concerns about the human rights situation in Colombia and suggested possible solutions to the widespread human rights violations in the country. Some of the most prominent Colombian legal scholars also joined the effort, bringing their extensive knowledge and deep understanding of comparative legal systems. A number of constitutional provisions were inspired from the French and American legal traditions and many others derived from constitutional provisions in Brazil, Spain, Portugal, and Scandinavia.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Human Rights Watch (HRW). (1992). *Human Rights Watch World Report 1992 - Colombia - December 1990-February 1992*. https://www.hrw.org/reports/1992/WR92/AMW-04.htm#P259_96870

¹²⁹ Nielson, D., & Shugart Soberg, M. (1999). Constitutional change in Colombia: Policy adjustment through institutional reform. *Comparative Political Studies*, 32(3), 313-341.

¹³⁰ Fox, D., Gallón-Giraldo, G., & Stetson, A. (2010). Lessons of the Colombian Constitutional Reform of 1991; Toward the Securing of Peace and Reconciliation? In L. Miller & L. Aucoin (Eds.), *Framing the State in Times of Transition* (pp. 467-482).

THE AD M-19'S WORK IN THE GOVERNMENT AND AT THE SENATE

As members of government and congressmen, the AD M-19 officials strived to improve social welfare and promote social equity. Holding the Ministry of Health between 1990 and 1992, Camilo González Posso¹³¹ sought to democratize the Colombian health system. Using principles that were embodied in the revised Constitution, González Posso designed policies that conformed with the concepts of universality, equality, and solidarity. The AD M-19 Minister proposed a publicly financed universal decentralized insurance system, and recommended the strengthening of public hospitals networks, and of the primary health care system.¹³² According to Posso, the ministry put in place the foundations needed to achieve the goal of 'Health for all before the year 2000'. In a 1992 interview, Posso summarized his achievements as follows: the improvement of the quality and distribution of water to benefit mostly disadvantaged areas; the advancement of children's health through improving child nutrition and access to vaccination; the introduction of an expanded immunization program (*Programa Ampliado de Inmunización*); the institution of a gender component in the health sector, and the creation of the Woman's Health Rights (*Derechos de la Salud de la Mujer*) aimed at ensuring that the newly created gender sensitive policy is institutionalized.¹³³ As Senator of the Republic, Senator Bernardo Gutiérrez Zuluaga strove to promote gender equality.¹³⁴ Gutiérrez Zuluaga suggested the development of legal instruments that would enhance women's role and their participation in society. In particular, he advocated for a National Plan for Women Participation (*El Plan Nacional para la Participación de la Mujer*),

¹³¹ Camilo González Posso was appointed Minister of Health under Cesar Gaviria's government as part of a National Unity Government. Posso served in the Ministry from October 1990 until July 1992

¹³² Vega Vargas, M., Eslava Castañeda, J. C., Arrubla Sánchez, D., & Hernández Álvarez, M. (2012). *La reforma sanitaria en Colombia a finales del siglo XX: La aproximación histórica desde el análisis sociopolítico*.

¹³³ González Posso, C. (1992). *La Salud: Un Programa Social a Largo Plazo* [Interview].

¹³⁴ Gutiérrez Zuluaga was one of the elite leaders of the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) and became a Colombian senator for the *Alianza Democrática M-19* in the period following the enactment of the new Constitution.

an initiative aimed at building the capacity of women and complying with the Constitution's articles that pertain to the promotion of women's rights.¹³⁵

RHETORIC AND PLATFORM

As a political party, the AD M-19 adopted a language of peace, promoting dialogue and non-violent solutions. A letter sent to President Gaviria in November 1992 well exemplifies the party's postwar position towards armed conflict expressing concern about the increase in guerrilla violence and the government's virulent response to the developments. In the letter, the directorate of the party asked that the government reconsiders its decision to retaliate with a full-fledged war. The plea was communicated in the following words: "Some of us, promoters of the *Alianza Democrática M-19*, were 'war people' and we know its horrors. Now we are 'peace people' without deceit or ambiguity".¹³⁶ The party also issued a number of documents detailing its vision of an improved Colombia with reduced inequalities and improved standards of living. In its Grand Proposals for a Leading Colombia (*Grandes Propósitos para Colombia Líder*), the party expressed its opposition to populist policies, countering practices that justified the persistence inequalities, and rejecting the false pretenses of redistribution of income. The party also took a clear stance against populism stating that it "promised the impossible and redistributed stagnation, lies, and delay."¹³⁷

A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

The AD M-19's contributions in furthering democracy in Colombia are often overlooked as scholars evaluate the performance of the party. Having ceased to exist just four years after its inception, the party is often evaluated in reference to its ability to consolidate and sustain itself as an alternative force in Colombian politics. According to former AD M-19 adviser to the Constituent Assembly Armando Novoa, this ephemeral movement's real value should be evaluated, not as a political institution but rather as a political phenomenon. To the

¹³⁵ Gutiérrez Zuluaga, B. (1992). Plan Nacional de Participación de la Mujer. *Revista 2010, February*.

¹³⁶ Political Office of the AD M-19. (1992). *Correspondance shared with the author*.

¹³⁷ AD M-19 Archives. *Grandes Propósitos para una Colombia Líder*.

magistrate, despite being short-lived, the party's life span accomplishments are huge. Novoa compared the achievements of the AD M-19 to those of another transient party, the *Union de Centro Democrático* [Union of the Democratic Centre], a Spanish party founded by Adolfo Suárez during the Spanish transition. Novoa explained that when the Franco regime fell and a new constitution was issued, a centrist party led by Suárez facilitated the transition between monarchy and democracy. Once that mission was accomplished, the cycle was closed, and the party ceased to exist. Similar to the *Union de Centro Democrático*, the AD M-19's mission was to stimulate the development of a new era. He explained,

“The question is: do we consider as a failure a party that emerges in a process of transition, and acts as a guarantor of a seamless transition from arms to political life? No, because the AD M-19 allowed us to go through this process. The fate of the AD M-19 was not to become an enduring political force but rather to facilitate the confluence of several factors that contributed to this transition.”

Comparing the party to great people who achieve great things and then cease to exist, Novoa argued that even when these interim instances disappear, their legacy lives on. As he remarked, “If you ask leaders such as Antonio Navarro or Gustavo Petro if they believe that this experience was a failure they would disagree, because both are political heirs of the AD M-19 and are important Colombian political figures.”¹³⁸ Along the same line, Camilo Gonzalez Posso maintained that the movement's main purpose was to give birth to a new type of political expressions. Mutating into a succession of left-leaning political entities such the *Polo Democrático Alternativo* and the *Partido Verde*, the AD M-19 he contended “was more like a promise for a better future than an immediate reward or an institution destined to survive over the years.”¹³⁹ Novoa recounted that the laying down of the M-19 weapons created a momentum that, along with the student-led *Septima Papeleta* [seventh ballot],¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

¹³⁹ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

¹⁴⁰ The Seventh Ballot refers to an additional vote to six others that took place in December 1990. The six ballots intended to vote for senators, representatives to the house, mayors, deputies, governors and councilors. The seventh called for the formation of a National Constituent Assembly to modify the Constitution of Colombia.

set in motion the process of a fundamental change in the history of Colombia. As he would note, “From a political point of view, the real force that led to the Constituent Assembly was not only the lack of credibility in the institutions but also the evolution of that new political force.”¹⁴¹ Resolutely involved in the drafting of the new Constitution and in the campaign that led to it, the recently disarmed M-19 had earnestly engaged in a historic undertaking that forever changed the political disposition of Colombia.

Putting this accomplishment in a wider historical context, former member of the Constituent Assembly Rosemberg Pabon reckoned that the existence of the AD M-19 is yet another milestone in Colombian history. To Pabon, Colombian history was produced by a series of milestones, each of which had helped the country slowly advance towards improved representation. To the former party leader, oftentimes, seemingly insignificant historical events quietly contribute to big and important changes. These events represent developments that push the boundaries of the possible and culminate in a big change that owes its occurrence to those important episodes. In Pabon’s words, “Men make history without being aware of it, the issue is not what is raised today, the issue is that today an idea is created and starts making its way until people adopt it.”¹⁴² A previous milestone he contends, was the 1957 Sitges and Benidrom agreement, securing a shared power between the liberal and conservative parties. Pabon believes that the 1957 agreement had set the stage for resolving disputes through peaceful means. The next important milestone he observed was the political process of the 1990s as it paved the way for the subsequent peace agreement signed in Havana 25 years later with the FARC guerrilla. To Pabon, this latter negotiation would have been unthinkable if it weren’t for the changes that occurred in the 1990s.¹⁴³ Along the same lines, former AD M-19 leader Antonio Navarro contended that the party’s achievements constituted an important foundation stone in the country’s modern history. Commenting on the party’s role within the Constituent Assembly he remarked, “We were pivotal in the establishment of the Constituent Assembly and our contribution was

¹⁴¹ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author’s interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

¹⁴² Pabon, R. (2018). *Author’s interview with Rosemberg Pabon* [Interview].

¹⁴³ Ibid.

fundamental for the content of the Constitution. The Assembly was a very important step of institutional reorganization that continues to be defended up until today.”¹⁴⁴

SINN FEIN

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The political roots of Sinn Féin go back to the Irish Independent Movement, brought forward by the founders of Irish Republicanism, the United Irishmen. Led by Theobald Wolfe Tone, the United Irishmen were inspired by the American Independence War and the democratic principles of the French Revolution in the 1790s.¹⁴⁵ Firmly convinced that British presence in Ireland fostered and reinforced discrimination and inequality, the Society of United Irishmen was formed in 1791 to achieve parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation.¹⁴⁶ Committed to those same ideals, Sinn Féin was founded in 1905 by Dublin-born journalist Arthur Griffith who, in 1899 established the first separatist newspaper in Ireland, the *United Irishman*. Through his writings, Griffith shaped and influenced the views of many individuals and organizations who, in the early 20th century yearned for home rule and separation from Britain.¹⁴⁷ The group’s firm belief that Ireland’s predicament lied in the hands of Irish people inspired the organization’s name translating to “Ourselves Alone.”¹⁴⁸ Convinced that British military power was invincible, Griffith opposed armed rebellion and advocated for passive resistance as the way to achieve home rule. Inspired by the example of Hungary that had achieved a dual monarchy with Austria in 1867, Griffith called for a similar approach advocating for the creation of a separate kingdom alongside Great Britain with a shared

¹⁴⁴ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author’s interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

¹⁴⁵ Sinn Fein. (1996). *Building a Permanent Peace in Ireland*

¹⁴⁶ Curtin, N. (1985). The transformation of the Society of United Irishmen into a Mass-Based Revolutionary Organization, 1794-6. *Irish Historical Studies*, 24(96), 463-492.

¹⁴⁷ Veldeman, M.-C. (2007). The Easter Rising 1916: a Minor Incident of Major Importance in Modern Irish History. *Equivalences*, 34(2).

¹⁴⁸ Cavendish, R. (2005). The Foundation of Sinn Féin. *History Today*, 55(11).
<https://www.historytoday.com/archive/foundation-sinn-fein>

monarch but separate governments. Griffith's non-violent approach was soon countered by more radical factions who saw no other solution to Ireland's predicaments than armed insurrection. In the spring of 1916, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), a more belligerent nationalist force planned an insurrection in the city of Dublin, with the hope of setting off a massive popular uprising in favor of an independent Ireland. The rebellion was brutally put off by the British army, resulting in 450 dead and 2,500 injured.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, in the following days, British authorities ordered the execution of fifteen men seen as the leaders of the rebellion and the incarceration of a hundred more.¹⁵⁰ The brutal British repression provoked outrage and indignation amongst the Irish population who, while initially reluctant to support the insurrection, grew much less supportive of non-passive rebellion. The Easter Rising as it came to be known, would mark the beginning of a sustained campaign of violence against British rule in Ireland.¹⁵¹ Even though Griffith had steered clear of the rising, the British authorities blamed the trouble on Sinn Féin and labelled it as such. Sinn Féin became the general term by which the British would make reference to all Irish nationalists. Eventually, the misnomer would bring together different political traditions and the majority of Irish republicans would unite under that same banner making Sinn Féin the largest political force in Ireland.¹⁵² The resentment and frustration that were triggered by the Easter Rising led extreme elements amongst Irish nationalists to wage an undeclared sustained war against the British forces in Ireland. Initially disapproved by Sinn Féin, the military actions of the Volunteers (which would later be known as the IRA) were eventually accepted by the movement who would officially acknowledge the IRA as its armed wing.¹⁵³

In the aftermath of the Easter Rising, Sinn Féin's adherence to the cause of self-determination and full independence from Britain would become the party's primary objective.

¹⁴⁹ Veldeman, M.-C. (2007). The Easter Rising 1916: a Minor Incident of Major Importance in Modern Irish History. *Equivalences*, 34(2).

¹⁵⁰ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁵¹ Veldeman, M.-C. (2007). The Easter Rising 1916: a Minor Incident of Major Importance in Modern Irish History. *Equivalences*, 34(2).

¹⁵² Connell J.R., J. E. A. (2011). Arthur Griffith and the Development of Sinn Féin *Contemporary History Book Reviews*, 19(4).

¹⁵³ Veldeman, M.-C. (2007). The Easter Rising 1916: a Minor Incident of Major Importance in Modern Irish History. *Equivalences*, 34(2).

Abstentionism (the refusal of elected candidates to take their seats in parliament) and armed resistance were the two main strategies used to achieve this goal. Winning 73 out of the 105 Irish seats in the 1918 British parliamentary elections, Sinn Féin's newly elected representatives formed the first parliament of an Irish republic, the *Dáil Éireann*, setting up a provisional government to rival Ireland's British administration.¹⁵⁴ In 1921, using the threat of Unionist intransigence, British conservative Prime Minister Lloyd George was able to persuade the Irish to make concessions that would lead to a constitutional settlement that gave partial autonomy to the twenty-six counties, known as the Irish Free State.¹⁵⁵ While the treaty didn't give Ireland full independence, Irish negotiators, including Michael Collins (a leading figure in the Irish Volunteers) considered it as a stepping stone towards full independence. But the reaction to the newly created State wasn't unanimous. Many within the Sinn Féin party, staunchly opposed the treaty, seeing it as a betrayal of republican aspirations. These divisions culminated in a bloody war that resulted in the defeat of the anti-treaty forces and the assassination of Michael Collins. Sinn Féin's military defeat set in motion the party's gradual decline in forthcoming years. This backslide was precipitated by De Valera's resignation as Sinn Féin leader and his founding of his own party, the Fianna Fáil. Over the next few decades, Sinn Féin witnessed more divisions over the manner to obtain reforms and its positions towards abstentionism.¹⁵⁶ The 1960s witnessed a significant change in direction and ideology. Relegating the armed struggle to the background, the official wing of the party and the IRA embraced Marxism-Leninism and favored the parliamentary route, making social inequality the central fact of their struggle. But in the 1970s, as the Protestant-dominated RUC proved unable to protect peaceful protesters, the Provisional IRA emerged as a necessary armed division, tasked to protect republicans from militant Unionists who constantly attacked Catholic areas with impunity.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁵⁵ Fair, J. (1972). The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921: Unionist Aspects of the Peace. *Journal of British Studies*, 12(1), 132-149.

¹⁵⁶ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁵⁷ Wilkinson, P. (1982). The Provisional IRA: An Assessment in the Wake of the 1981 Hunger Strike. *Government and Opposition*, 17(2), 140-156.

Convinced that the armed struggle was the most effective way to abolish partition, the *Provisional IRA* settled on a plan to modernize and improve the capabilities of its paramilitary organization making it more organized and more efficient. Complementing the activities of the paramilitary organization, the *Provisional Sinn Féin* served as a link between the clandestine IRA and the communities where it recruited its volunteers. The *Provisional Sinn Féin* also participated in elections with the explicit purpose of sending messages of disobedience and sabotaging the system. As the military defeat of the IRA started to seem more unlikely, the British changed strategies, introducing policies that exerted pressure on partisans, but those methods proved equally as counterproductive. The introduction of internment without trial in 1971 was met with anger and exasperation, and the Bloody Sunday events when British paratroopers fired on peaceful protesters created animosity and further increased resentment towards the British authorities.¹⁵⁸

The situation took a turn to the worse when the Wilson government in London decided to withdraw the special category status that republican and loyalist prisoners had been granted in 1972. The Northern Irish prisoners who were convicted of politically motivated crimes had been given a special status that had enabled them to self-organize on a communal basis. When the British authorities realized that this arrangement was radicalizing the movement from within prison walls, they transferred them to a new administration area where they would have to wear prison uniforms and perform prison work. The prisoners' passive protest to this decision gradually escalated and culminated in a hunger strike that turned into a movement that would draw massive global support, and lead to the death of ten prisoners.¹⁵⁹

One of the prisoners that had paid with their lives, Bobby Sands, became a symbol of martyrdom and sacrifice. Sands who had been elected to Westminster for the constituency of Fermanagh-South Tyrone a month prior to his passing, came to represent the plight of the

¹⁵⁸ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁵⁹ O'Hearn, D. (2017). Movement Inside and Outside of Prison, The H-Block Protest. In L. Bosi & G. De Fazio (Eds.), *The Troubles in Northern Ireland and Theories of Social Movements* (pp. 11-32). Amsterdam University Press.

working-class, a theme that suddenly started to resonate in the Republican community. The introduction of the working-class element in the Sinn Féin ideology and discourse marked a turning point in the organization's platform as from 1981 on, Sinn Féin started refining its political discourse, broadening its policy to encompass broader issues than just national independence. With this new approach, the organization's appeal started having ripple effects across the island, mobilizing public opinion in both parts of Ireland especially on the issue of prisoners' rights. The hunger strikes also resulted in what would be known as the "Armalite and Ballot box" strategy, the new stratagem whereby Sinn Féin would fight electoral and armed battles simultaneously. While the new approach yielded electoral benefits in the North, the Republic voters showed less enthusiasm to the party's discourse of oppression. The 1982 electoral results, revived the debate around abstentionism for the *Dáil* and before long, this long held policy was abandoned with the tacit approval of the IRA.¹⁶⁰

In 1985, the Thatcher government and the Irish Republic signed the Anglo-Irish agreement, a treaty that attempted to bring an end to the troubles, but the document was rejected in Unionist and Republican circles alike. Other attempts to quash the Republican fervor such as using informants' testimonies to jail IRA members, or undercover operations and summary executions of suspected IRA members, were at best ineffective. In 1986, the British government banned the broadcast of interviews of representatives of Sinn Féin and their supporters, escalating the tensions and intensifying IRA operations.¹⁶¹

While explicit efforts were exerted at various levels to suppress the insurgency, a long bargaining process between the British State and the Provisionals had been tacitly taking place since the early 1970s. This private connection included intermittent secret talks that lasted for many years, but for propaganda purposes, key elements of this relationship were obscured as deliberate back-channel discussions were ongoing.¹⁶² In 1988, as the prospects

¹⁶⁰ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ó Dochartaigh, N. (2015). The Longest Negotiation: British Policy, IRA Strategy and the Making of the Northern Ireland Peace Settlement. *Political Studies*, 63(1), 202-220.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12091>

for peace appeared highly improbable, another set of secret talks were initiated between Sinn Féin and SDLP (Sinn Féin's rival nationalist party) leaders, Gerry Adams and John Hume. The talks between the two representatives continued for months and surfaced in 1993 when the two leaders published the summary of the principles they had agreed on. The publication of the document marked a breakthrough in the history of the Irish conflict as British Prime Minister John Major and the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Albert Reynolds made a joint declaration that would set the stage for the process that would lead to formal peace talks.¹⁶³ In 1997, the British Labour Party's electoral victory facilitated the start of official peace negotiations. The 1998 Belfast agreement that ensued effectively brought an end to the troubles and established a cross-community roadmap for peace. The Good Friday agreement as it was commonly known, also dealt with the constitution, the political institutions, equality and human rights, the issue of arms, the victims of the conflict, the release of the political prisoners, policing and justice. In July 2005, the IRA leadership officially announced its intentions to end the armed conflict and asked its members to help facilitate the transition towards a new era where those very same battles would be fought for in a peaceful manner.¹⁶⁴ Sinn Féin is currently the largest party in both the Republic of Ireland the Northern Irish Assemblies. Over the past two decades, Sinn Féin achieved many gains, most notable of which were: paving the way towards the reunification of the island; and rising to become the most popular party, both in the North -within the nationalist community- and in the Republic of Ireland.¹⁶⁵

STRIDES MADE

RECEIVING THE ULTIMATE REWARD AND EDGING CLOSER TO REUNIFICATION

The party's political strategy reaped electoral benefits. Despite a fast-growing bloc of non-aligned voters, Sinn Féin's popularity in the North of Ireland remained unquestionable¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁶⁴ Brún, B. d. (2008). *The road to peace in Ireland*

¹⁶⁵ O'Connor, R. (2020). Sinn Féin officially Ireland's most popular party following massive surge in support. *The Irish Post*. <https://www.myendnoteweb.com/EndNoteWeb.html?func=new&>

¹⁶⁶ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

while the party's standing in the Republic accomplished a quantum leap in the February 2020 general elections.¹⁶⁷ Sinn Féin was able to meet the demands of its supporters and crystallize their political aspirations thanks to a dynamic constituency service and an army of political activists who constantly operate on behalf of the constituents. Providing a broad range of social services that ensure the wellbeing of its constituency, the party supported legislation that responds to the needs of the community it represents,¹⁶⁸ while enlarging its constituency by tapping into often neglected areas.¹⁶⁹ In the North of Ireland, the party succeeded in attracting previous non-voters, appealing to a wider section of the nationalist community.¹⁷⁰ In the South, targeting young voters and a disadvantaged population that had grown increasingly frustrated by a widening economic gap, Sinn Féin capitalized on lack of affordable housing and the government's failure to provide proper healthcare.¹⁷¹ To the surprise of many, the February 2020 general elections in the Republic of Ireland proclaimed Sinn Féin as the country's biggest winner and made it, for the first time, the most popular party in the Republic.¹⁷²

With Catholics outnumbering protestants in Northern Ireland since 2021,¹⁷³ a referendum resulting in a reunification of the island seems within reach more than at any other time in history. Despite recent reporting of a dwindling correlation between sectarianism and national identity,¹⁷⁴ Sinn Féin estimates that the idea of a United Ireland is swiftly gaining ground. Confident that reunification has become inevitable, former Lord Mayor of the city of Dublin posited that the Irish government should start making preparations for a transition

¹⁶⁷ Leahy, P. (2020). Sinn Féin leads way in Irish Times/Ipsos MRBI poll with highest support ever *Irish Times*.

¹⁶⁸ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

¹⁶⁹ MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

¹⁷⁰ Mitchell, P. L. c. i. W. (2001). *Transcending and Ethnic Party System: The impacts of consociational governance on electoral dynamics and the party system*.

¹⁷¹ Beesley, A. (2020). What is driving Sinn Fein's electoral surge in Ireland? *Financial Times*.

¹⁷² The Guardian. (2020). Sinn Féin declares victory in Irish General Election. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/10/sinn-fein-declares-victory-irish-general-election>

¹⁷³ NISRA. (2022). *Census 2021 main statistics for Northern Ireland*.

¹⁷⁴ Morrow, D. (2019). *Sectarianism in Northern Ireland: A Review*

from a partitioned Ireland to a United one. He reported, “We called the Irish government to plan for Irish unity, to establish forums, and bring people together... we feel it needs to be done very quickly.”¹⁷⁵ The prospects of a United Ireland were also recently revived by the withdrawal of the U.K. from the E.U. (BREXIT) and the ensuing Irish backstop controversy, an argument that raised the question of partition of the Island in a way that was unprecedented.¹⁷⁶ According to Mac Donncha, the issue of remaining or not in the E.U. has unleashed cleavages within the Unionist Community, with many unionists starting to entertain the idea of a United Ireland. Explaining the matter, Mac Donncha argued that any alternative to reunification could have disastrous consequences on the Irish economy, an economy that is inherently integrated throughout the island. He explained, “You have a situation at the border where milk might cross the border twice or three times between milking, processing and sale. It’s extremely interlinked, so the idea that you can somehow have customs and barriers is hugely problematic.”¹⁷⁷ Shifting demographics and the forces unleashed by the Brexit controversy suggest that the prospect of a referendum is not as unlikely as it once was.

THE PEACE AGREEMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

In addition to burying the hatchet and establishing mechanisms for power-sharing and cross-border cooperation, the Good Friday agreement brought important changes on the whole island. While mostly credited to the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), led by David Trimble and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), led by John Hume, Sinn Féin’s role in the talks that led to the peace accords cannot be ignored. As early as 1988, Gerry Adams declared his willingness to ‘examine ways in which conditions for peace could be established’ and unveiled that a number of secret encounters seeking solutions had already taken place.¹⁷⁸ In 1993, after a series of meetings between Adams and Humes, a joint statement was published declaring both parties’ willingness to reach ‘an agreement on a peaceful and democratic

¹⁷⁵ MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

¹⁷⁶ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

¹⁷⁷ MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

¹⁷⁸ Adams, G. (1988). Why I talked to John: By Gerry. *Fortnight*, 6-7.

accord'.¹⁷⁹ Signed in 1998, the document is believed to have paved the way to the Belfast agreement. The Belfast agreement provided for a mechanism by which the Irish people would be able to decide on the fate of a united Ireland and provided for the creation of democratic institutions in Northern Ireland safeguarding the rights and interests of all sections of the population. A special section was dedicated to human rights, reinforcing the British and Irish islands' human rights legislative framework. In its section entitled 'Rights, safeguards, and Equality of Opportunity' the accord called for the British government to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into Northern Ireland law. Among other initiatives, the agreement called for the establishment of a Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, an Equality Commission, an Equal Opportunities Commission (NI), a Commission for Racial Equality (NI), and a Disability Council. It also stipulated that the Irish Government would adopt similar measures to strengthen the protection of human rights in the Republic. A reform of the security, policing and justice systems to ensure effectiveness, fairness and impartiality were also enacted.¹⁸⁰

CONTRIBUTION TO CITIZENS' WELLBEING

CRUSADING FOR MORE RIGHTS AND EQUALITY

Since the signing of the Belfast Agreement, Sinn Féin policies contributed to significant advances in Irish democratic life.¹⁸¹ A staunch advocate of the principle of equality, Sinn Féin explicitly included anti-racist elements in its manifestos,¹⁸² and constructed a political program explicitly prioritizing equality around issues of gender, race, and class.¹⁸³ Sinn Féin's gender representation has been exemplary, placing a female member at the helm of the party since 2018, and positioning itself at the forefront of the fight for gender equality

¹⁷⁹ Sinn Féin Website. *John Hume/Gerry Adams Statement 23rd April 1993*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/15217>

¹⁸⁰ Multi-party&Irish-British. (1998). *The Northern Ireland Peace Agreement*.

¹⁸¹ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

¹⁸² Doyle, J. (2005). Republican Policies in Practical Politics: Placing Contemporary Sinn Féin in a European Context. In *Institute for British-Irish Studies; IBIS Working Papers #35*. University College Dublin.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

both North and South of the Island.¹⁸⁴ The party has also been an advocate for the rights of minorities, carefully distinguishing between its own nationalism from that of anti-immigrant, xenophobic proponents.¹⁸⁵ In particular, Sinn Féin advocated on behalf of the *Roma* and *Travellers*, communities that had experienced varying levels of racism and discrimination, both at an individual and institutional level.¹⁸⁶ Sinn Féin and other human rights defenders' pressure, led the Irish government to publish its *Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (2017-2021)* in 2017.¹⁸⁷ In Northern Ireland, Sinn Féin's campaigns in favor of the rights of minorities yielded concrete results and indirectly helped advance the rights the Catholic population in a number of ways. The Unionists' willingness to introduce legislation that protected the Irish language for example, was greatly influenced by the growth of the non-Irish minorities.¹⁸⁸ Also, Sinn Féin strongly opposed limiting the right to citizenship¹⁸⁹ and campaigned for amnesty for asylum seekers already within the country.¹⁹⁰ Lastly, the party campaigned vigorously in support of same-sex marriage in the Republic and demanded a similar campaign in Northern Ireland.¹⁹¹

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND FIGHTING SEX-BASED DISCRIMINATION

Gender equality and women's rights have long been part of Sinn Féin's fundamental principles. Despite having been modeled on the Irish patriarchal model of society in its early stages, Sinn Féin gradually took up the issue of gender equality and carried the fight both

¹⁸⁴ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

¹⁸⁵ Doyle, J. (2005). Republican Policies in Practical Politics: Placing Contemporary Sinn Féin in a European Context. In *Institute for British-Irish Studies; IBIS Working Papers #35*. University College Dublin.

¹⁸⁶ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁸⁷ Minority Rights Group International. *World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous People, Ireland*. <https://minorityrights.org/country/ireland/>

¹⁸⁸ Ó Hadhmaill, F. (2022b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

¹⁸⁹ Doyle, J. (2005). Republican Policies in Practical Politics: Placing Contemporary Sinn Féin in a European Context. In *Institute for British-Irish Studies; IBIS Working Papers #35*. University College Dublin.

¹⁹⁰ SinnFéin. (2011). Many Voices, One Country: Cherishing all the Children of the Nation Equally; Towards an Anti-Racist Ireland. In *Sinn Féin Policy Review*. Sinn Féin Website.

¹⁹¹ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

within its own organization and on a national level. In the early 1980s Sinn Féin started embracing more proactively women issues, establishing a women's department within the party and actively promoting the role of female party members. A measure of positive discrimination, reserving four seats on the party governing body to women, was introduced in the party constitution at the 2003 *Ard Fheis*. This measure was added to a system of quotas on women participation that allowed women to be co-opted even it didn't automatically guarantee them a seat on the *Ard Comhairle*.¹⁹² The election of two women candidates for the 2004 European Elections, as well as the appointment of a female leader in the North represented a great step forward in the battle to put women front and center.¹⁹³ Finally, the election of Mary Lou McDonald at the helm of Sinn Féin in 2018 was seen as a groundbreaking move in support of women empowerment and the promotion of gender equality.¹⁹⁴ Sinn Féin has also been an advocate for women issues, LGBT rights and minorities rights on a national level. The party's clear stance in favor of abortion in 2001, and its bold efforts to redress gender imbalance shed light on these efforts and placed Sinn Féin at the forefront of the fight for gender equality on the island.¹⁹⁵

In November 2018, Sinn Féin unveiled its *Vision for Women's Healthcare*, a 43-page document that outlined the party vision and ambitions for women's health care across the Island of Ireland. The document pointed out to Irish women's under-representation in the political system, their social and emotional vulnerability and the systematic inequalities that they face at all levels of society. Focusing on the provision of an improved women's health care based on the principles of fairness and equality, the document proposed policies that favor low-income women, improve access to cancer screening, facilitate access to contraception, authorize ethical Assisted Human Reproduction and IVF, improve maternity services, care for women from diverse backgrounds, attend to women's mental health, develop a school curriculum that is more sensitive to students with disabilities and gay

¹⁹² Party leadership or high council.

¹⁹³ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

¹⁹⁴ Buckley, F., & Galligan, Y. (2020). The 2020 General Election: A Gender Analysis. *Irish Political Studies*, 35(4).

¹⁹⁵ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

students, and protect women from domestic physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse.¹⁹⁶

In December 2020, Sinn Féin introduced a bill aimed at mitigating the impacts of domestic violence in the workplace. Many studies having reported an increase of domestic violence throughout the pandemic, the bill was proposed to provide for a statutory entitlement to domestic violence paid leave. The legislation would enable victims to take the necessary time to seek support, secure new accommodation, or attend court.¹⁹⁷ Also working across the aisle, Sinn Féin introduced bills such as the Safe Access to Termination of Pregnancy Services Bill, which bans distressing and intimidatory anti-abortion protests directly outside hospitals or other facilities that provide abortion services.¹⁹⁸

CONSUMER AND CITIZENS' RIGHTS PROTECTION

Over the past few years, Sinn Fein has also introduced a number of consumer protection and anti-discrimination legislations to the Irish Assembly. Those include a bill in favor of householders who are supplied with excess electricity from small scale renewable energy;¹⁹⁹ a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of someone's accent or perceived socio-economic background;²⁰⁰ and a legislation to tackle bogus self-employment.²⁰¹ A Ban on Rent Increases Bill was put forward in 2020 to give renters a breathing space by asking for a reduction of rents and introducing an emergency ban on rent increases for three years.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ Sinn Fein. (2018). *A Vision for Women's Health* <https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/51530>

¹⁹⁷ O'Reilly, L. T. (2020). *Sinn Féin bring forward legislation to deliver paid leave for victims of domestic violence*. <https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/59121>

¹⁹⁸ Senator Gavan, P. (2021). *Senator Paul Gavan to Introduce Safe Access to Zones Bill to Seanad*. <https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/62074>

¹⁹⁹ SinnFéin. (2019). Climate Justice and a Just Transition. In *Sinn Féin Discussion Document*.

²⁰⁰ Fox, K. (2021). Sinn Féin to Introduce Legislation to Ban Accent Discrimination at Work <https://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/sinn-fein-to-introduce-legislation-to-ban-accent-discrimination-at-work-1070575.html>

²⁰¹midlands103.com. (2021). Sinn Féin Proposing Legislation to Tackle Bogus Self-Employment <https://www.midlands103.com/news/midlands-news/sinn-fein-proposing-legislation-to-tackle-bogus-self-employment/>

²⁰² Ó Broin, E. T. (2021). *Eoin Ó Broin TD publishes Bill to remove affordable housing exemption for Part V*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/61693>

Sinn Féin also introduced an Insurance Bill to ban the practice of “dual pricing” and increase transparency in the insurance industry pricing policies.²⁰³

PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY

In 2020, the party brought forward the Regulation of Lobbying Bill in a bid to improve transparency and accountability in Irish political lobbying. The legislation proposed to increase the “cooling off period for Ministers, Junior Ministers and Special Advisors who move from public office to a lobbying role from one year to two years”. The bill also empowers the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO) to authorize an investigation, and take the necessary measures to enforce and sanction breaches of the cooling-off period.²⁰⁴

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUALITY AND WELLBEING

Sinn Féin maintained its leftist rhetoric despite sporadic political positions dictated by pragmatic choices. Party policies continued to evolve around greater public investments in education, health and housing and Sinn Féin remained an ardent supporter of environmental protection and a mouthpiece for rural communities to ensure social inclusion and equality. Free education ranked high on Sinn Féin’s priority list. For example, in September 2019, the party introduced a bill to regulate the seeking of the so-called “voluntary contributions” to ensure equal access to education to all Irish citizens. The bill called for the elimination of the “voluntary contribution”, a measure that is considered discriminatory since an overwhelming majority of parents are pursued for its payment and a non-payment can lead to their children being deprived of access to extracurricular activities and other services.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Doherty, P. T. (2021). *Pearse Doherty TD calls on government not to delay Sinn Féin Bill to end the insurance rip-off in Dáil vote today*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/59996>

²⁰⁴ Farrell, M. T. (2020). *Dáil to debate Sinn Féin Bill that seeks to bring enhanced accountability and transparency to political lobbying*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/58930>

²⁰⁵ Ó Laoghaire, D. T. (2019). *Sinn Féin publishes legislation on voluntary contribution* <https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/54787>

In a bid to promote social inclusion and equality, in 2021 Sinn Féin published a bill that would remove an exemption from the Affordable Housing Act that benefits developers and investors at the expense of disadvantaged communities.²⁰⁶ During that same year, Sinn Féin TD Matt Carthy suggested amendments to the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill, a legislation aimed at achieving a climate resilient and climate neutral economy. According to Sinn Féin, this bill put a heavy burden on rural communities, and vulnerable workers and their families. Despite being accused of populism and environmental hostility,²⁰⁷ Sinn Féin proposed a number of amendments asking for the adoption of measures that mitigate the negative social and economic consequences that the bill entailed.²⁰⁸ Other introduced legislation such as the one for “parental bereavement leave”, that proposes to give mourning parents a legal right to time off work, have contributed to the promotion of compassion and empathy in the workplace.²⁰⁹ Similarly, during the Covid pandemic, Sinn Féin campaigned for a fair calculation of redundancy entitlements for workers who have spent time on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP).²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Ó Broin, E. T. (2021). *Eoin Ó Broin TD publishes Bill to remove affordable housing exemption for Part V*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/61693>

²⁰⁷ Senator Mc Gahon, J. (2021). Sinn Féin wants to ban all onshore wind energy
In. Fine Gael website.

²⁰⁸ Carthy, M. T. (2021). *Sinn Féin will seek changes to Climate Bill to protect rural communities and the vulnerable*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/60806>

²⁰⁹ Cronin, R., & O'Reilly, L. (2021). *Sinn Féin introduce bill to deliver parental bereavement leave*
<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/62291>

²¹⁰ Ward, M. T. (2021). *Sinn Féin introduces bill to ensure fair calculation of workers' redundancy entitlements*

<https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/60905>

THE LEBANESE FORCES

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Lebanese Forces emerged as an umbrella organization coordinating the activities of several Lebanese Christian militias. The armed resistance came forward as a political and military force aimed at restoring control as the government proved powerless in managing the struggles caused by foreign presence and foreign occupation in Lebanon.²¹¹

The Lebanese conflict broke out in 1975 as the Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon divided Lebanon's political forces between those who welcomed it and those who viewed it as a threat to national sovereignty. The battle of Tall al-Zaatar, a fortified Palestinian enclave in the Christian-dominated area of East Beirut, had highlighted the need for close coordination of operations between Christian militias who saw the presence of the Palestinian forces in the Christian areas as a menace to national security. For the first time, the Christian forces, unable to count on the assistance of the Lebanese army to clear the area, needed to combine efforts to expel Palestinians from Northeastern Beirut. The operation was carried out by six different military groups: *Al Kataeb* (The Phalangist Party), *Al Tantheem* (The Organization), *Al Numur* (The Tigers Militia), *Harakat al Shabab Al Lubnani* (The Lebanese Youth Movement), *Hurras el Arz* (The Guardians of the Cedars), *Junud al Muchat Wal Madfa'iyya Lijaysh Lubnan* (The Infantry and Artillery Soldiers of the Lebanese Army). The Tall al-Zaatar campaign underscored the benefits of joint action but also, highlighted the need for better planning and improved training. The sheer number of casualties and the heavy equipment losses called for better coordination under a unified command structure. Formally established on August 30, 1976 the Joint

²¹¹ LF Website. حزب القوات اللبنانية، من نحن. <https://www.lebanese-forces.com/party-lf-about/>

Command Council of the Lebanese Forces brought together all six militias under the leadership of Bashir Gemayel as its first elected commander. After a number of bloody clashes with insubordinate factions, all members of the six initial militias were eventually absorbed into integrated units of the Lebanese forces in August 1980.²¹²

Despite two major attempts to stop the fighting in 1975-76 and in 1983-84, the Lebanese conflict dragged on for fifteen years. The structure of the conflict and the warring parties witnessed many changes throughout the war. The disintegration of the Lebanese army in 1976 led to a Syrian invasion, initially welcomed by the Lebanese Forces but later fiercely fought as the 30,000 Syrian troops settled in Lebanese territory with no clear intention to pull back.²¹³ After Palestinian leaders and their forces were forced out of the country in 1982, the young charismatic Lebanese Forces leader Bashir Gemayel, was elected president and assassinated three days after his election. Gemayel's assassination unleashed a wave of violence and a fight for power within the party. Defeated by Druze fighters in the Chouf mountains in 1983, the Lebanese Forces witnessed years of internal turmoil until, Samir Geagea, a young member who rose through the ranks of the party, crushed dissent and took control of the party in 1986.

Following a presidential crisis in 1988, a transitional military government headed by Army Chief, Michel Aoun, was formed. When Aoun declared a *War of Liberation* against the Syrian occupation in 1989, the Lebanese Forces reluctantly joined the battle, aware of the limited capabilities of the Lebanese Army. Aoun's attacks resulted in six months of heavy artillery across Beirut and, while causing heavy casualties, did little to push the Syrian troops from the ground.²¹⁴ The fierce fighting pushed the Arab league to exert great efforts to negotiate an end to the war. After three weeks of intense negotiations in the Saudi city of Taef, an agreement was signed on October 1, 1989. Unenthusiastically approved by the Lebanese

²¹² Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

²¹³ Deeb, M.-J., & Deeb, M. (1991). Regional Conflict and Regional Solutions: Lebanon. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 518, 82-94.

²¹⁴ Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek.

Forces, the Taef agreement was aimed at stopping the fighting and restoring a balanced system of governance that appeased all participating parties. The agreement changed the power-sharing formula that had previously favored the Christians, to parity in parliament and all other government institutions. It also enhanced the powers of the Sunni Prime Minister over those of the Christian president and made a vague call for the redeployment of the Syrian forces after a two-year transition period. The peace accords however did not receive the endorsement of the General Aoun who, disgruntled, intensified his fighting against the Syrian troops and announced an elimination war against the Lebanese Forces who, at that point, were refusing to cooperate. The civil war was at last extinguished on October 13, 1990 when the Syrian forces decimated Aoun's army and forced him into exile. When the fighting came to a halt, all armed militias, with the exception of Hezbollah, demobilized.²¹⁵

Closely resembling the organizational structure of a regular military force, the Lebanese Forces' militia was trained in a professional manner, ready to fight difficult battles and confront foreign armies if required. In addition to its armed operations, the Lebanese forces established a network of social services in the territories under its protection. As the government weakened, the Lebanese Forces started providing assistance in areas where the State had become unable to meet citizens' needs. This state substitution however remained permutable, the militia stepping in to fill the vacuum left by an absent government only when needed. Recognizing the legitimacy of the government, the Lebanese Forces remained very cooperative whenever the government claimed back its authority. In fact, the Lebanese Forces' goals often overlapped with those of the Lebanese government, in particular when it came to securing the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Lebanese territory. Occasionally, the militia would provide military support to the national army against the Syrian occupation, reflecting a 'positive symbiotic relationship' between a powerless government and the powerful militia.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ Malley, M. (2018). The Lebanese Civil War and the Taif Accord: Conflict and Compromise Engendered by Institutionalized Sectarianism. *The History Teacher*, 52(1), 121-159.

²¹⁶ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

The Lebanese Forces' social makeup consisted of mostly middle-class, educated young and middle-aged people. Members included lawyers, engineers, university professors, and students. Young people from both working and middle-class also filled the ranks of the organization. While comprising an overwhelming majority of Maronites, the Lebanese Forces also comprised Greek Catholics, Greek orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Assyrians, as well as a small percentage of Muslim (about 5 to 7 percent). According to Snider, the quality of personnel greatly contributed to the effectiveness of the militia as it included a number of engaged, driven, and educated youth, unlike other contemporaneous Lebanese militias that counted less qualified and enthusiastic inner-city youth.²¹⁷ The Lebanese conflict was very unique in a number of respects. Primarily, the Lebanese government embodied the entire gamut of political views since most of the militias leaders were actually part of the political system. Moreover, unlike most other cases where peace dialogues would be held between the government and the insurrection, in Lebanon, the negotiation processes included members of the executive and legislative branches of government, many of whom were representatives of armed factions.

As the country emerged from the conflict, the Lebanese Forces formed a political party. Founded on September 10 1992, the professed party mission was to safeguard the independence and the sovereignty of Lebanon, and to establish a democracy protecting and guaranteeing the fundamental principles of human rights.²¹⁸ Barely two years after incorporating, party leader Samir Geagea was accused of perpetrating a church bombing and arrested. The Lebanese government ordered the dissolution of the party and banned it from any activities. Despite being exonerated from the charges, Geagea was imprisoned and tried for crimes committed in the past, serving more than eleven years in prison. Upon his release in 2005, Geagea resumed his political activities as leader of party. Gradually, the party gained back its popularity, emerging as an anti-Syrian nationalist movement, strongly rooted in the Christian community.²¹⁹ As a political actor, the Lebanese Forces party sought to transform

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ LF Website. حزب القوات اللبنانية، من نحن. <https://www.lebanese-forces.com/party-lf-about/>

²¹⁹ Anid, N. (2014). *L'homme de cèdre : les trois vies de Samir Geagea*. Calmann-Lévy.

itself into a modern, democratic institution, committed to the promotion of national sovereignty, human rights, judicial independence, and transparency.

AN UPWARD TRAJECTORY

The Lebanese Forces' political journey was to say the least remarkable. Over the course of two election cycles, the party rose from a banned entity to doubling the size of its parliament presence in 2018, and adding an additional six seats in the 2022 parliamentary elections. In addition to extending its geographic reach to new areas, the party started attracting an important number of independents voters.²²⁰ Furthermore, the party managed to transform its image from an armed resistance associated with a violent past, to an organized and well-established political actor, actively contributing to the country's democratic life. Recognizing the need to regain public trust and demonstrate its commitment to putting the country's interests first, the Lebanese Forces worked across the aisle to engage in dialogues and find common ground with different political players. In addition to becoming an essential component of the Lebanese political landscape, the Lebanese Forces asserted a presence on the international stage, gaining recognition in the regional and international political arenas.²²¹ The Lebanese Forces also positioned itself at the forefront of the fight against corruption, and as the greatest opponent of the bearing of arms of its archnemesis, the Hezbollah party.²²²

CONTRIBUTION TO DEMOCRACY

Fully embracing the fundamental principles of democracy, LF members of parliaments worked with civil society to shape the national agenda in favor of human, women, and children's rights. LF also sought to promote transparency, and adopted a language of reconciliation and national unity.

²²⁰ Atallah, S., & Zoughaib, S. (2019). *A Snapshot of Parliamentary Election Results*. https://www.lcps-lebanon.org/publications/1556883474-parliamentary_election_1_web.pdf

²²¹ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

²²² Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview].

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

In compliance with international conventions, in particular the U.N. OHCHR resolution urging States to safeguard the rights of those facing capital punishment and to progressively limit its application and the number of crimes punishable by death,²²³ in 2012 the Lebanese Forces submitted a draft law to abolish death penalty in Lebanon.²²⁴ Suggesting to replace death penalty with either life imprisonment or life imprisonment with hard labor, the Lebanese Forces bill was also aimed at addressing major concerns related to the lack of due process in the judicial system. Forced confessions under torture or other forms of duress are not uncommon in Lebanese and especially military courts, and often lead to arbitrary sentences. Although not the first attempt at abolishing death penalty²²⁵ the LF initiative was a testimony to the party's commitment to abide by international standards.²²⁶

ADVOCATING FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Within the party, the Lebanese Forces created a special department intended for activating the role of women and made some efforts to put women at the fore. The party leading female members included, a party Secretary General, a Minister, and a Member of Parliament. Other high-ranking members comprise the heads of: the social affairs department, the department to activate the role of women within the party, the public policy department, the international secretary (tasked with coordination with other parties in Europe), the human resources department, the legal department, and the media office.

At the national level, the Lebanese Forces proactively lobbied to promote gender equality and support women empowerment. The party was able to celebrate a victory when in August 2011, the Lebanese parliament repealed article 562 of the criminal code, a law mitigating the

²²³ Source of description of international standards: UN OHCHR website, Death Penalty, The International Framework

²²⁴ The draft legislation was submitted by MP Elie Kairouz on February 6, 2012

²²⁵ Human Rights Watch (HRW). (2017). Lebanon: Don't Resume Executions <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/12/lebanon-dont-resume-executions>

²²⁶ In 2008, justice minister Ibrahim Najjar had submitted to the Council of Ministers a similar draft law

sentence of perpetrators of “honor crimes.” The Lebanese Forces had campaigned for the annulment of this article, presenting a draft bill in 2010.²²⁷ Despite the infrequent occurrence of honor crimes in Lebanon, parliament’s abolishment of the article marked a great win in the national fight for women’s rights.²²⁸ Yet another article of the criminal code, article 252, still allowed for sentence mitigation for crimes committed against women, often used by judges to shorten sentences. In 2018, LF proposed a law aimed at toughening penalties on crimes of killing, wounding, injuring or beating women.²²⁹ The Lebanese Forces also campaigned against another archaic law that exonerates a perpetrator of sexual offence who married his victim if the circumstances fell under certain articles of the penal code. In July 2016, the party presented parliament with a proposal aimed at abolishing the inhuman exoneration by marriage law. The Lebanese Forces also submitted many other important draft bills aimed at improving women’s conditions including a proposal to increase penalties for the murdering, wounding, abusing and beating of wives and women. In keeping with the Lebanese Constitution, and in compliance with the UDHR and the ICCPR, the aforementioned proposal aimed at protecting women from all kinds of violence and preserving their physical and psychological integrity. In a similar vein, the party put forward a proposal to amend articles of the Lebanese Penal Code relating to crimes of marital rape considering it an assault on human rights, women dignity and physical integrity. The Lebanese Forces also campaigned to end discrimination between men and women especially in relation to the offense of adultery through a draft bill aimed at amending articles of the Lebanese Penal Code to achieve equality in defining the aforementioned offense.²³⁰

MAKING CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO PROTECTION A PRIORITY

In support of the rights stipulated in a number of international conventions and agreements ratified by the Lebanese government, the Lebanese Forces engaged in a battle to protect

²²⁷ LF Archives. (2021). LF Parliamentary Bloc Draft Proposals, documents shared with the author. In.

²²⁸ Human Rights Watch (HRW). (2011). Lebanon: Law Reform Targets "Honor" Crimes. In. Human Rights Watch Website.

²²⁹ LF Archives. (2021). LF Parliamentary Bloc Draft Proposals, documents shared with the author. In.

²³⁰ Ibid.

children's rights. The party put forward several draft bills including one that sets a minimum age for marriage. The national legal system making no mention of a minimum age of marriage, it is not uncommon for Lebanese girls to marry under the age of 18, regardless of the religious affiliation.²³¹ In 2020, in compliance with international human rights conventions and in particular article 2 of CEDAW, the Lebanese forces submitted a draft law preventing child marriage. The bill was presented in collaboration with civil society (the Lebanese Democratic Women's Gathering).²³² Another form of child abuse in Lebanon is embedded in article 186 of the Lebanese Penal Code which allows some types of corporal punishments as accepted by general custom.²³³ In May 2016, referring to the State's ratification of international covenants protecting the rights of children and in particular the CRC, the Lebanese Forces submitted a draft proposal to amend this law to comply with the international treaties' obligations.²³⁴

PROMOTING JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND COMBATING CORRUPTION

The Lebanese Forces were also concerned with promoting an independent judiciary and with fighting corruption. Lebanon's judiciary being highly influenced by the government,²³⁵ the LF party drafted a bill aimed at making the High Judicial Council less vulnerable to "improper" political influence (ICJ, 2017).²³⁶ In September 2018, LF MP George Okais, along with other parliamentarians, presented a bill to promote judicial independence and transparency. The proposal received a favorable response from the government who, in September 2019, assigned the Ministry of Justice to draft a related bill. In 2019, LF MPs also

²³¹ United Nations Development Program (UNDP). (2018). *Lebanon Gender Justice and the Law*.

²³² The draft law was presented by MPs Georges Okais and Antoine Habchi on November 7, 2019

²³³ Act for Human Rights (ALEF), Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH), (AJEM), A. f. J. a. M., Proud Lebanon, & Restart Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture. (2020). *Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review Thirty-seventh session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council*. https://alefliban.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UPR-Detention_Final.pdf

²³⁴ LF Archives. (2021). LF Parliamentary Bloc Draft Proposals, documents shared with the author. In.

²³⁵ The Minister of Justice having the power to appoint eight of the Council's ten members and given the authority to set the budget of the judiciary as a whole.

²³⁶ International Commission of Jurists (ICJ). (2017). Lebanon: The ICJ Calls for Extensive Reforms to Strengthen Judicial Independence and Accountability. *ICJ Website*.

submitted a draft law aimed at combating corruption in the private sector and another one related to the right to access information.²³⁷ Another bill presented in 2020, and subsequently ratified, demanded the lifting of banking secrecy to facilitate a forensic audit of the country's central bank, a key condition for stalled foreign aid.²³⁸

PROVIDING RELIEF AT CRITICAL JUNCTURES

When the economic crisis battered Lebanon in 2019, the Lebanese Forces advocated on behalf of the impoverished population, hard hit by one of the worst economic collapses in the country's history. The Lebanese Forces strived to create legislation that would reduce the burden of living costs that were increasing at an alarming rate. Amongst the legislations presented were a draft law aimed at compelling the government to contribute funds to children education²³⁹ and a demand of tax exemption on basic food products and other services and commodities such as transportation, pharmaceutical products, and stationaries.²⁴⁰ In addition, in the aftermath of the 2020 Beirut port explosion, the party asked for the establishment of a government body tasked with the management of crisis, emergencies and disasters.²⁴¹ More recently, in March 2021, Lebanese Forces MP Antoine Habchi requested the amendment of articles 358 and 395 of the customs law, making the legislation more rigorous with the goal of impeding smuggling, a practice that was believed to cause enormous damage to the national economy.²⁴²

²³⁷ LF Archives. (2021). LF Parliamentary Bloc Draft Proposals, documents shared with the author. In.

²³⁸ Okais, G. (2021). *Author's interview with Georges Okais, LF Member of Parliament* [Interview].

²³⁹ LF legislation asked for the amendment of article 87 of law No.144, asking the government to contribute an amount equal to the double of minimum salary. The draft was presented by MP Antoine Habchi on November 11, 2020.

²⁴⁰ The draft legislation was presented by MP Georges Okais on November 16, 2020.

²⁴¹ LF Archives. (2021). LF Parliamentary Bloc Draft Proposals, documents shared with the author. In. The draft legislation was presented by MP Georges Adwane on October 15, 2020.

²⁴² LF website. (2021). *Documented: "The Strong Republic" submitted a proposal to amend a law on combating smuggling.* بالوثائق: "الجمهورية القوية" تقدم باقتراح تعديل قانون حول مكافحة التهريب. <https://www.lebanese-forces.com/2021/03/10/lf-bloc-14/>

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE AND SUPPORTING THE MOST VULNERABLE

While in government, the Lebanese Forces launched a number of initiatives aimed at improving the provision of services and enhancing citizens' and vulnerable groups' quality of life. As Minister of Public Health, Ghassan Hasbani initiated the legal and administrative framework for comprehensive health coverage; launched the distant hospitalization initiative to ensure quality health services in remote areas, supported the local pharmaceutical industry; initiated a food safety campaign, improved a hotline service to attend to peoples' medical needs; and initiated a number of programs aimed at raising awareness about detection and prevention of disease, and modernizing the health service and medical care, introducing the digitization of services.²⁴³

The LF held Ministry of Social Affairs designed a national strategy for attending all types of vulnerable groups, including children, women, people with special needs, the elderly, drug-addicts, and the destitute. It also collaborated with the Ministry of Public Health to improve the provision and quality of services in remote areas, straightened out ongoing redundant programs, launched the biometric card for all ministry beneficiaries, in addition to other initiatives aimed at redirecting wasted resources to benefit the neediest section of the population.²⁴⁴ While under LF control, the ministry increased the number of poor families benefiting from food cards by half²⁴⁵ and secured seasonal financial aid through UNICEF. In cooperation with international organizations such as UNICEF and UN WOMEN, the ministry developed several programs aimed at protecting children and reducing domestic violence. Minister Kouyoumjian was able to obtain the approval of the Council of Ministers to issue a decree aimed at implementing the provisions of the Disability Rights Act,²⁴⁶ stipulating the inclusion of a minimum of three percent of people with disabilities in the public sector. Also,

²⁴³ The LF Website. (2017b). *The Ministry of Health's most distinguished achievements*, أبرز أعمال وزارة الصحة. <https://www.lebanese-forces.com/2017/12/20/ministry-of-health-509/>

²⁴⁴ Achievements under Minister Pierre BouAssi who held the ministry between 2016 and 2017. The LF Website. (2017a). *About the achievements of the Ministry of Social Affairs* نبذة عن إنجازات وزارة الشؤون الإجتماعية. <https://www.lebanese-forces.com/2017/12/20/ministry-of-social-affairs-17/>

²⁴⁵ The number of beneficiaries increased from 10,000 to 15,000

²⁴⁶ Article 73 of Law 220/2000

in cooperation with international organizations, he initiated the work to develop the disability rights insurance program.²⁴⁷

CONCILIATORY TONE

In September 2008 at the annual mass of the LF martyrs, in the presence of an audience bursting with victims' families, handicaps, and war survivors, the leader of the Lebanese Forces surprised his audience with a public act of contrition. Recognizing the wrongdoings of the war, Samir Geagea declared,

“To err is human... we sometimes committed mistakes. Some of us have committed exactions that we considered unacceptable, some of these exactions were unfortunately ignominious... I would like therefore, on this special occasion, with a modest and clear heart, with deep sincerity and in a transparent manner, in front of God and the people, in my name and the name of generations of resistance fighters, living or martyred, to present deep, honest and complete apologies for every wound, wrongdoing or loss, and every unjustified damage that we were responsible for while we were accomplishing our national mission during the war... I ask God, and all the people that we have aggrieved, to forgive us, to transcend their suffering and give us affection.”²⁴⁸

According to Nada Anid, author of the Lebanese Forces leader's biography, this national apology generated a wide range of responses but also great a deal of interest especially within the intellectual community. Samir Frangié, a scholar dedicated to interfaith dialogue declared that for the first time in national history, Christians who, unlike Muslims, give higher priority to freedom over justice, inverted that role and put justice ahead of freedom.²⁴⁹ This public act of forgiveness augured a new area in the group's history, indicating a commitment to turn the page of war and build a more peaceful and conciliatory future.

²⁴⁷ Information shared by former Minister of Social Affairs, Richard Kouyoumjian

²⁴⁸ Anid, N. (2014). *L'homme de cèdre : les trois vies de Samir Geagea*. Calmann-Lévy.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

As a political party, the Lebanese Forces vigorously advocated for peace and reconciliation, adopting a discourse that promoted tolerance and embraced the principles of democratic governance. Quoting Winston Churchill, Kouyoumjian summarized the LF philosophy: “In war, resolution... and in peace, good will.”²⁵⁰ The party’s Head of Media Charles Jabbour stressed the importance of constructive engagement and Christian-Muslim partnership. Making reference to Pope Jean Paul the Second’s statement, “Lebanon is not a country, Lebanon is a message” he alluded to the importance of the “National Pact”, the unwritten agreement that laid the foundation of Lebanon as a multi-confessional state. Jabbour drew attention to the fact that, since the moment the party put its weapons beyond use, it has used every opportunity to promote reconciliation in Lebanon. In 2000, it set in motion a reconciliation initiative with its former archenemy, the Progressive Socialist Party; in 2005 it initiated the March 14 settlement that reconciled the Lebanese Forces with Sunni Muslims; and in 2016 the party instigated talks that reestablished and strengthened relationships with its Christian adversaries.²⁵¹ In their political rhetoric, the Lebanese Forces repeatedly spelled out their vision of a State built upon principles that bypass sectarianism and focus on a national project that emphasizes sovereignty, constitutional democracy, equal rights and rule of law²⁵². The Lebanese Forces’ incorporation as a political party and its full commitment to the democratic rules of the game -despite the exceptionally difficult circumstances of its entry into civil life- marked the end of an era. Along with other former militias turned political parties, the Lebanese Forces irrevocably helped carry out the transition from war to peace.

²⁵⁰ Kouyoumjian, R. (2017). *From Resistance Strategy to a State Project* A non-published article obtained from Mr. Kouyoumjian on Oct. 16, 2017

²⁵¹ Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview]. On January 18, 2016, the LF signed the “Maarab understanding” with the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM). The document required the leader of the LF, who had withdrawn from the presidential race, to endorse FPM presidential candidate Michel Aoun for the 2016 presidential elections, which paved the way for the election of Aoun as president in October 2016.

²⁵² Those concepts were iterated by most LF interviewees

FMLN

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Salvadoran guerrilla movements originated in 1970, in response to the growing oppression of an authoritarian regime in place since 1932. Swift persecution of political dissent and little heed for the population's misery had earned the government a reputation that was popularly described as: "The dog is dead; the rage is over."²⁵³ The regime's pervasive and brutal repression generated growing discontent that culminated with the emergence of a multitude of armed groups representing various political movements and diverse segments of the society. The first armed group developed when the Secretary General of the Salvadoran Communist party (PCS), Salvador Cayetano Carpio, and a few of his followers broke apart from the party, convinced that no change can occur outside of an armed struggle. Carpio founded the *Fuerzas Populares de Liberación Farabundo Martí* (The Liberation Popular Forces, FPL), the first of the five organizations that would form part of the FMLN guerrilla. Between 1971 and 1972, young members of the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (Democratic Christian Party, PDC), some PCS militants and various university students joined the guerrilla warfare forming their own movement, the *Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* (the People's Revolutionary Army, ERP). An internal battle within the ERP resulted in a split that gave rise to two separate revolutionary movements, the *Resistencia Nacional* (National Resistance, RN) and the *Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores Centroamericanos* (The Revolutionary Party of the Central American Workers, PRTC). In 1979, after an intensification of the ruling government's oppressive practices, the PCS also decided to create its own military structure, subordinated to the party's political project. Despite their differences, in the early 1970s, all five armed movements -later to form part of the FMLN- shared many similarities, above all their adherence to the Marxist-Leninist ideology.²⁵⁴ Largely inspired by the Uruguayan Tupumaros, the Salvadoran guerrillas were

²⁵³ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

²⁵⁴ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

mainly urban and enjoyed wide support from peasant organizations, university students, workers, and slum dwellers. These strong links to the community were mostly attributable to the geographic characteristics of the country. Unable to hide in impenetrable forests or jungles, the guerrilla movements were forced to settle in populated areas and thus remained deeply connected to the local communities.²⁵⁵

On October 15 1979, a military coup put an end to the military regime that had been in place since 1932. Despite terminating almost five decades of autocratic rule, the more inclusive government that ensued -which included representatives of the center and the center-left, and was supported by the PCS- was unable to stop the violence that had reached record heights. In fact, the armed and internal security forces had remained under the control of military officers who favored the repression of the social movements and the extermination of the guerrillas that represented them. At the same time, under the auspices of the Cuban government and the personal intervention of Fidel Castro, the various Salvadoran guerrillas had started discussions geared towards the establishment of an umbrella organization where they would all coalesce under the same leadership. On December 17, 1979 a first organized structure comprising PCS, RN and FPL emerged. The *Coordinadora Político-Militar* (Political-Military Coordination, CPM) was made public on January 10, 1980. The assassination of the Archbishop of San Salvador *Monseñor* Oscar Arnulfo Romero in March 1980 precipitated the alliance between the center-left opposition and the integrated guerrillas to form the *Frente Democrático Revolucionario* (Revolutionary Democratic Front, FDR). In October 1980, the CPM was expanded to include the ERP and the PRTC under the banner of the *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (The Farabundo Martí Front for National Liberation FMLN).²⁵⁶ The name referred to PCS leader Agustín Farabundo Martí who had led a peasant uprising in 1932, after the government manipulated the results of municipal elections in areas where the communist party had claimed victory. The revolt was quickly suppressed by the government in an infamous the massacre that came to be

²⁵⁵ Jovel, F. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

²⁵⁶ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

known as the *Matanza* (Massacre).²⁵⁷ The FMLN and the FDR formed a strategic alliance that would persist until the end of the war. Although the FMLN relied on allied countries such as Vietnam, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, and neighboring Nicaragua for armaments and ammunition, to a large extent, the guerrilla's financial recourses were secured from solidarity committees scattered across the U.S., Mexico and Europe, a factor that facilitated the armed group's survival after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc.²⁵⁸

The new government that was put in place in the wake of the 1979 military coup, set up a new Constitution that provided the basis of a new, allegedly more democratic regime. This was part of a broader strategy, backed by the United States government, with the dual purpose of undermining the political and economic bases of the powerful oligarchy, and putting an end to the armed insurrection carried out by the guerrillas. The considerable reduction of civilian deaths and forced disappearance between 1984 and 1989, along with the United States' generous financial assistance, helped avert an economic collapse and eroded popular support for the guerrilla. Faced with this new order, the FMLN was forced to adopt a new military strategy based on the establishment of small guerrilla units with greater mobility. While this new plan of action expended the FMLN's territorial control, the segmentation of its military divisions dealt a severe blow to the morale of many of its combatants causing mass defections. Furthermore, the Salvadoran armed forces' military control over large swathes of territory, and the elimination of a large number of social supporters that were entrusted with the task of spreading FMLN's influence across regions, forced the FMLN to start reexamining its choices. The armed group had begun to realize that immediate military victory was not possible and that other non-military options should be seriously considered.²⁵⁹

In 1982, a number of guerrilla commanders along with some opposition leaders started to explore the possibility of a negotiated solution. But while the negotiations path seemed like

²⁵⁷ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

²⁵⁸ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

the logical way forward for many, it was also met with strong opposition especially from the leader of the FPL who viewed it as a betrayal of the revolutionary movement. The death of this latter in 1983 opened up the possibility of a negotiated solution. In anticipation of the 1984 presidential elections, the FMLN proposed to enter a negotiation process that, from its perspective, could have enabled its participation in an inclusive government. Its vision was encapsulated in a document entitled the *Government of Broad Participation (GAP)*. This initial document, along with the rise to power of the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano*, set the stage for a series of discussions that would occur between 1984 and 1991.²⁶⁰ Changes within ARENA, the right-wing National Republican Alliance whose new leader Alfredo Cristiani was more moderate than his predecessor, bode well for a change in course in favor of a peace accord.²⁶¹ Nonetheless, in a bid to force the new government to seriously consider a negotiated solution, but also hoping to incite a popular insurrection that would bring down the regime, in November 1989, the FMLN launched a coordinated military offensive. While crippling the country, the military action produced neither a decisive popular uprising nor an outright military victory. The unsuccessful FMLN offensive, the army's indiscriminate shelling of the civilian population, and the assassination of six Jesuit academic priests, prompted the resumption of negotiations convincing both sides of the imperative need for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The latest developments also persuaded the U.S. Congress of the urgent need to limit its support to the Salvadoran military. In addition, the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the fall of the Berlin wall had tempered the guerrilla's verve and helped moderate its ideological position.²⁶²

In the wake of the offensive and under the auspices of the United Nations, the FMLN and the Salvadoran government resumed the peace talks in earnest. In April 1990, both parties signed the Geneva accord in which they pledged to decisively bring the armed conflict to an end, promote democratization, and guarantee full respect for human rights. They also committed to enter secret negotiations where the U.N. Secretary General would play an

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

²⁶² Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

intermediary role. The negotiations resulted in the signature of six sets of agreements which culminated with the release of the Chapultepec agreement.²⁶³ Signed in Mexico in December 1991, the Chapultepec agreement ended the war and paved the way for the FMLN's political participation. The agreement included a comprehensive reform of the armed forces; dealt with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the armed groups; and included provisions for a reform of the electoral system, the promotion of human rights as well as economic and social arrangements. Notably, the peace accord laid the foundation for the FMLN transformation into a political entity. Despite the surfacing of numerous ideological differences within the organization, the FMLN party was able to hold the line and preserve the support of its loyal supporters, fighting its way to eventually become El Salvador's ruling party.²⁶⁴ As a political party, the FMLN obtained several mayorships, achieved an important presence in the Legislative Assembly, and won two successive presidential elections.²⁶⁵ After ten years in power however, the FMLN was dealt a massive blow in the 2019 presidential elections its vote share declining by 70% from the previous elections.²⁶⁶

THE RISE TO POWER

By many standards, the FMLN is considered one of the most successful war-to-peace transformations. Despite heated internal struggles, and fierce political opposition, the FMLN successfully engaged in Salvadoran political life, gradually ameliorating its electoral performance until it became the prime political force in the country. By the year 2000, the FMLN had become a major player in parliament and for several years, the party retained the mayor's office in San Salvador. In 2009, the election of Mauricio Funes Cartagena a center-

²⁶³ Holiday, D., & Stanley, W. (1993). Building the Peace: Preliminary Lessons from El Salvador. *Journal of International Affairs*, 46(2), 415-438.

²⁶⁴ Martín Álvarez, A. (2010). *From revolutionary war to democratic revolution: the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador*. Berghof Conflict Research.

²⁶⁵ Ramos, C. G., López, R. O., & Quinteros, A. C. (2015). *The FMLN and Post-War Politics in El Salvador. From Included to Inclusive Actor?* www.berghof-foundation.org

²⁶⁶ Sprenkels, R. (2019b). Ambivalent Moderation: The FMLN's Ideological Accommodation to Post-War Politics in El-Salvador, Government and Opposition. *Cambridge University Press*, 54, 536-558.

left journalist who ran on an FMLN list to the presidency, marked the first big electoral victory for the party. The FMLN had unrooted the ARENA party's hegemony on Salvadoran politics, and that same year, it had also beaten the Salvadoran right-wing party in the legislative elections.²⁶⁷ For the first time in El Salvador's history, the country was governed by a leftist government with many former guerrilla members entering the government. The election of one of the FMLN's historical leaders, Salvador Sánchez Cerén to the presidency in 2014 consolidated the party's win and consecrated its control of the country's destiny for another five years.²⁶⁸ As a political party, the FMLN was able to achieve many successes. This thesis will mainly focus on the party's performance during the period spanning from 2009 to 2019 when the FMLN presence in the executive expanded its ability to bring about meaningful changes. While the FMLN's political relevance certainly precedes this period, the party's access to the executive branch of government -first under Funes, and five years later under Sánchez Cerén- enabled the FMLN to effectively design and implement programs and policies that embodied its vision, and addressed the issues that it aimed to achieve.

FMLN NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Beyond question, the FMLN has many accomplishments to its credit, most of which stemming from the negotiated settlement that brought an end to the hostilities. Mostly driven by demands from the FMLN guerrilla, the agreement called for three main constitutional reforms: civilian control of the military (approved in 1992), judicial reforms to guarantee human rights (approved in 1992), and a reform of the election system (enacted in 1993).²⁶⁹ These reforms would lead to revolutionary changes that would permanently transform the Salvadoran society. As a peaceful political actor, the FMLN helped promote

²⁶⁷ Martín Álvarez, A. (2010). *From revolutionary war to democratic revolution: the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador*. Berghof Conflict Research.

²⁶⁸ Ramos, C. G., López, R. O., & Quinteros, A. C. (2015). *The FMLN and Post-War Politics in El Salvador. From Included to Inclusive Actor?* www.berghof-foundation.org

²⁶⁹ Kroc Institute for International Studies. *Constitutional Reforms: Chapultepec Peace Agreement*

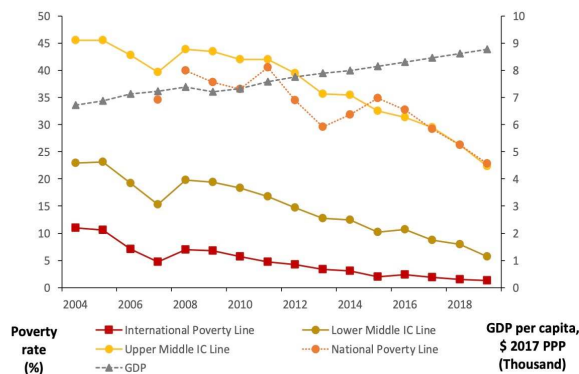
human rights and judicial independence, but also drastically improved freedom of speech and gender representation. During its ten years of government, the FMLN achieved a marked reduction in poverty, strived to improve educational conditions for children from disadvantaged economic backgrounds; supported small farmers; increased the minimum wage; developed a literacy program; expanded public healthcare; enacted a law facilitating access to low-cost medicines; and laid the bases for the holding of successive free and fair elections.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION

During the two FMLN mandates, El Salvador saw its poverty and disparity rates decline considerably. According to the World Bank, between the years 2007 and 2017, El Salvador witnessed a period of growth and a reduction of inequality. This period which corresponds to the FMLN decade in power saw the poverty rate decline from 39 to 29 percent, and extreme poverty reduced from 15 to 8.5 percent. Remittances and an important decline in oil imports are cited among the most important factors contributing to the growth. Furthermore, a significant decline in the Gini coefficient from 2001 to 2017 reflected a reduction of inequality in El Salvador making it one of the most equal countries in Latin America.²⁷⁰

²⁷⁰ Worldbank. (2019). *The World Bank in El Salvador, Overview*

POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2004-2019



INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2004-2019

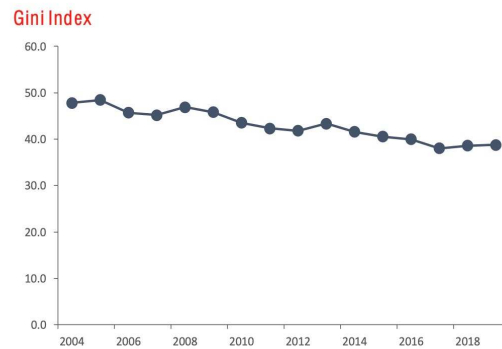


Figure 1: Decrease in Poverty Rate and Inequality in El Salvador between 2004-2019. Reprinted from World Bank, *Poverty & Equity Brief, El Salvador Latin America & the Caribbean, 2021*

IMPROVED HEALTHCARE

While in power, the FMLN expanded healthcare to El Salvador's poor departments delivering quality medical access to underprivileged areas. In its 2019 evaluation of the ten-year healthcare reforms, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) reported that El Salvador had achieved important improvements in health outcomes, significantly reducing infant and maternal mortality, and increasing life expectancy. Despite recognizing some challenges including the passable quality of healthcare, PAHO praised the increase of preventive services and improved access to medical services in the poorest departments of the country.²⁷¹ In May 2014, the FMLN government unveiled a new, state of the art National Women's Hospital replacing an old decayed National Maternity facility. The new hospital offered sophisticated equipment and provided free advanced quality services.²⁷² The hospital included two medical centers, one for maternity and another one for women diseases.²⁷³ According to Samayoa, the National Women's Hospital was undoubtedly one of

²⁷¹ Báscolo, E., Cid, C., Houghton, N., & Luque, H. (2019). *En el Camino a la Salud Universal, Diez años de reforma del Sistema de Salud en El Salvador*.

https://www.paho.org/els/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=1844-documento-el-salvador-web&category_slug=publicaciones-destacadas&Itemid=364

²⁷² Cispes. (2014). *El Salvador Inaugurates New Women's Hospital Abandoned by Past Government* Cispes, *Committee in Solidarity of the People of El Salvador*.

²⁷³ Peña, L. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

the FMLN’s most important achievements chiefly because it happened amidst stiff resistance from the ‘political right’ and opposing forces within private sector.²⁷⁴

El Salvador: Infant mortality rate from 2009 to 2019
(in deaths per 1,000 live births)

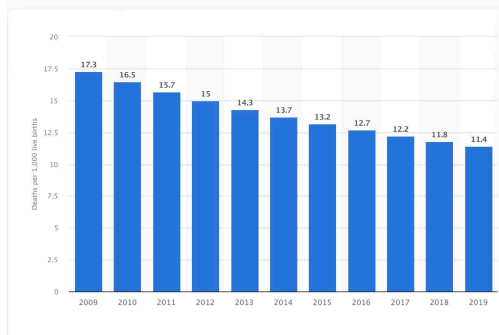


Figure 2: El Salvador: Infant mortality rate. Reprinted from Statista, *Economy and Politics*, 2022

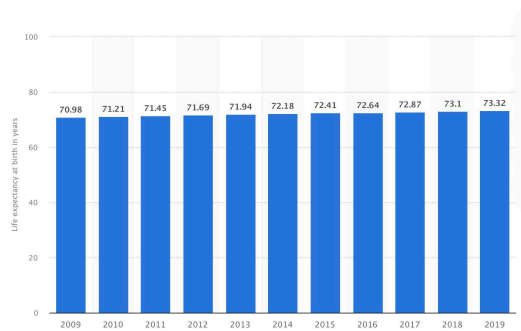


Figure 3: El Salvador: Life Expectancy at Birth from 2009-2019. Reprinted from Statista, *Economy and Politics*, 2022

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR

FMLN’s signature policy in the education sector was the *Paquetes Escolares* [School Packets], a program that provided annual packets of school supplies along with locally made shoes and uniforms to public school children.²⁷⁵ During the party’s two-term presidencies, public schools began serving milk and small meals addressing the nutrition needs of

²⁷⁴ Samayoá, S. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

²⁷⁵ Secretaria Técnica y de Planificación de la Presidencia. (2013). Programa de Dotación de Uniformes, Zapatos y Útiles Escolares para Estudiantes de Educación Parvularia y Educación Básica del Sector Público

In.

underprivileged children.²⁷⁶ As Minister of Education and with help from Cuban advisers, Sánchez Cerén initiated a literacy program where, fulfilling community service hours, high schoolers taught reading, writing and basic math to illiterate adults in their community. By the end of 2018, adult illiteracy rate had fallen by nearly half. Additionally, the Cerén administration made the National University of El Salvador tuition-free for public school students.²⁷⁷ Despite much debate over whether the efforts put in education reform were a worthwhile investment -given that the overall education system in El Salvador failed to improve in a meaningful way (see below)- the many programs put in place and the adult literacy progress testify to the party's serious efforts to address the pressing education issue.

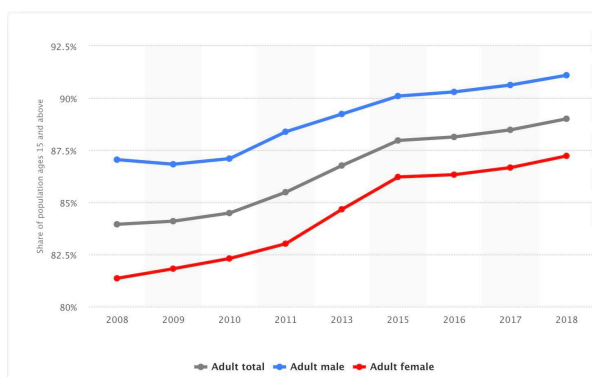


Figure 4: El Salvador: Literacy rate from 2008 to 2018, total and by gender. Reprinted from Statista, *Economy and Politics*, 2021

BRINGING HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION TO THE FORE

The constitutional reforms agreed upon in the Chapultepec agreement called for judicial reforms to protect human rights. The FMLN-driven changes requested the appointment of a new National Counsel for the Defense of Human Rights tasked with monitoring the human rights situation at the national and institutional level. The reforms also asked that Supreme Court justices, the attorney general, the state counsel, and the newly established National Counsel for the Defense of Human Rights all be elected by 2 out of 3 members of the

²⁷⁶ CentralAmericaData. (2011). *El Salvador proyecta cosecha récord de granos básicos*.

https://www.centralamericadata.com/es/article/home/El_Salvador_proyecta_cosecha_rcord_de_granos_bsicos

²⁷⁷ Ministerio de Educación. (2019). *Educación Especializada e Inclusiva*. In.

legislative assembly. As a ruling party, the FMLN went to great lengths to improve the human rights situation in the country. National commissions for the search of disappeared children and adults were established. Girls and women's rights markedly improved, and special courts to address gender-based violence were set up. Also, special provisions to prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in public administration were put in place. In 2016, an annulment of the amnesty law of 1993 by the supreme court received a warm welcome from the victims of the armed conflict and U.N. experts alike. *Plan El Salvador Seguro* [the safe El Salvador Plan], a comprehensive plan aimed at strengthening public order and security was also put in place.²⁷⁸ Advances in the democratization of the country were also reflected in the riddance of political persecution and the promotion of freedom of thought and freedom of organization.²⁷⁹

Evaluating the progress made on human rights since 2010 -the year after the government of Mauricio Funes took office- the 2014 UN Human Rights Commission reported that El Salvador ratified two optional protocols, adopted a number of legislations, and implemented various programs and strategies aimed at strengthening human rights.²⁸⁰ In its 2019 review, the same commission reported that El Salvador had furthered its commitment to international treaties and continued strengthening its legal and policy framework to protect and improve human rights.²⁸¹

RATIFICATION OF TREATIES

Between 2011 and 2019, El Salvador further formalized its commitment to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights. In 2011 El Salvador ratified the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in January 2014 it

²⁷⁸ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR). (2018). *Human Rights Committee review report of El Salvador*.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22824&LangID=E>

²⁷⁹ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

²⁸⁰ Human Rights Council; Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review; Twentieth session; 27 October–7 November 2014

²⁸¹ Human Rights Council; Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review; Thirty-fourth session; 4–15 November 2019

ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. While entering a reservation as permitted to States under the Protocol,²⁸² El Salvador committed to abolishing of the death penalty.²⁸³ In its 2019 review, the Human Rights commission reported that El Salvador had ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and withdrawn its reservation to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.²⁸⁴

REFORMING THE DOMESTIC LEGAL FRAMEWORK

During the FMLN's first term in power, a number of legislations protecting human rights and advancing social wellbeing were enacted. In addition to a number of gender equality legislations,²⁸⁵ the government adopted the Child and Adolescent Protection Act (2009), the General Act on Young People (2011), the Act on Comprehensive Care for Older Persons (2002), the Special Act on the Protection and Advancement of Salvadoran Migrants and Their Families (2011), the Act on Social Development and Protection (2014), the General Act on Prevention of Workplace Hazards (2010), the Framework Act on Civic Harmony and Antisocial Behaviour, the Medicines Act (2012), and the Special Act on Voting from Abroad (2013).²⁸⁶ In addition, in 2014, article 63 of the Constitution was amended to reflect its recognition of indigenous people's rights. It stated, "El Salvador recognizes the indigenous peoples and will implement measures to maintain and develop their ethnic and cultural

²⁸² To the effect that the death penalty shall be applied in accordance with article 27 of the Constitution, which states: "The death penalty may be imposed only in the cases provided by the military laws during an international state of war."

²⁸³ UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Twentieth Session 27 October- 7 November 2014. (2014). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G14/140/33/PDF/G1414033.pdf?OpenElement>

²⁸⁴ UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Thirty Fourth Session 4-15 November 2019. (2019). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/246/42/PDF/G1924642.pdf?OpenElement>

²⁸⁵ See next section for more details

²⁸⁶ UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Twentieth Session 27 October- 7 November 2014. (2014). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G14/140/33/PDF/G1414033.pdf?OpenElement>

identity, worldview, values and spirituality.”²⁸⁷ This amendment led to a number of municipal ordinances in favor of indigenous people’s rights, stipulating that any activity, program, project or enterprise affecting the interests of the indigenous people should include prior consultation with community representatives.²⁸⁸ In 2010, a Presidential Decree recognized Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBTI) rights, prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. The FMLN government also created the Sexual Diversity Division, under the Social Inclusion Secretary. The new division aimed at fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; encouraging education and sensitization about sexual diversity; creating public policies that protect the rights of the LGBTI community; and promoting the creation of discrimination free spaces where all persons are equally treated with dignity and respect, regardless of sexual orientation.²⁸⁹

The 2019 Human Rights Council National Report reported that during the second FMLN-led government, the country had further complied with international human rights standards. The Salvadoran parliament had adopted a number of laws aimed at improving human rights standards and citizens’ wellbeing such as the Access to Public Information Act (2011); the Special Act against Trafficking in Persons (2014); the Reparations for Moral Damage Act (2015); the Culture Act (2016); the Special Act on Adoption (2016); the Administrative Disputes Act (2017); the Mental Health Act (2017); the Administrative Procedures Act (2018); the Special Act for the Regulation and Establishment of Employer-Sponsored Childcare Facilities (2018); the Regulatory Improvement Act (2018); the Elimination of Bureaucratic Barriers Act (2019); the Special Act on Migration and Alien Affairs (2019); and the National Comprehensive Health System Act (2019). In an effort to improve existing regulation, amendments were made to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Family Code, the Labor Code, the Domestic Violence Act, the General Education Act, the

²⁸⁷ Decreto 707.

<https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/0306D587-DB5A-4F4B-A0CE-4714996E4370.pdf>

²⁸⁸ Center for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR). (2016). *El Salvador State Report*.

https://ccprcentre.org/country/el_salvador

²⁸⁹ UNHRC, S. R. s. t. t. (2010). *The violation of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in El Salvador*.

Act on the Teaching Profession, the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, and the Special Act on the Protection and Advancement of Salvadoran Migrants and Their Families.²⁹⁰

LOCAL POLICIES AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS

To ensure proper follow-up on these laws, a number of State policies were implemented. In its first term in office, the FMLN-led government adopted: the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy, the National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, the National Health Policy, the National Policy on Social Participation in Health, the National Environment Policy and education policies. In addition, the government called for the streamlining of human rights practices making them a guiding principle for the work of the State including while “devising, formulating, executing and evaluating government strategies, programs and actions.” The Office of the Human Rights Advocate also benefited from additional government support.²⁹¹

Between 2014 and 2019, more policies, action plans, programs and strategies were established. In addition to a number of initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality (see below), the government set up the National Policy for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents, 2013–2023; the Public Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador; the National Health Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador; the Public Policy on Culture, 2014–2019; the National Policy on Decent Work; the National Health Policy, 2015–2019; the Gender Equity and Equality Policy and implementation plan of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the period 2016–2020; the Policy for Gender Equality and Equity in Health; the National Housing Policy; the National Integrated

²⁹⁰ UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Thirty Fourth Session 4-15 November 2019. (2019). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/246/42/PDF/G1924642.pdf?OpenElement>

²⁹¹ Ibid, UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Twentieth Session 27 October- 7 November 2014. (2014). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G14/140/33/PDF/G1414033.pdf?OpenElement>

Water Management Policy; the National Policy for the Protection and Advancement of Migrants and Their Families; the Citizen Participation Policy of the executive branch; the action plan for the National Policy for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents, 2014–2019; the national action plan for the period 2017–2022 on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security; the National Equality Plan, 2016–2020; the action plan for the National Policy on Access to a Violence-Free Life for Women; the National Strategic Plan on Breastfeeding, 2016–2019; the National Plan for Development, Protection and Social Inclusion (Social Plan); the National Integrated Water Management Plan; the National Action Plan for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador; the “Safe El Salvador” Plan; the National Drinking Water and Sanitation Plan; the National Literacy Program; the Program on Flexible Education Methods; the “I’m Changing” prison management program; the “Young People with Everything” employment and employability program; the National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Child and Adolescent Pregnancy; the Strategy for the Prevention of Femicide and Sexual Violence against Women; and the National Strategy for Comprehensive Early Childhood Development, 2018–2028.²⁹²

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The Funes and Sánchez governments paid special attention to women, revising the legal framework and adopting policies that improved women’s condition, status and wellbeing. In its 2017 concluding observations on the eighth and ninth periodic reports of El Salvador, CEDAW commended El Salvador’s adoption of a number of legislations including: The Act on Equality, Equity and the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in 2016, and the Children and Adolescent Protection Act, in March 2009, by which the Ministry of Education is mandated to provide education on gender, reproductive health and discrimination against women in the educational system; Act on the Promotion, Protection and Development of Microenterprises and Small Businesses, in 2014, which is aimed at promoting greater access

²⁹² UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Thirty Fourth Session 4-15 November 2019. (2019). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/246/42/PDF/G1924642.pdf?OpenElement>

by women to entrepreneurial development; Special Act against Trafficking in Persons, in 2014; Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women, in 2012.²⁹³

During that period of time, El Salvador also exerted great efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework with the goal of accelerating the elimination of gender inequality. Those measures included the adoption or establishment of : a Pact for the Defense of Civil and Political Rights of Women, in 2014; a National System for Substantive Equality and its National Plan, in 2013; a System of Statistics and Monitoring for Equality, in 2013; a National Policy on a Violence-Free Life for Women, in 2013, National plans covering the periods 2013-2015 and 2016-2020; a Safe El Salvador Plan, in 2015, which addresses gender-based violence; a National Plan for Equality and Equity for Salvadoran Women, in 2012; a Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health, in August 2012, which is focused on raising awareness of family planning methods and comprises a section specifically addressing adolescent health; and a Strategic National Plan to Reduce Maternal, Perinatal and Neonatal Mortality, in 2011. In addition, El Salvador ratified and acceded to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, in February 2015; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, in February 2015.²⁹⁴

In 2010, the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women (*Ley Especial Integral para una Vida Libre de Violencia para las Mujeres*) was enacted. In force since 2012, this comprehensive law aimed to punish all forms of violence against women, ranging from mocking to murder. The Law contains 61 articles defending women's rights against economic, femicide, physical, psychological, emotional, patrimonial, sexual, and symbolic violence. The law offers concrete measures aimed at detecting and preventing violence, offering victim assistance and protection, as well as reparation and prosecution of

²⁹³ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). (2017). *Concluding Observations on the Combined Eight and Ninth Periodic Reports of El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/062/92/PDF/N1706292.pdf?OpenElement>

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

offenders.²⁹⁵ The Salvadoran Institute for Women Development (ISDEMU)²⁹⁶ -in close coordination with the Specialized Technical Commission (*Comisión Técnica Especializada-CTE*)- was mandated to monitor and review the implementation of the national policy and action plans that were put in place to support the implementation of the law.²⁹⁷ The Institute was also assigned the task to receive complaints related to violence against women. ISDEMU offers a virtual platform that provides guidance, legal assistance and psychological care; a free hotline for immediate attention; and several offices that provide care and all types of assistance in various parts of the country.²⁹⁸

In 2011, the creation of Specialized Courts for a Life Free of Violence and Discrimination against Women²⁹⁹ allowed women to take legal actions in cases of violence against them. The decree required all legal staff to obtain necessary knowledge on a woman's right to a life free of violence and discrimination. The courts had competence to "hear cases involving the offences established in the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women; and receive complaints and reports based on the Domestic Violence Act. Finally, the courts had competence to monitor and oversee precautionary and protection measures established in the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women; the Equality, Equity and Eradication of Discrimination against Women Act; Labor discrimination cases; and Violations of the Right to Equality".³⁰⁰

The National Equality Plan 2016-2020 [*Plan Nacional de Igualdad 2016 – 2020*], prioritized gender equality at the national, sectoral and municipal levels. The plan aimed to promote

²⁹⁵ La Asamblea Legislativa de la República de El Salvador. (2011). Ley Especial Integral Para una Vida Libre de Violencia para las Mujeres, Decreto 520. In.

²⁹⁶ *The Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer* (ISDEMU), is the lead agency for the Domestic Violence Act and the National Plan to Prevent and Deal with Domestic Violence

²⁹⁷ Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (ISDEMU). (2013). *Informe de Rendición de Cuentas*.

²⁹⁸ Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (ISDEMU) website. *Servicios*. <https://isdemu.gob.sv>

²⁹⁹ Also known as Decree 286 or the "Femicide Law"

³⁰⁰ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) addendum. (2019). *Concluding Observations on the Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of El Salvador*.

economic autonomy; social attention and protection; the right to education in a discrimination-free environment; the mainstreaming of the principle of equality and non-discrimination; sexual and reproductive health; a life free of violence through prevention, detection, and protection; women political and citizen participation; and the mainstreaming of the principle of equality in access, management, use and control of natural and environmental resources.³⁰¹

The *Banca Mujer* (Woman's Bank) program, launched in 2014, empowered women microentrepreneurs through training and technical assistance, and provided them with access to credit with favorable conditions (ALIDE).³⁰² Approved in 2015, legislative Decree 72 established regulations for the generation, use and distribution of e-money. It also provided for simplified methods for opening savings accounts and provided the marginalized low-income population a less complicated path into the formal financial system.³⁰³ In March 2016, a reform to the Salvadorian Labor Code increased paid maternity leave from 12 to 16 weeks and required an advance payment of 75% percent of the basic salary during the leave.³⁰⁴ Also, and since March 2013, fathers were granted three days of paid paternity leave.³⁰⁵ In 2012, the Salvadorian Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock initiated the *Amanecer Rural* (Rural Dawn) program, an initiative aimed at reducing economic inequality and rural poverty through, among other things, promoting entrepreneurship among rural women and young people. The program benefited and empowered 14,808 women, contributing to reducing domestic chores and improving women and youth's security and self-esteem.³⁰⁶ In addition, the FMLN created designated

³⁰¹ Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (ISDEMU). (2016). *Plan Nacional de Igualdad, Periodo 2016-2020*.

³⁰² Banca Mujer was implemented by the El Salvador Development Bank (*Banco de Desarrollo de El Salvador (Bandesal)*)

³⁰³ Decreto No. 72, (2015).

³⁰⁴ Decreto No. 143, (2015).

³⁰⁵ Decreto No. 332, (2013).

³⁰⁶ Salvadoran Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, M. d. A. y. G. M. (2019). *Rural Territorial Competitiveness Programme Project Completion Report*.

budgets in all ministries [*presupuestos etiquetados*] destined to promote women issues.³⁰⁷ It also created the statistics subdepartment [*gerencia estadística de género*] especially dedicated to women with the goal of designing more effective gender-focused public policies.³⁰⁸ An undersecretariat for sexual diversity was also established as a means to combat discrimination and include the LGBTI population in government positions.³⁰⁹

Praising these changes, a CEPAL 2021 publication on fiscal policies with gender focus in Latin America, reported that El Salvador featured between the countries that made the greatest progress in incorporating a gender perspective into their public budget. This progress it reported, was rooted in the legislation that was enacted to protect and defend women's rights.³¹⁰

PUSHING FOR GENDER REPRESENTATION

Women participation in politics also grew in importance after 1992. The FMLN party pushed for more gender representation within the party and for women's active involvement in decision-making. In 1994, the FMLN established a minimum of 30 percent women representation in its statutes, increasing it to 35 percent two years later. According to Blandino, this practice had a positive influence on the deliberations that led to the drafting of Salvadoran political parties' law.³¹¹ Less than a decade later, a quota of at least 30% of women candidates in parties' candidate lists to the Legislative Assembly and municipal council elections was imposed in the 2013 Law on Political Parties (article 38). The law also mandated that political parties include mechanisms in their internal regulations to

³⁰⁷ I Know Politics. El Salvador: Primer Ejercicio de Etiquetado En El Presupuesto General De El Salvador

<https://www.iknowpolitics.org/es/2012/05/el-salvador-primer-ejercicio-de-etiquetado-en-el-presupuesto-general-de-el-salvador>

³⁰⁸ Observatorio de Estadísticas de Género. *Boletín sobre Estadísticas de Género*

<http://aplicaciones.digestyc.gob.sv/observatorio.genero/igualdad/index.aspx>

³⁰⁹ Mendizábal, M. (2012). *Diagnostico Jurídico Sobre Derechos Humanos de la Población LGBTI de El Salvador*.

³¹⁰ Dolores, M., & Sánchez, A. (2021). *La Política Fiscal con Enfoque de Género en Países de América Latina* (Macroeconomía del Desarrollo, Issue).

³¹¹ Blandino, R. A. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

guarantee a gender quota in their internal elective processes.³¹² Along with the quota law, political parties were requested to adopt measures to promote women and youth's participation in elections and in management positions.³¹³

In addition to the above, in 2011, the government of Carlos Mauricio Funes initiated the *Ciudad Mujer* (Woman City) program with the main objective of improving the living conditions of Salvadoran women. The program provided services that met women's basic needs and strategic interests such as the improvement of women's sexual and reproductive health, attention to gender violence, the promotion of economic autonomy, support for territorial and knowledge management, as well as child care.³¹⁴ Lastly, in 2018, FMLN MP Lorena Peña introduced a bill for a new Gender Identity Law, a proposal that would allow transgender people to carry out names and gender changes on official documents.³¹⁵

RESTORING A HEALTHY LEGAL SYSTEM

One of the core reforms of the Chapultepec agreement was an overhaul of the judiciary making it more independent and more professional. Despite being less far-reaching than other reforms, the judiciary reforms strengthened judicial independence, enhanced capacity, and modernized the criminal and civil codes.³¹⁶ Measures were also taken to improve government transparency through enacting an access to public information law in 2011.³¹⁷ In addition, the government established the 'national legal facilitators' service which built the capacity of community leaders to become a liaison between the general public and justice

³¹² Ley de Partidos Políticos, Art. 38, (2013a).

<https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/F13D8C40-EA5D-4029-B592-5EAA9919BD87.pdf>

³¹³ Ley de Partidos Políticos, Decreto No. 307, Art. 22h, (2013b).

<https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/F13D8C40-EA5D-4029-B592-5EAA9919BD87.pdf>

³¹⁴ CiudadMujerWebsite. *Qué es Ciudad Mujer*. <http://www.ciudadmujer.gob.sv/que-es-ciudad-mujer/>

³¹⁵ Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). (2018). FMLN Backs New Gender Identity Law Defending the Rights of the Transgender Community
In.

³¹⁶ Kurtenbach, S. (2018). *Judicial Reform - A Neglected Dimension of SSR in El Salvador*

³¹⁷ Also known as Decree No. 534, Ley de Acceso a la Información Pública, 2011

officials. The electoral process was also democratized, allowing constituents to vote in their neighborhoods and inaugurating an absentee voting system for Salvadorans living abroad.³¹⁸ In 2016, the General Amnesty (Peacebuilding) Act of 1993 was declared unconstitutional. A landmark decision that promised to restore trust in the justice system and bring justice to the victims, prosecuting perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity that were committed during the armed conflict.³¹⁹

In addition to the above-mentioned achievements, between 2009 and 2019, the country saw a steady fall in the spread of diseases; improved housing in low-income communities; a healthier environment; more child and adolescent attention and protection; a re-engineering of the prison system, including rehabilitation and reintegration; more protection of migrants and refugees; and improved programs for people with disabilities.³²⁰ The FMLN's journey in El Salvador's political life carries a significance that extends beyond its contribution to improving the country's democratic practices. As the country transitioned from an oligarchic regime to a representative democracy, the former guerrilla helped change the rules of game and established the foundations for a true democratic transition.

CONCLUSION

In El Salvador and Colombia, the biggest leaps into more inclusive and democratic societies happened at the moment of the M-19 and FMLN's transitions from war to peace. In El Salvador, the peace agreement reformed the armed forces and the Salvadoran electoral

³¹⁸ Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE). (2014). *Memoria Especial Elecciones 2014*.

<https://www.tse.gob.sv/documentos/memoria-de-elecciones/memoria-elecciones-2014.pdf>

³¹⁹ UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Thirty Fourth Session 4-15 November 2019. (2019). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/246/42/PDF/G1924642.pdf?OpenElement>

³²⁰ UN Human Rights Council, W. G. o. t. U. P. R. T. F. S., 4-15 November 2019. (2019). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21; El Salvador*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/246/42/PDF/G1924642.pdf?OpenElement>

system; and promoted human rights, and social and economic equity. In Colombia, the new constitution gave human rights prime importance and established a number of mechanisms to protect those rights. The Constitution also promoted political rights and enabled the emergence of a relevant opposition. In Lebanon and Ireland, the emerging parties' contributions at the national level, while significant, were less transformative. That was partly due to the fact that the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin emerged in societies that had higher degrees of democratic practices (in the case of the Republic of Ireland), but also because the governing systems in Northern Ireland and in Lebanon greatly inhibited these parties' abilities to bring about as much positive change as they would have like to. Organized along religious/ethnic lines, Lebanon and Northern Ireland had established democratic systems that were driven by their strong desire to achieve stability and avoid the resumption of violence. But the power-sharing systems also led to elite bargaining, with veto power producing deadlocks, indecisiveness and inefficiency. As political parties, while clearly exhibiting a democratic platform, Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces' capacities to improve democratic norms and practices were greatly impaired by Lebanon and Northern Ireland's systems of governance.

It ought to be remarked that the above-mentioned contributions were not all crowned with success or rewarded with concrete results. They don't imply either that the parties never engaged in practices that were arguably considered an imperilment to democracy. Imperfect internal democracy is certainly pointed out as a major weakness in all four cases. A number of local and international reports pointed out to the shortcomings of two consecutive FMLN governments policies and their inability to achieve some of their intended goals. In 2019, Human Rights Watch reported that El Salvador had one of the world's highest homicide rates with gangs paralyzing the country with recruitment, extortion, coercion and forced disappearances, and a great ability to evade the control government. In 2020, fewer than 70 percent of Salvadorans were employed and average real wages were lower than 15 years earlier.³²¹ Sinn Féin's course is not flawless either. The party is accused of numerous felonies

³²¹ Banegas, N., & Winkler, H. (2020). *Jobs Diagnostic El Salvador; Understanding Challenges for More and Better Jobs in El Salvador: An integrated approach* (Job Series, Issue).

and malpractices. Those include evading crime allegations -including one involving Gerry Adam's brother- channeling public funds into a its coffers, and harassing media to receive more favorable covering.³²² Sinn Féin is often criticized for its hypocrisy, taking undue credit for others' successes.³²³ Similarly, the Lebanese Forces has been blamed for sacrificing the greater cause in pursuance of personal gains. In particular, the party's agreement with the Free Patriotic Movement clearing the way for the presidential election of its political opponent, but also and mostly, striking a deal to share the nominations of Christian appointees at the administrative level conflicted with the principles of meritocracy and other principles that their legislative actions were based upon.³²⁴ The Lebanese Forces were also criticized for condoning the corrupt behavior of their allies in government, and failing to take action when they could have witnessed abuse of public office for private gain. In Colombia, the new Constitution that the AD M-19 prides itself on spearheading, was certainly not the result a single-handed initiative but rather the outcome of a number of developments, most notably the student-led civic movement that requested the *séptima papeleta* leading to the convocation of a National Constituent Assembly. Party members' individualism was not the best example of democratic behavior and indicated a tendency to put their own interest ahead of the party's.

Nonetheless, the unequivocal democratic measures and rights-driven initiatives that were undertaken by these parties leave no doubt as to their democratic intentions. Above all, they clearly demonstrated that the war-focused military organizations had successfully yielded political ones. Their sustained efforts to elevate human rights and improve education, healthcare, the judiciary, and citizens' wellbeing in general, testify to their strong and sustained commitments to violence-free and more democratic societies. The next chapters will look at the factors that might have contributed to these parties' behavior. We will look

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/34699/Understanding-Challenges-for-More-and-Better-Jobs-in-El-Salvador-An-Integrated-Approach.pdf>

³²² Independent. (2016). 10 reasons not to cast a vote for Sinn Féin

independent.ie. <https://www.independent.ie/opinion/editorial/10-reasons-not-to-cast-a-vote-for-sinn-fein-34471327.html>

³²³ Ambassador McCoy, G. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³²⁴ Ayoub, H. (2022). *Author's interview with the Chief Editor of 180post.com* [Interview].

at both the external and internal factors that could have affected their development and turned them into drivers of change.

CHAPTER 3: EXOGENOUS FACTORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON PARTY PERFORMANCE/ACHIEVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

I define exogenous factors as elements that are beyond the control of the party and generate circumstances that can condition or contribute to conditioning the life of the party, its evolution, success, and achievements. The list of exogenous factors analyzed in this research is not exhaustive but includes those factors what I believe could have affected the ability of the political institution to perform the way it did. The factors considered are:

1. The peace agreement, the process that follows;
2. The electoral system and electoral performance;
3. The political environment;
4. Alliances and international support;
5. Previous political experience.

While these factors are all important elements in the rebel-to-party transformation, they impacted the political parties under review in different ways. Peace agreements were crucial for moving past the conflicts. But while essential for halting the fighting and facilitating a successful transition, the peace agreements and the processes that followed, had limited consequences on party development. Central to the success of any political party, good electoral performance obviously reflected the parties' popularity and political relevance, and allowed them to fulfill their representative roles in democracies. But while important for party survival, lack of electoral success did not impede party contribution to the democratization process. Political stability helped create environments where parties could more easily carry out their duties. Whether financial or logistical, international support, greatly impacted the post-insurgent parties' political outreach and capacities as they endeavored to reinvent themselves as peaceful political players. Lastly, previous political experience played a crucial part especially at the time of the transition as it determined these

groups' ability to successfully integrate the political scene. Undoubtedly, the above-mentioned elements impacted the parties in varying ways, but while they often played crucial roles -some more than others- in helping the parties thrive and succeed, none of these factors seems to have fundamentally impacted their willingness -or ability- to push the boundaries of democratic practices at the national level.

PEACE AGREEMENTS AND THE PROCESS THAT FOLLOWS: VIRTUES AND SHORTCOMINGS

THE PEACE AGREEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Peace agreements are known as the documents that formally end a conflict and lay down the terms of the rebuilding in the post-conflict setting. They take many shapes and forms and have a wide range of outcomes.³²⁵ Some scholars view the substance of the peace agreement as central to the unfolding of post-conflict developments, resulting in either a durable peace, setbacks, delays, or even resumption of conflicts. Others view peace agreements as one of many stages, leading to improved conditions that facilitate the transition from war to peace.³²⁶

The impact of the content of the peace accords on the development and the achievements of the political parties addressed in this research is wide-ranging. What seems to have played a more important role however is the official endorsement of these deals through ratification (or rejection) of the texts of the agreements. Indeed, many party members interviewed for this study observed that the text of the peace accords had little influence on the evolution of

³²⁵ Yawanarajah, N., & Ouellet, J. (2013). *Peace Agreements*

³²⁶ Arnault, J. (2006). Good Agreement? Bad Agreement? An Implementation Perspective. *Center of International Studies Princeton University*.

their parties, their achievements, or their future electoral success. Nonetheless, most reported that government/legislative support for the peace deals, not only ended the fighting but also helped the emerging parties lead a more successful political life. This is particularly interesting given the fact that the agreements' circumstances and contexts varied widely. In El Salvador, the peace agreement sealed a deal between the government and a guerrilla, in Lebanon, the agreement was the result of a settlement between different political actors, in Ireland, the peace deal comprised a Multi-Party and a British-Irish agreements, and finally in Colombia, the peace agreement was a political agreement signed between the government, the guerrilla, and various parties but was ultimately not endorsed by congress.

AD M-19

The Political Agreement

Signed by the national government, the political parties, the M-19, and the Catholic church - as moral and spiritual guardian of the process- the *Acuerdo Político* [Political Agreement] formally ending the armed hostilities between the Colombian government and the M-19 guerrilla, was sealed on March 9, 1990.³²⁷ The agreement marked the beginning of the M-19 transformation from an armed group to a political party, which would also influence other armed insurgencies to seek the path of negotiated settlement and ultimately transform into peaceful political actors.³²⁸ The settlement announced the demobilization of all guerrilla members and offered to facilitate the incorporation of former combatants into civilian life. In addition, the peace deal proclaimed the creation of a one-time only special circumscription for peace, the introduction of an electoral reform, the expansion of parliamentary

³²⁷ National government, Political parties, M-19, & The Catholic Church. (1990). *Acuerdo Político-Multiparty agreement*.

³²⁸ Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue).

representation for minorities, and the creation of an advisory commission for the reform of the Colombian justice system. The agreement also granted pardon to guerilla members.³²⁹

It is noteworthy that a constitutional reform bill including the political reforms that formed the basis of the peace agreement had been rejected by the Colombian Congress four months before the M-19 signed the peace agreement. Simultaneously waging a war against drug trafficking, the government had linked the implementation of this political pact to a constitutional proposal that contained reforms aimed at combating narcotrafficking which included the institutionalization of extradition. The contentious issue of extradition became a major point of difference between Congress and the Government which had a fateful effect on the reform.³³⁰ In a significant way, the collapse of the reform had removed the legal basis of the *Political Agreement* -by which the M-19 had agreed to lay down its arms. Notwithstanding this important setback, the M-19 publicly reaffirmed its intention to remain committed to peace. In September 1990, the guerrilla held its 10th and last national conference during which it was agreed that the insurgency would give up its weapons, reintegrate civil life, and create a legal political movement.³³¹

Implications

Despite its collapse in Congress, the Political Agreement is widely regarded as an important step in the country's evolution towards a new social contract. Notably, the agreement allowed former members of the M-19 guerrillas to run for elections enabling the movement to act as a leading force in the National Constitutional Assembly that was entrusted with the important task of re-writing the Constitution. Crucially, the 1991 Constitution also conceived as a political pact, helped address the deep-rooted problems that impeded democratic

³²⁹ National government, Political parties, M-19, & The Catholic Church. (1990). *Acuerdo Político-Multiparty agreement*.

³³⁰ Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue).

³³¹ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

institution building, and consolidated respect for human rights in Colombia.³³² The peace treaty's rejection by Congress however, stripped the agreement of its legal basis and dealt a massive blow to the government's counterinsurgency efforts. But despite its collapse, the Political Agreement would have served as a catalyst for a revolutionary reform and for the demobilization of the M-19 guerrilla and several other Colombian armed groups.

FMLN

The Chapultepec Agreement

About two years after the M-19 demobilization, the Salvadoran government and the FMLN guerilla signed a peace agreement in Mexico, marking the end of a more than a decade civil war. Two major events had convinced the warring parties that the time for peace dialogues was ripe: an FMLN staged offensive in affluent neighborhoods of San Salvador causing waves of panic amongst elite Salvadorans; and the Salvadoran military's murder of several people including six Jesuit scholars, on the grounds of the José Simeón Cañas Central American University. The resulting peace talks lasted two years and culminated with the Chapultepec accords signed on January 16, 1992 in Mexico City.³³³ The provisions contained in the agreement aimed at mitigating economic and social inequalities by addressing the root causes of the conflict. The accord called for land distribution, the democratization of political practices and a reform of the military, placing it under civilian control. The negotiating parties also provided for a comprehensive reform of the justice and electoral systems. The agreement included provisions for the political participation of the FMLN and for a final ceasefire with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the armed groups.³³⁴

³³² Thornhill, C., & Rodrigues de Araújo Calabria, C. (2020). Global Constitutionalism and Democracy: The Case of Colombia. *Jus Cogen*, 2, 155-183. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42439-020-00024-z>

³³³ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

³³⁴ FMLN and Salvadoran Government. (1992). *Acuerdos de Chapultepec*. Ciudad de Mexico

Implications

Designated “a revolution achieved by negotiation”, by the U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Chapultepec agreement introduced groundbreaking reforms while preserving constitutional order.³³⁵ In addition to ending the conflict, the accord laid the basis for the democratization of the government, political demilitarization, and the FMLN’s transformation into a political actor.³³⁶ With hindsight however, many observers would point out to the Chapultepec agreement limitations. One of the document’s biggest drawbacks is said to be its failure to address a reform of the economic model. Looking back, Ana Guadalupe Martínez argued that many of the agreement’s valuable initiatives could not be completed because the economic model remained unchanged. Having won the elections, the ARENA government had established that any change to the economic model had to be agreed on democratically, an ambition that was never achieved.³³⁷ Some FMLN leaders would recognize that, despite its undisputed contributions, the peace agreement was no magic bullet.³³⁸ One such detractor is former vice-minister of justice Juan Javier Martínez who would even assert that the agreement’s sole achievement was bringing the conflict to an end. As he declared, “The only thing the agreement did was end the war. Now, another reform is needed to bring about real change. The agreement was a pact for a new nation with international support, now we need a new pact with international support to get out of this crisis.”³³⁹ Despite the many criticisms, the profound transformations that followed the accord leave no doubt as to the impact of the U.N.-brokered agreement on Salvadoran political life. The Chapultepec agreement would totally disrupt the prevailing order and bring radical constitutional changes that introduced civic and political rights that were totally absent from the country’s judicial and political landscape before 1992.

³³⁵ Holiday, D., & Stanley, W. (1993). Building the Peace: Preliminary Lessons from El Salvador. *Journal of International Affairs*, 46(2), 415-438.

³³⁶ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

³³⁷ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³³⁸ Martínez, J. J. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview]. , Mata, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³³⁹ Martínez, J. J. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

SINN FÉIN

The Belfast Agreement

Overwhelmingly endorsed by a referendum on May 22 1998, the *Belfast agreement*, paved the way for important changes in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Primarily, the document provided for a mechanism -approved by the British government- by which the Irish people would have the authority to decide on the fate of a United Ireland. It also proposed and supported amendments to the Irish Constitution and clauses for incorporation in British legislation relating to the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. In addition, the agreement provided for the creation of democratic institutions in Northern Ireland safeguarding the rights and interests of all sections of the population and ensuring that key decisions are taken on a cross-community basis. The document set up a new cross-border Ministerial Council tasked with developing and coordinating actions on matters of shared interest across the Island, and a British-Irish Council aimed at promoting policies beneficial to all the people living on these islands. A special section was dedicated to human rights, including the creation of special institutions and the commitment to various actions aimed at safeguarding civil rights and religious liberties. Participants also committed to full disarmament and a reform of the security, policing and justice systems to ensure effectiveness, fairness and impartiality. An accelerated program for the release of prisoners was put in place, protecting the rights of prisoners and assisting them both prior and after the release.³⁴⁰ In addition, the negotiated settlement instituted a power-sharing arrangement between Unionists (represented by the Democratic Unionist Party-*DUP*) and nationalists (represented by Sinn Féin). This arrangement collapsed and was restored on multiple occasions, most notably in 2006 with the signature of *St Andrews agreement*.

³⁴⁰ Signed by British and Irish Government after multi-party talks. (1998). *The Northern Ireland Peace Agreement*. United Nations Peacemaker: United Nations Retrieved from https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IE%20GB_980410_Northern%20Ireland%20Agreement.pdf

Implications

The Good Friday agreement brought an end to decades of violence in Northern Ireland forcing the warring parties to agree on a peaceful way forward, and work together for the common good.³⁴¹ Establishing a system of checks and balances, the agreement instituted safeguards to protect the rights and interests of all sides of the community, ensuring that all sections of the community work together and are equally protected.³⁴² The peace accord also brought some economic success to Northern Ireland, encouraged cross-border exchanges, and partly restored trust in policing with the implicit consent of the public.³⁴³ Lastly, the signature of the peace treaty created an atmosphere conducive to the peaceful settlement of disputes that set the stage for future disarmament.³⁴⁴ Providing for the establishment of EU programs aimed at promoting North-South cooperation and cross-community initiatives, 'Peace Funds' – mostly targeting children and young people- were created to build cohesion between the communities and promote economic and social stability.³⁴⁵ Those included funds to help ex-prisoners set up projects, and initiatives fostering cross-community collaboration between youth to prevent the development of violence.³⁴⁶

In retrospect, as in the other cases, the Good Friday agreement was no panacea as both sides would often choose to disregard many of its provisions and brush aside political decisions that required cross-community consensus. As time passed, polarization and political stagnation would frequently be blamed on the nature of the agreement. The appointment of a Justice Minister for example would often develop into a political issue. According to Whysall, one of the most essential elements of the document, the provision that consecrated the principles of mutual respect and was designed as a safeguard for social cohesion was

³⁴¹ Whysall, A. (2015). Northern Ireland 1.01: A a revision class for those with a sense of déjà vu. *Constitution Unit*.

³⁴² Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

³⁴³ Whysall, A. (2015). Northern Ireland 1.01: A a revision class for those with a sense of déjà vu. *Constitution Unit*.

³⁴⁴ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

³⁴⁵ European Parliament. *Northern Ireland PEACE Programme*.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/102/northern-ireland-peace-programme>

³⁴⁶ Ó Hadhmaill, F. (2022b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

largely ignored. To Whysall, disrespect of the concept of ‘parity of esteem’ led to much polarization and to an increase in partisanship which in turn generated political deadlocks. Since 2016, divisions over Brexit exacerbated an already delicate situation and brought discontent on both sides of the divide.³⁴⁷

Despite these setbacks, the document is largely believed to have been beneficial to both sides and to the society as a whole. Party activist and former prisoner Jim Gibney remarked that the agreement didn’t favor any section of population, instead, it brought reassurances to both Catholics and Protestants. As he explained, “You could not describe it as a document favoring one party over another... It contains many elements that dealt with human rights and equality and those are important issues that served the interests of all the people in the island.”³⁴⁸ In fact, the agreement did generate a national identity that would become evident a few years later with the emergence of an important segment of the society claiming allegiance to none of the two major trends.³⁴⁹ A 2018 survey indicating that 50% of Northern Irish identified as neither Unionist nor Nationalist -a 20% increase from a similar survey 20 years earlier- suggested a clear evolution in people’s political identity, the “neither” population indicating that they wouldn’t necessarily rally behind any political party.³⁵⁰ The recent rise of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI), a centrist, interdenominational, non-aligned party that rejects nationalist and Unionist labels, would confirm this trend. Attracting members from both the Catholic and Protestant communities, the Alliance party seeks middle ground, perhaps best symbolizing the ‘new beginning’ that the Good Friday agreement had aimed for.

³⁴⁷ Whysall, A. (2015). Northern Ireland 1.01: A a revision class for those with a sense of déjà vu. *Constitution Unit*.

³⁴⁸ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

³⁴⁹ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

³⁵⁰ BBC.com. (2019). NI Survey Suggests 50% Neither Unionist nor Nationalist <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-48702235>

THE LEBANESE FORCES

The Taef Agreement

Signed in October 1989, the Taef agreement mandated the ending of the war, political reforms, the establishment of special relations with Syria, and a framework for the beginning of complete Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon.³⁵¹ While not altering the political structure of the Lebanese system -based upon sectarianism- the agreement created a more balanced and more equitable confessional system. It is noteworthy that one of the most significant parties to the conflict, the General Michel Aoun objected to the agreement and refused to comply with its provisions.³⁵² The Lebanese Forces reluctantly approved the Taef agreement as a lesser evil than the absence of an agreement, hoping that the settlement would stop the war and start the rebuilding of the State. Those hopes were vain as the fighting quickly resumed. After a fierce battle opposing the General Aoun's army and the Lebanese Forces, and a Syrian attack of the Lebanese presidential palace ousting the General, the fighting would eventually come to a halt by the end of October 1990. The Taef agreement would ultimately bring some stability to the country and restore a fairly functioning democracy.³⁵³

Implications

The Taef accord between the Lebanese government and the various warring parties laid the foundation for reconciliation in a society consumed by war and sectarian violence. Despite changing the power-sharing formula at the expense of Christians, the Lebanese Forces perceived the peace settlement as an opportunity to finally turn the page of hostilities and start a new chapter in their protracted battle. Despite their initial reservations, they eventually embraced the new deal seeing it as a necessary undertaking to restore the balance of power in a more equitable way. According to the head of the university professors' body

³⁵¹ Presidency-website. The national accord document- The Taef agreement.

³⁵² Stedman, S. J., Rothchild, D. S., & Cousens, E. M. (2002). *Ending civil wars : the implementation of peace agreements*. Lynne Rienner.

³⁵³ Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek.

at the LF, Wissam Raji the party didn't perceive the accord as a dissolution of Christian privileges but rather as an adjustment to the way power was exercised in the country. As he explained, "Taef transferred power from one person to a group of people." This shift in power he argued, forced Christians to exert power in a more equitable way and pay heed to the new equilibrium of forces, which ultimately led them to become more mindful of the other communities' needs.³⁵⁴

As it happens, very few elements of the Taef agreement actually materialized and with time, the new power-sharing system generated more tensions and deadlocks. Syrian troops remained in Lebanon until 2005 emasculating the opposition, interfering in government decisions and in elections, and brazenly designating presidents and prime ministers.³⁵⁵ Even after the Syrian troops' withdrawal, Syria's direct and indirect interference lingered for many years.³⁵⁶ The agreement's unchanged confessional power-sharing formula hampered progress, facilitated corruption, and perpetuated instability and deep divisions.³⁵⁷ In sum, largely ignored by the political authorities, the Taef agreement helped stop the war but failed to rebuild the state. The new power-sharing formula diffused power, making it difficult to pinpoint responsibility and hold anyone responsible for poor governance and bad administration.³⁵⁸

CONCLUSION

A direct correlation between the peace-sealing documents and the evolution of the parties that emerged from conflict is hard to establish. Despite their obvious benefits, these negotiated settlements faced challenges and contained their share of imperfections and shortcomings. Far-reaching from a historical point of view, the agreement with the M-19 in

³⁵⁴ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

³⁵⁵ Salem, P. (2006). The future of Lebanon. *Foreign Affairs*, 85(6), 13-22.

³⁵⁶ Salloukh, B. (2005). Syria and Lebanon: A Brotherhood Transformed. *Middle East Research and Information Project (MER)*, 236.

³⁵⁷ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

³⁵⁸ Bahout, J. (2016). *The unraveling of Lebanon's Taef Agreement: Limits of Sect-Based Power Sharing*. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/05/16/unraveling-of-lebanon-s-taif-agreement-limits-of-sect-based-power-sharing-pub-63571>

Colombia had little influence on the future development of the emerging party and carried no significance with regard to the party's contribution to the changes that saw the light in the early 90s. The Taef agreement was similarly inconsequential with respect to the evolution of the Lebanese Forces and its future achievements. Reluctantly approved and poorly implemented, the agreement's impact on the policy direction and political orientations of the LF is at best negligible. The same holds true for the Good Friday agreement, many of its provisions having been largely ignored. And while many of the agreement provisions were vital to end the troubles, the settlement cannot be credited for Sinn Féin's achievements in the post-agreement period. In El Salvador, the peace agreement was a fateful moment in the country's history, bringing about much-needed changes. An evaluation of the content of, and circumstances around the peace agreements shows that the content of these peace settlements had little influence on these parties' evolution and ability to undertake the many reforms that they are credited for.

DDR AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, otherwise known as DDR, is a process aimed at removing weapons from the hands of former combatants and helping them reintegrate society as active participants in the peace process. DDR sets the stage for these individual's safe return to their communities and addresses the needs of both the communities and the ex-combatants to create the right conditions for a sustainable peace.³⁵⁹ Political will and national buy-in are considered essential to the success of DDR. Also associated to that success is the implementation of an integrated recovery strategy that takes

³⁵⁹ UN Peacekeeping. *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*.
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration>

into consideration economic development, security sector reform, the integration of refugees and internally displaced persons, and justice and reconciliation.³⁶⁰

Despite a few setbacks, the disarmament operations that accompanied demobilization in all four cases studied are largely considered successful. In most cases however, rehabilitation posed many challenges. The reintegration programs either lacked clarity or left many outside the rehabilitation process which, in a number of instances, led to widespread discrimination or stigmatization. This situation prompted the political parties to play a central role in assisting the demobilized.

Transitional justice mechanisms were established in Ireland and El Salvador. But while the National Reconciliation Act in El Salvador had provided a limited amnesty, excluding individuals involved in serious human rights violations; in Ireland, the peace agreement didn't provide for an amnesty for crimes committed during the troubles. In Lebanon and Colombia, armed groups were granted either amnesty or pardon. While the specter of prosecution loomed in Ireland, and to a lesser extent in El Salvador -casting uncertainty over the political future of the party leaders- the conditions created by these uncertainties don't seem to have impacted the parties' ability to deliver on the democratic front.

AD M-19

In Colombia, law 77 of 1989 granted former guerrilla members judicial forgiveness. This law of amnesty and pardon was regulated by a decree in 1991, allowing the Colombian government to grant pardon or amnesty to Colombian nationals for crimes committed before the promulgation of the decree. The granting of pardon or amnesty would be contingent upon the government's ruling on the good conduct of the guerrilla group to which the individual belonged to.³⁶¹ To further protect former guerrilla members, Law 7 of 1992 was

³⁶⁰ IPA, I. P. A. (2002). *A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations*. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/framework_for_ddr.pdf

³⁶¹ Ministerio de Gobierno. (1991). *Decreto 213 de 1991*. Ministerio de Gobierno: Diaro Oficial

enacted at a later stage after judge Clemencia García de Useche threatened to prosecute the former guerrilla members for crimes against humanity, referring to the capture of the Palace of Justice by members of the M-19 in November 1985.³⁶²

Serious efforts were made by both the government and the former guerrilla to reintegrate and rehabilitate ex-combatants.³⁶³ A reincorporation program for former combatants was established through the *Presidential Council for Reconciliation, Normalization and Rehabilitation*. The model insured standardization, which referred to the guarantees and principles of favorability for the demobilized; rehabilitation, focusing on the populations affected by the conflict; and reconciliation, which concentrated on the reintegration of former combatants. The government of César Gaviria Trujillo (1990-1994) continued the process, issuing Decree 2884 of 1991, which created the presidential program for reintegration. 3,287 demobilized individuals, many of whom were former M-19 members, benefited from this program.³⁶⁴ Secondary education was offered to former combatants and an education program -expanded to benefit citizens who did not belong to the demobilized community- was established.³⁶⁵ In addition, the government set up an economic reintegration program focusing on micro-entrepreneurship. The program granted funds to participants to cover housing and help ex-combatants continue their education and start their own business. This latter initiative was met with limited success as most participants lacked entrepreneurial skills and couldn't carry out their projects successfully.³⁶⁶

³⁶² El Congreso de Colombia. (1992). *Ley 7 de 1992 (Julio 3) Por la cual se dictan algunas disposiciones en materia de procedimiento penal*. Diario Oficial. Caracol Radio. (2015). Conozca las leyes que indultaron al M-19. *Caracol Radio*.

³⁶³ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

³⁶⁴ Giraldo Gómez, S. (2010). Contextualización teórica e histórica de la reintegración social y económica de desmovilizados en Colombia. In.

³⁶⁵ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³⁶⁶ Méndez, M. L., & Rivas, Á. (2008). Alternativas de generación de ingresos para desmovilizados: El Programa de reinserción a la vida civil y la Alta Consejería para la Reintegración *Fundacion Ideas para La Paz- Informes FIP, Serie Informes No. 5*.

Despite a number of shortcomings, many former M-19 combatants indicated that the reinsertion process was fairly successful.³⁶⁷ According to Navarro, for the most part, former fighters found their place in civil life and very few went back to arms. As he pointed out, “The majority of us integrated into society with more or less income. I have a life that is quite good and successful, others did not do so well, some of us went abroad, but very few returned to the mountains.”³⁶⁸ It should be noted that despite the general success of the demobilization, in 1995, an M-19 dissidence called Guerrilla Jaime Bateman Cayón (named after the founder of the M-19) was created and carried out several armed operations until 1998. That dissidence was short-lived and quickly absorbed by the larger FARC guerrilla.³⁶⁹

FMLN

As a result of the peace process, the Salvadoran 1992 Law of National Reconciliation offered amnesty for war crimes in accordance with international law which excluded those responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity. However, the publication of the UN Truth Commission in 1993 attributing 80% of the crimes committed to government forces, prompted an emergency response. The ARENA party, in control of the legislative assembly, rushed to unilaterally pass the amnesty law of 1993, overriding many aspects of the 1992 law in particular the exceptions that permitted the prosecution of those involved in massacres and egregious crimes.³⁷⁰ This law also incidentally protected FMLN leaders identified in the Truth Commission as being responsible for serious crimes, from being prosecuted. It’s only in 2016, after almost half a century of impunity that, in a historical ruling, a Constitutional Court declared the 1993 law on general amnesty unconstitutional.³⁷¹

³⁶⁷ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author’s interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview]., Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³⁶⁸ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author’s interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

³⁶⁹ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

³⁷⁰ Dolliver, K., Kanavel, S., & Robeck, D. (2013). *El Salvador’s Amnesty Law: A monument to impunity?* <https://elliott.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2141/f/downloads/acad/lahs/el-salvador-amnesty-2013.pdf>

³⁷¹ OHCHR, U. N. H. R. O. o. t. H. C. (2020). *Justice delayed but not denied: transitional justice in El Salvador*

The ruling led to the Salvadoran parliament agreeing to suspend the controversial bill in 2019.³⁷²

Focusing mainly on demobilization and demilitarization -both measures considered a priority for true reconciliation- the Chapultepec agreement largely overlooked the reintegration of former combatants. The document lacked clarity as to how reintegration would take place which prompted the government to develop a five-year “National Reconstruction Plan” aimed at providing technical and material support as well as university scholarships to ex-combatants. However, these programs along with land transfers to ex-combatants and civilians didn’t answer expectations, having been poorly planned and reaching only a fraction of the initial beneficiaries.³⁷³

The land transfer program, was considered a central demand by the guerrilla forces. In a land-scarce country, the program was linked to what was considered a ‘reconstruction of identities’ aimed at helping former combatants resettle with their families and socially reintegrate. Hampered by administrative and technical problems, the program was a particular disappointment to former combatants who saw their promise for a better future sacrificed. According to Mata both the ARENA and FMLN governments share responsibility for the shortcomings of the reinsertion programs. In the initial period after peace was sealed, obstructions from the ARENA government and financial limitations hampered the process. When the FMLN came to power, it strived to pass the reinsertion programs into laws, paying special attention to the veterans’ families and their descendants. But technical problems - such as the granting of infertile land- and incompetence -including lack of technical skills- hindered the implementation. .³⁷⁴ Furthermore, severance pay of one year’s salary to

³⁷² Renteria, N. (2019). El Salvador wartime parties suspend controversial amnesty bill. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-el-salvador-amnesty-idUSKCN1ST2TC>

³⁷³ Segovia, A. (2009). *Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of El Salvador*. <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-DDR-ElSalvador-CaseStudy-2009-English.pdf>

³⁷⁴ Mata, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

demobilized members of the military and security forces -a relief measure planned for in the agreement- was only paid to one third of ex-soldiers causing resentment and frustration.³⁷⁵

In addition to rehabilitation, the Salvadoran peace accords committed to some aspects of transitional justice for the purpose of revealing past wrongdoings and promoting national reconciliation. These measures included the creation of a Truth Commission tasked with investigating serious acts of violence; an ad hoc Commission to study the human rights record of the armed forces; the adoption of measures, mainly legislative, aimed at guaranteeing ex-combatants' full reintegration into civil life; the reform of the security forces, putting it under the direction of civilian authorities; and a reform of the judicial system making it more competent and more independent.³⁷⁶ While achieving some results such as the vetting of the armed forces and some institutional reforms, transitional justice failed to bring justice to the victims of the conflict. Despite the Ad Hoc Commission's submission of an extensive report on the human rights record of high-level officers, prosecutions were limited as both the government and the FMLN secretly negotiated respective amnesties.³⁷⁷

THE LEBANESE FORCES

The disbanding of the Lebanese militias, a recurrent theme throughout the Lebanese war, was made possible after the ratification of the Taef agreement in March 1991. With the exception of the Hezbollah, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), and the Palestinian militia groups, all militias in Lebanon were disarmed by April 30, 1991. After initially opposing the government decision to demobilize all militias, the Lebanese Forces complied with the requirements, sold its armament (unsuccessfully trying to stow away some of it) and

³⁷⁵ Segovia, A. (2009). *Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of El Salvador*.

<https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-DDR-ElSalvador-CaseStudy-2009-English.pdf>

³⁷⁶ FMLN and Salvadoran Government. (1992). *Acuerdos de Chapultepec*. Ciudad de Mexico

³⁷⁷ Segovia, A. (2009). *Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of El Salvador*.

<https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-DDR-ElSalvador-CaseStudy-2009-English.pdf>

reintegrated some of its combatants in the Lebanese Army.³⁷⁸ According to Picard, the reincorporation of the Lebanese Forces into the army was largely unsuccessful due in part to the former militia's ambitious demands but also to the army's reluctance to integrate former LF combatants given their belligerent history.³⁷⁹ Often perceived as having a militant and combative disposition, former LF militia members were persecuted in a deliberate manner.³⁸⁰ This active discrimination was compounded by the government's lack of preparedness to handle the post-conflict challenges.³⁸¹

Neglected by the authorities, the Lebanese Forces' management strived to secure jobs for its militants making every possible effort to reintegrate them into their communities. Individual and group efforts from supporters and sympathizers provided financial assistance to those in need and helped them regain confidence and find a place in civilian life.³⁸² Many of the former combatants who couldn't emigrate or chose to remain in the country became largely reliant on family members and the former militia network for social and economic reintegration.³⁸³ When asked about their experience transitioning into civil life, many interviewees expressed their gratitude for the party's efforts despite the many challenges faced. Badaro credited much of the positive outcomes to the party leader who, he said, never abandoned the veterans and made sure the old generation was cared for and not stigmatized. In Badaro's words, "Samir Geagea, did an excellent job integrating the *pre-political era* combatants. He established an integration plan that is still ongoing. He didn't do it in a brusque manner and was careful to avoid clashes between the old and the new generation. I think this part of the reintegration efforts was pretty successful".³⁸⁴ But despite the enormous efforts, several thousand former militants remained outside the reintegration

³⁷⁸ Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek.

³⁷⁹ Picard, E. (1999). *Prospects for Lebanon. The demobilisation of the Lebanese Militia*.

³⁸⁰ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

³⁸¹ Badaro, R. (2017). *Author's interview with Roy Badaro* [Interview].

³⁸² Picard, E. (1999). *Prospects for Lebanon. The demobilisation of the Lebanese Militia*.

³⁸³ Karamé, K. (2009). Reintegration and the relevance of social relations: the case of Lebanon *Conflict, Security and Development*, 9(4), 495-514.

³⁸⁴ Badaro, R. (2017). *Author's interview with Roy Badaro* [Interview].

process. Fearing for their lives, some former militants not covered by the amnesty, chose to flee the country fearing retaliations.³⁸⁵

The Taef agreement didn't include any amnesty provisions however, more than two years after the signature of the agreement, the Lebanese government issued a much-criticized amnesty law with the goal of turning the page on hostilities and beginning a new chapter in the country's political history. With a few exceptions, the General Amnesty Law No. 84/91 granted general amnesty for crimes committed before March 28, 1991.³⁸⁶ Widely regarded as a symbol of impunity and an arrangement that favored peace at the expense of justice, the amnesty law granted general amnesty to all militias and armed groups.³⁸⁷

SINN FÉIN

The decommissioning of IRA weapons was initiated in October 2001, a process that lasted until September 2005, when the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) officially announced the completion of the IRA hand-over of weapons. The demilitarization of the IRA is generally considered one the most complex issues of the peace process and years that followed. IRA complete disarmament became a condition for the Unionists to negotiate with, and later sit in government with Sinn Féin, which ultimately led to crippling government operations and the suspension of many institutions of the devolved government.³⁸⁸

In contrast to the three other cases considered in this study, the Good Friday agreement didn't provide for an amnesty for crimes committed during the troubles. According to party member and former prisoner Féilim Ó hAdhmaill, the absence of amnesty created a delicate

³⁸⁵ Picard, E. (1999). *Prospects for Lebanon. The demobilisation of the Lebanese Militia.*

³⁸⁶ Amnesty.org. (1997). *Lebanon: Human Rights Developments and Violations.*
<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/164000/mde180191997en.pdf>

³⁸⁷ ICTJ, I. C. f. T. J. (2014). *Failing to Deal with the Past. What Cost to Lebanon?*

³⁸⁸ CAIN Archives. *Irish Peace Process - Brief Note on Decommissioning*
Ulster University. <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/decommission.htm>

situation for ex-combatants as people formerly involved with the armed organization remained subject to prosecution for offenses that occurred during the armed conflict, if uncovered. Ó hAdhmaill, who was himself convicted with conspiring to cause explosions, explained that this situation led to many former IRA members being extremely discreet about their past unless already charged and jailed. He explained, “It’s a different type of peace process. People prefer to say that they were involved in the *republican movement* because the *republican movement* is seen as the broader movement that may include being a member of the Sinn Féin which is a legal organization.”³⁸⁹

As is often the case with peace-sealing documents, the Good Friday agreement didn’t shield former IRA members from criminalization and media harassment. It frequently happened that former prisoners were discriminated against and met with distrust, stigma and rejection.³⁹⁰ Ó hAdhmaill related that to this day, former IRA members with a criminal record receive unequal treatment when applying for certain job positions, or if seeking certain services. As he reported, “If you want access to insurance policies or if you want a job with children or people with disabilities you have to get a police check and, depending on the organization, you might improve or lower your chances of being hired.” He reported that the way former prisoners are perceived varies considerably. Their location usually determines their social status which can vary from hero to terrorist. He explained,

“The reason why I work at the University College in Cork which is a prestigious university, one of the best in Ireland, is because it regards me as having been in jail because of the conflict, they do not see me as a criminal. But in the North of (the republic of) Ireland it would be difficult for me to get a university job because they would see me as a criminal or a terrorist.”³⁹¹

³⁸⁹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

³⁹⁰ Shirlow, P., Graham, B., McEvoy, K., Féilim, Ó. h., & Purvis, D. (2005). Politically Motivated Former Prisoner Groups: Community Activism and Conflict Transformation. In. Research Gate: N. Ireland Community Relations Council.

³⁹¹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

Similar to what happened in Colombia and El Salvador, an organization aimed at improving the lives of former Republican prisoners and their families was established in 1998. Funded by the European Peace Fund and operating throughout the island, the Coiste Na N-Iarchimi, still employs 65 full-time workers and numerous volunteers. According to the institution's website, the organization's main projects include legal initiatives to fight discriminatory practices and injustice against former political prisoners, support and counseling services, as well as educational and peace building projects among other things.³⁹² With the support of Sinn Féin and Coiste Na N-Iarchimi, former republican prisoners found community and personal support, an assistance that was highly effective and far more productive than the one received by their loyalists counterparts.³⁹³

The Good Friday agreement didn't contain any formal transitional justice mechanisms however, a number of other subsequent agreements addressed the issues of victim reparation, and reconciliation. These agreements include the Weston Park Agreement (2001), the St Andrews (2006), and the Hillsborough Agreement (2010). These documents sparked a considerable number of national initiatives such as truth-telling, public apologies, memorials and reconciliation programs that contributed to recovering the truth and alleviating the pain of those that have suffered from of NI's violent past.³⁹⁴

CONCLUSION

The peace agreements and DDR processes described above differ significantly from case to case. The demobilization, type of clemency, rehabilitation, and transitional justice systems applied in these cases were markedly different and had different implications on the

³⁹² Anna Lindh Foundation. *Coiste Na N-Iarchimí*.

<https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/members/coiste-na-n-iarchimi>

³⁹³ Shirlow, P., Graham, B., McEvoy, K., Féilim, Ó. h., & Purvis, D. (2005). Politically Motivated Former Prisoner Groups: Community Activism and Conflict Transformation. In. Research Gate: N. Ireland Community Relations Council.

³⁹⁴ Commission-NIHRC, N. I. H. R. (2013). *Dealing with Northern Ireland's past Towards a transitional justice approach*

development of the parties. This is particularly true in the cases of Ireland where the specter of prosecution for crimes committed in the past loomed large. But in all four cases, many problems pertaining to the post-agreement period had the potential to obstruct the parties' efforts to contribute to social progress and promote democratic practices: Colombia's failed ratification of the agreement, Sinn Féin's declined amnesty, the Lebanese Forces' banning for several years, and the transitional justice's failure to ensure fairness in El Salvador. None of these circumstances however has significantly altered the parties' willingness and ability to push the envelope of democracy promotion at the national level.

ELECTORAL SYSTEM & ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE

INTRODUCTION

Electoral systems are the rules governing elections, and the methods used to translate votes into election outcomes. The central features of electoral systems are the electoral formula used (majoritarian, plurality, and proportional), the ballot structure, and the district magnitude. Often not deliberately selected, electoral systems are generally a reflection of the political history and special circumstances of each country.³⁹⁵ In Colombia and El Salvador, the electoral systems in place before the transition from war to peace were often described as too favorable to traditional parties, which led to bringing important changes to the electoral code in Colombia, and to creating important safeguards in El Salvador. Reforms encouraging the formation of new parties in Colombia, and the creation of institutions intended to ensure fair and democratic elections in El Salvador helped the emerging parties compete in more equitable conditions. While the FMLN was able to benefit from those changes, the AD M-19 was less successful. That was partly attributable to its own shortcomings, but also to the traditional parties' electoral savviness. In Lebanon, an unrepresentative electoral law remained in place for 28 years after the signature of the

³⁹⁵ ACE, t. E. K. N. *Electoral Systems*. <https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/esd/esd06/esd06a>

agreement and was replaced by a new electoral code in June 2017. Taking full advantage of the reform, the Lebanese Forces were able to substantially improve their parliament representation. In the case of Sinn Féin, an already operational and reasonably fair electoral system enabled the party to get its fair share of representation on the island.

AD M-19

Before 1991, the history of Colombian political parties had been dominated by the supremacy of two traditional forces, the Conservative and Liberal parties. Colombia's party system, largely characterized by elitism, clientelism, and abstentionism has long benefited these two parties and prevented the emergence of alternative forces. Ideological considerations being almost totally absent, clientelist practices were the only mechanism through which elite families ensured popular support. From 1958 until the 1970s, real inter-party competition was literally absent and to a large extent, from 1930 to 1991, electoral rules remained fairly unchanged. Towards the end of the so-called *Violencia*, the 10-year civil war that lasted until 1958, the main rival parties agreed to monopolize power and alternate governments, with mixed cabinet positions, between the liberal and the conservative parties. That arrangement, referred to as the *National Front*, and meant to last for a period of 16 years starting in 1957, was designed to serve as a political truce between the historically rival parties. While guaranteeing a period of relative peace, the agreement almost completely inhibited political competition. While the *National Front* ended in 1974, the bases upon which it was created remained unchanged and until 1991, the party system in Colombia retained the same features as before.³⁹⁶

It's only in 1991 with the enactment of the new Constitution, that substantial changes would shake up Colombia's electoral system. The Constituent Assembly in itself reflected those changes, being co-chaired by a representative of a former guerrilla member, Antonio

³⁹⁶ Taylor, S. L. (2009). *Voting amid violence : electoral democracy in Colombia*. Northeastern University Press ;
Published by University Press of New England.

Navarro Wolf, alongside members of the two traditional parties. The *Constituyente* worked on redistributing certain executive branch powers to the legislature and the judiciary. Under the new constitution, the president, previously elected through a plurality system now required absolute majority with a runoff provision; governors and mayors were to be elected and not appointed; the size of the legislature was contracted; and the Senate was set to be elected from one national electoral district, as opposed to department-based districts. This last reform encouraged the formation of new parties by eliminating malapportionment that worked in favor of traditional parties.

AD M-19 in the Electoral Battle

In the months following the signature of the peace agreement, a series of elections in Colombia bolstered the new party's confidence after a remarkable success at the polls. These consecutive elections' results reflected strong public support for the demobilized guerrilla, but were also the result of exceptional circumstances that distorted the country's political reality. According to former AD M-19 member of the Constituent Assembly Otty Patiño, the party's initial outstanding performance at the polls was the result of a series of developments that had generated a unique situation created by exceptional circumstances. As he observed, "People thought that the election results were an auspicious beginning for future success but they had underestimated the effectiveness of the 'electoral machines' of the traditional forces that were utilized in the previous elections."

As a new political party, the AD M-19 participated in several electoral battles achieving outstanding results and raising expectations in unforeseen ways. From a modest but respectable representation in the March 1990 parliamentary elections, the AD M-19's vote share grew to 12.5% in the May 1990 presidential elections, followed by a remarkable 27.3% in the 1990 National Constitutional Assembly election.³⁹⁷ In October 1991 however the trend started to change. The elections were held in a different context and the traditional

³⁹⁷ See Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil data cited in Boudon, "Colombia's M-19 Democratic Alliance," p. 78, for December 1990 elections.

forces, now aware of the party's approval rates, were ready to resume the fight, employing their well-established and forcible methods. With its thin electoral experience, the AD M-19 was caught off guard by the other parties' skillfulness, and found itself unprepared for the challenge. As Patiño explained, the first elections' results were skewed by a number of factors including low participation and traditional parties' complacency. While participation in the Constituent Assembly elections was estimated at 26 percent,³⁹⁸ the legislative elections of 1991 saw voter turnout reach 36.5 percent.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, after initially ignoring the former guerrilla's representative strength, in subsequent elections, the traditional parties corrected course and drove forward with all their power. As Patiño reported, "The first time this competition occurred, during the election of the Constituent Assembly, the traditional parties as an electoral force did not put much effort. In the October 1991 elections, they had to do their utmost or they died. They put everything, everything."⁴⁰⁰ Outmaneuvering the AD M-19, the traditional parties tapped into the new party's own electoral base, mostly derived from underprivileged sections of the population, and generally prone to manipulation. The party's electorate was, in Patiño's words, 'politically vulnerable' and became an easy prey for traditional parties who mastered the skills of buying votes.⁴⁰¹ By October 1991, the hype around the first successes had started to wane and the gradual decline of the AD M-19 was set in motion.

In many ways, the imbalances in the Colombian electoral system that favored a traditional form of political activity were left unchanged after the 1991 reforms. According to Armando Novoa, former advisor to the AD M-19 for the Constituent Assembly and magistrate of the National Electoral Council (CNE), the rules of the electoral system, and in particular the 1994 *operación avispa* [wasp operation] -an electoral practice that rewarded parties whose candidates engaged in list proliferation- still impeded a healthy competition. Having little experience in electoral maneuvering, the fledgling party impetuously chose to use this

³⁹⁸ Palacios, M. (2006). *Between Legitimacy and Violence, A History of Colombia, 1875-2002*. Duke University Press.

³⁹⁹ Barrero, F. (2013). *Absencionismo Electoral en Colombia: Una Aproximación a sus Causas*

⁴⁰⁰ Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

system, unmindful of the possible implications and overly confident about its popular backing. To Novoa, had a system of closed lists been established, the scenario of the electoral results would have been different. The magistrate argued that the wasp operation allowed traditional parties to recover the majorities they had lost in the Constituent Assembly election and thus maintain their political hegemony. As he observed, “It was a strategic error attributable to the AD M-19’s ignorance of political system maneuvering. Traditional parties and traditional politicians knew how to use these rules and applied them thoroughly. The AD M-19 went from having 19 congressmen to having only one, while traditional parties skillfully managed to recover their majorities.”⁴⁰² The 1994 electoral decision to run with multiple lists had sounded the death knell for the party. According to former AD M-19 presidential candidate Antonio Navarro, the initial success was followed by a sharp decline in public opinion due to the way decisions were made in 1994. From that moment on he argued, the party had become unsustainable.⁴⁰³ But while electoral naivety had damaging consequences, broader strategic mistakes also bear a great deal of responsibility in the elections’ outcomes. As discussed in chapter 6, lack of cohesion, absence of discipline, and poor party management would play an important part in the party’s electoral and institutional fortunes.

The Laws in Place

The 1991 Constitution included measures that facilitated participation and encouraged the formation of small parties.⁴⁰⁴ However, despite creating conditions for the emergence of new political forces, the reform failed to include provisions that would facilitate the flourishing of the new parties or create mechanisms to help them succeed and become sustainable.⁴⁰⁵ In reality, the new law encouraged the burgeoning of a large number of new political parties reflecting short-term political interests, rather than the creation of parties with long-term goals and strategies. In 2003, the Colombian Congress passed a major

⁴⁰² Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁴⁰³ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁴⁰⁴ Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author's Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

⁴⁰⁵ Patiño, O. (2018a). *Author's Interview with Otty Patiño* [Interview].

electoral reform that imposed a minimum quotient to reduce the number of parties and bring more cohesiveness to political parties reflecting their collective voting.⁴⁰⁶ With the replacement of the Hare quota with the D'Hondt method, real alternatives to mainstream traditional parties started to take effect.⁴⁰⁷ In sum, what the political reform of 1991 achieved was a significant step forward in the advancement of democracy in Colombia but it did not modify the electoral system in the dimension that was needed or in a way that would have encouraged new parties to thrive.⁴⁰⁸

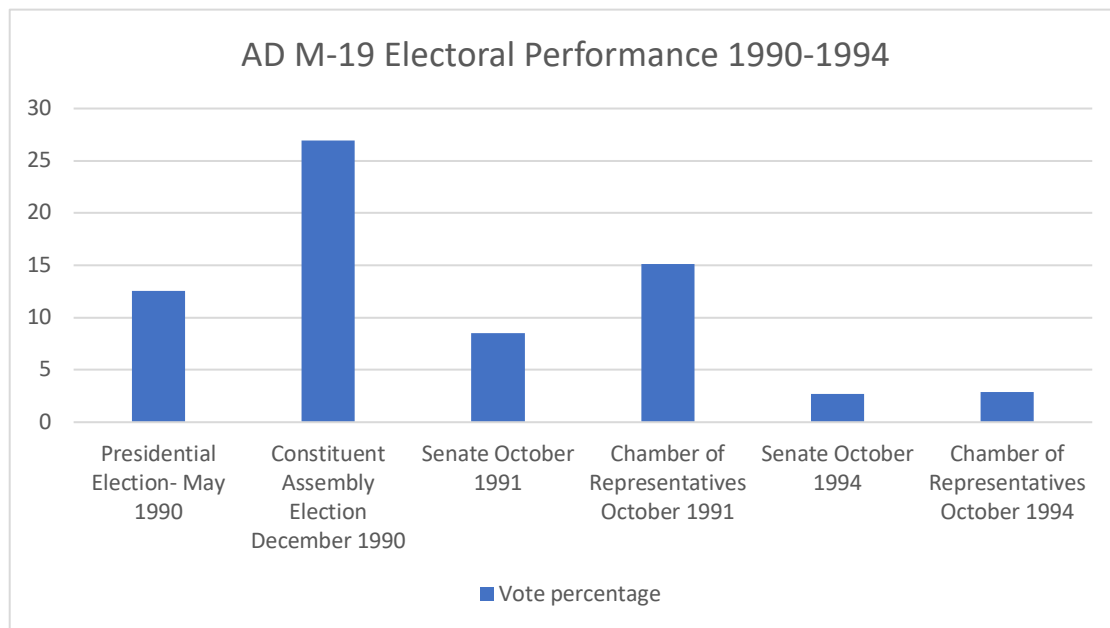


Figure 5: AD M-19 elections results 1990-1994. Adapted from different sources

FMLN

The absence of an inclusive political space being at the root of El Salvador's civil war, the peace accords proposed various reforms aimed at creating a more open and democratic

⁴⁰⁶ Dargent, E., & Muñoz, P. (2011). Democracy Against Parties? Party System Deinstitutionalization in Colombia. In (Vol. 2, pp. 47-71). *Journal of Politics in Latin America*.

⁴⁰⁷ Soberg Shugart, M., Moreno, E., & Fajardo, L. (2006). Deepening Democracy by Renovating Political Practices: The Struggle for Electoral Reform in Colombia In.

⁴⁰⁸ Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author's Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

system. In 1993, a new electoral code was enacted, creating institutions intended to ensure fair elections. The new code aimed at regulating the activities of the state, the electors, the electoral bodies, and the political parties. It also managed State activities that concern the electoral process. The electoral law established four electoral bodies: the supreme electoral tribunal, a collegiate body; the departmental electoral boards; the municipal electoral boards; and the "vote-receiving" boards.⁴⁰⁹ While marking a major improvement from past practice, electoral processes in El Salvador remained vulnerable to fraud and institutional bias. According to Wolf, irregularities intensified with the 2004 presidential elections especially as the political right resorted to electoral persuasion and traditional manipulation, allegedly dissuading voters from supporting the FMLN. Moreover, electoral violence and fraudulent practices remained customary practice, and were frequently ignored by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), preventing free and fair political competition.⁴¹⁰

Winning the ballot war

As a new party, the FMLN's electoral battles at the municipal and legislative levels were fairly successful. These performances ran counter with the many challenges faced during the party's first few years in politics. Internal turmoil threatened to dismantle the party on several occasions during the transition years, especially when FMLN MPs' defections during the 1994–97 legislative session reduced their 21 National Assembly seats to 14. But in spite of numerous intra-party crisis and the loss of an important number of historical leaders, the FMLN was able to retain its status as the second-largest party in the 1997 elections with 27 seats in parliament.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁹ IPU, I.-P. U.-. (1994). *Report of IPU delegation to observe the electoral process in El Salvador*. <http://archive.ipu.org/elcn-e/rptslvdr.htm>

⁴¹⁰ Wolf, S. (2009). Democracy: Elite Rule and the Limits to Political Participation in Post-War El Salvador. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 41(3), 429-465.

⁴¹¹ Allison, M. E. (2006). The Transition from Armed Opposition to Electoral Opposition in Central America. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 48(4), 137-162.

Party performance at the polls continuously improved over the years culminating with the control of 42% of the parliament seats in January 2009. Presidential elections achievements were more gradual but witnessed a steady growth. From 1994 to 2009, FMLN's percentage of vote in presidential elections consistently increased until it reached 51.32% of the votes in 2009, with the FMLN winning the presidency in a resounding victory.⁴¹² In the 2004 presidential elections, FMLN's standing had dramatically improved but its political rival ARENA, whose neoliberal economic policies were clearly established, was able to convince voters that its subsidized social programs and stronghanded policies against common crime would improve the country's overall situation (CIS 2004, cited in Azpuru 2010 p.112). At that point in time, social inequality, crime, and violence had increased dramatically (Holiday 2005 cited in Azpuru, 2010 p. 112).⁴¹³ Considered historic by many standards, the 2009 presidential election however marked the start of a new era in El Salvador. Despite having similar traits to previous electoral processes, and ARENA's usual tactics aimed at swaying opinions, the 2009 elections saw the level of polarization diminish when the FMLN party adopted a less radical tone. Many factors contributed to the party's victory but according to Azpuru, ideology and voters' assessment of the incumbent government's performance played a crucial role. While acknowledging the importance of factors such as financial resources, media attention, and choice of candidates, Azpuru argued that the role of ideology was tantamount in determining people's choices. To Azpuru, unlike in most developed democracies, where social class and geography take the lead in determining voters' preferences, in El Salvador, the left-right divide was the main driving force behind the election outcome. Salvadoran citizens who considered themselves to the left of the ideological spectrum voted for the FMLN, while citizens who placed themselves to the right voted for ARENA.⁴¹⁴ This left-right perspective was best described by former FMLN member Jovel who remarked, "For the longest time, Salvadorans defined themselves as either with the right or with the FMLN."⁴¹⁵ It should be emphasized however that this left-right divide

⁴¹² Azpuru, D. (2010). The Saliency of Ideology: Fifteen Years of Presidential Elections in El Salvador. *Ibid.*, 52(No2), 103-138.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁵ Jovel, F. (2018a). *Author's interview with Francisco Jovel* [Interview].

was more visible on the campaign trail than in the FMLN candidate’s actual program. In fact, officially presenting his plan of action at a party convention, Mauricio Funes, had pledged to maintain dollarization, respect private property, promote business and investment opportunities, and adhere to all free trade agreements, including CAFTA that it had opposed vehemently in the previous election.⁴¹⁶ Funes would even voice his commitment to the free market and to a constructive relationship with the United States (Colburn 2009, 149 cited in Azpuru, 2010 p. 113).⁴¹⁷

This ideologic dichotomy started to fade out in February 2019, when a 37-year-old politician, relying mainly on social media campaigning, and known to the voters as the mayor of the capital city of San Salvador, won the presidency in a first-round victory. For the first time in 30 years, and in a startling victory, Nayib Bukele, a candidate who was neither from ARENA nor the FMLN challenged El Salvador’s stable two-party system reaching the highest office in the nation.⁴¹⁸

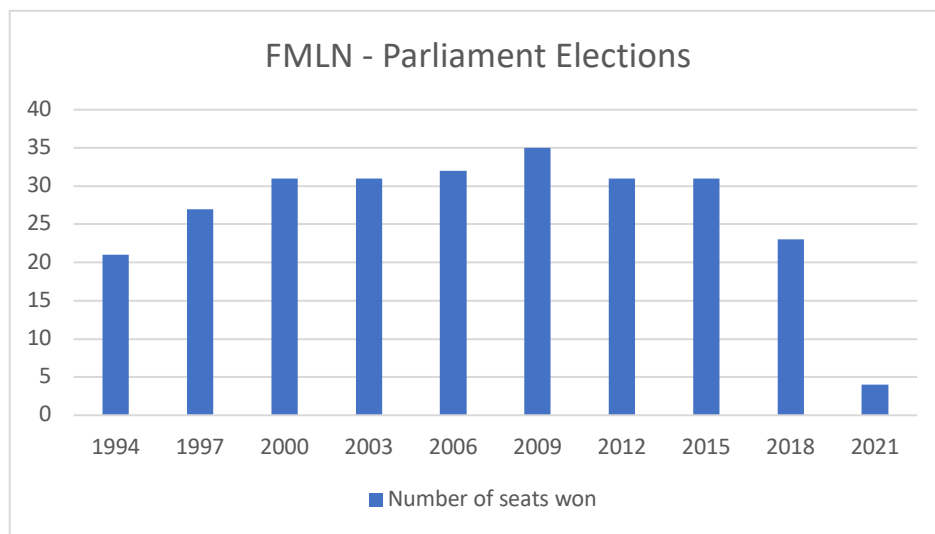


Figure 6: FMLN Parliament elections results 1994-2021. Adapted from different sources

⁴¹⁶ The Economist. (2008). Planning for El Salvador's poll. The leftist opposition unveils its electoral programme. *The Economist*.

⁴¹⁷ Azpuru, D. (2010). The Saliency of Ideology: Fifteen Years of Presidential Elections in El Salvador. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 52(No2), 103-138.

⁴¹⁸ Call, C. T. (2019). *The significance of Nayib Bukele's surprising Election as President of El Salvador*

SINN FÉIN

Sinn Féin contests elections both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. Long considered a minor opposition party -unlikely to form a coalition with other political forces- Sinn Féin emerged as the most popular party in the Republic after recording historic results in the 2020 elections.⁴¹⁹ In May 2022, after capturing the largest number of seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly, Sinn Féin assumed the mantle of the largest party in Northern Ireland as well.⁴²⁰ Sinn Féin also contests elections to the British Parliament but abstains from taking seats in Westminster. This policy dates back to 1917 when the party's first members of parliament took a stance against swearing allegiance to the Queen as head of state.⁴²¹

Both Northern Ireland and the Republic use proportional representation to elect their assemblies and local representatives. The Good Friday agreement provided for a democratically elected Assembly in Northern Ireland to be elected by PR Single Transferable Vote (STV). The STV is also used for the Local Councils elections. In addition, Northern Ireland uses the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system to elect its Members of Parliament (MPs) to the House of Commons of the UK. In the general election to the House of Commons, citizens are able to choose their preferred candidate on the ballot paper. Candidates who receive the most votes are elected to represent their constituencies.⁴²² In the Republic of Ireland, elections take place on the principle of proportional representation (PR) in multi-seat

⁴¹⁹ Coleman, M. (2017). Fighting an election only to refuse a seat: Sinn Féin and Westminster abstention. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/fighting-an-election-only-to-refuse-a-seat-sinn-fein-and-westminster-abstention-76963>

⁴²⁰ cnbc.com. (2022). Sinn Fein hails "new era" as it wins Northern Ireland vote <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/07/sinn-fein-hails-new-era-as-it-wins-northern-ireland-vote.html>

⁴²¹ Coleman, M. (2017). Fighting an election only to refuse a seat: Sinn Féin and Westminster abstention. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/fighting-an-election-only-to-refuse-a-seat-sinn-fein-and-westminster-abstention-76963>

⁴²² EONI, T. E. O. o. N. I. Voting systems in Northern Ireland
In.

constituencies, also using the transferable vote (STV) with the quota principle. Voters can choose between candidates of different parties or non-party candidates.⁴²³

Achieving historic wins

According to Dublin City Councillor, Mícheál Mac Donncha, it's only after Sinn Féin declared its intention to reconcile political action with the armed struggle -a strategy referred to as the "Armalite and ballot box" at the 1981 annual party conference- that the party started seriously investing in the ballot box and reaping electoral rewards. Mac Donncha explained, "Before 1981, Sinn Féin's main focus was organized around the conflict, propaganda, political prisoners and so on... the party was not focused on representation. The issue of: should we participate in a pragmatic and political way didn't arise until the early 1980s."⁴²⁴ When Sinn Féin endorsed the "Armalite and ballot box" strategy, the party started lending more weight to vote seeking and election campaigning. At the 1982 Northern Ireland assembly election, Sinn Féin captured 10 percent of the vote, followed by a win of 13.4 percent of the vote at the 1983 Westminster elections. Despite a series of subsequent setbacks -between 1989 and 1992- these electoral rewards set the stage for a rise in popularity within the nationalist community in Northern Ireland. Sinn Féin's decision to enter peace talks and sign the Good Friday agreement slowly won over a large proportion of Catholics in Northern Ireland. By 2003, Sinn Féin had taken over its rival the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP), as the largest nationalist party in the Northern Ireland Assembly.⁴²⁵ In the Republic of Ireland, Sinn Féin's electoral performance was even more impressive. In 1986, Sinn Féin dropped abstention to the Republic's parliament (Leinster House) and started contesting elections. In less than 20 years, Sinn Féin was able to more than quadruple its vote share, rising from a timid 6.5 percent of the vote share in 2002 to

⁴²³ Government of Ireland. (2018). *A Guide to Ireland's PR-STV Voting System*. Retrieved from https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/pr-stv_guide.pdf

⁴²⁴ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁴²⁵ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

24.5 percent in 2020.⁴²⁶ In 2011, Sinn Féin scored a three-point increase on its 2007 results in the general election⁴²⁷ and in 2020, the party achieved historic results winning 37 seats in parliament, an increase of 14 on the 2016 elections.⁴²⁸

According to Mac Donncha, while not necessarily favoring Sinn Féin, the election system in Ireland enables a fair representation of the party. Donncha indicated that proportional representation gave the party the political influence it deserved, in accordance with its share of the vote. At the same time, he contended, the multi-seat constituencies offer electors a vast selection of choices, allowing them to choose between candidates of different parties and non-party candidates. Unlike other European countries, in Ireland party membership is not mandatory for filing candidacy on a list, which provide a wide array of options, making the Irish electoral system more representative than in other countries in Europe.⁴²⁹

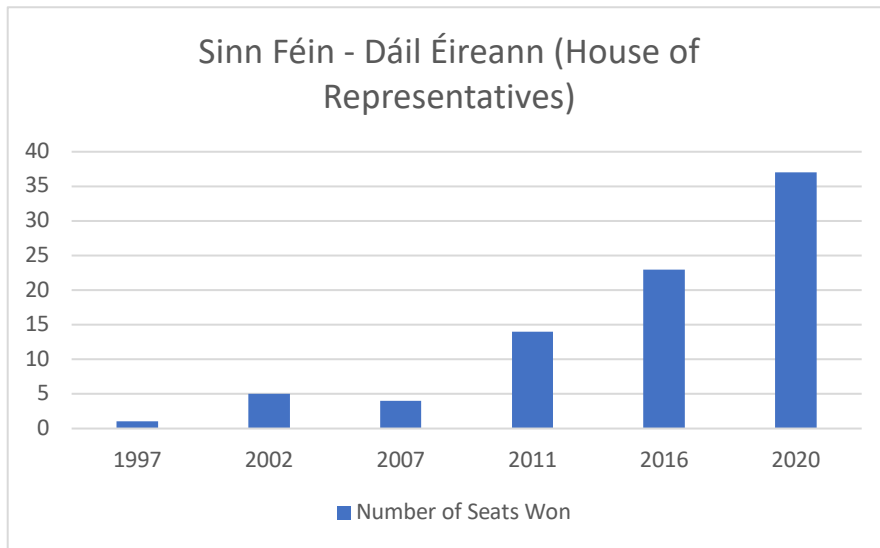


Figure 7: Sinn Féin Dáil Éireann elections results 1997-2020. Adapted from different sources

⁴²⁶ McCarthy, N. (2020). Irish Election: Sinn Féin's Rise. *statista.com*.

<https://www.statista.com/chart/20776/sinn-feins-share-of-the-vote-in-irish-elections/>

⁴²⁷ Walsh, D., & Eoin, O. M. (2012). The Slow Growth of Sinn Féin: from minor player to centre stage? *The History Press*.

⁴²⁸ BBC. (2020). Irish General Election: Sinn Féin celebrate historic result
In.

⁴²⁹ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

THE LEBANESE FORCES

The electoral framework in Lebanon was first established in the 1926 constitution. Based on confessional representation, the Lebanese Parliament reserved a specific number of seats to each of the various minority groups in Lebanon (confessions). During the French Mandate period, one third of parliament was appointed by French authorities while the remaining two thirds was elected on the basis of universal suffrage (excluding women). When Lebanon's independence became effective in 1943, the practice of appointment was abandoned while the basic rules of the electoral law remained the same. Seats in parliament were apportioned between Christians and Muslims in a 6:5 ratio, a proportion that was determined by figures derived from a 1932-1936 census.⁴³⁰ In the late 1950s, a demographic shift in favor of Muslims started to appear, prompting calls for greater equity in parliament representation. After resisting the change for more than four decades, the 1990 peace accord restored the imbalance placing parliament representation at a 5:5 ratio.⁴³¹

In Lebanon, electoral gerrymandering, along with a plurality/majority system, often combined with a low voter turnout, have for a long time fostered the re-election of the same political class who had mastered the art of monopolizing the political scene along sectarian lines.⁴³² In addition to preventing independents, new parties, and non-sectarian groups to secure representation, the electoral law that prevailed until 2018, was deemed inequitable to Christians since a large part of their elected representatives were chosen by other religious sects' votes.⁴³³ In 2016 the "Maraab agreement" bringing the Lebanese Forces party together with its main Christian rival the Free Patriotic Movement, laid the basis for a

⁴³⁰ Salem, P. (1997). Skirting Democracy, Lebanon's 1996 Elections and Beyond. *Middle East Report*, 203.

⁴³¹ Majed, Z. (2012). Consensus Democracy and Representation in Lebanon: Between Agony and Electoral Reform. *Accord, an international review of peace initiatives*(24), 42-45.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Haddad, S. (2013). Lebanese Electoral Law Redresses Christian Rights. *Al-Monitor*. <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2013/02/lebanon-christian-minority-rights-electoral-law.html>

reform of the electoral system.⁴³⁴ After a prolonged debate about the best way to overcome underrepresentation, Lebanon adopted a new electoral law in June 2017. The new electoral code retained key aspects of Lebanon's complex confessional system but also introduced new reforms.⁴³⁵ Foremost among them were allowing Lebanese in the diaspora to vote from their countries of residence, and proportional representation with preferential voting, which aimed at more inclusion and better representation. But these more inclusive measures were offset by a number of other measures namely, redistricting, ranking system, and electoral quotient formula that further strengthened sectarianism and favored candidates with a local power base.⁴³⁶

A gradual but steady expansion

As a political party, the Lebanese Forces started contesting elections in 2005, slowly asserting its political presence on the ground. The party rose to national prominence at the 2018 parliamentary elections when it doubled its parliament representation, LF MPs seeing their number increase from eight to fifteen. When the 2017 electoral code was instituted, the LF party candidates were able to swipe many seats from rival Christian parties, but also and strikingly, one seat from the Chi'i Hezbollah party in Baalbek-Hermel. According to Raji, the Lebanese Forces' performance at the polls wasn't merely the result of the revised electoral law but also a reflection of the Christian community's recognition of Geagea's leadership. The year preceding the election, the head of the Lebanese Forces had agreed to withdraw from the presidential race to endorse his rival's candidacy in a bid to end a long dispute and promote national reconciliation. To Raji, this strategic move bolstered the party's appeal and played a vital role in the elections results.⁴³⁷ In the 2022 elections, the Lebanese Forces party was crowned as the biggest winner of the elections, further expanding its parliament

⁴³⁴ Annahar.com. (2016). Geagea endorses Aoun's candidacy for presidency. *Annahar.com*. <https://en.annahar.com/article/303102-geagea-to-nominate-aoun-for-presidency-bid-riachi>

⁴³⁵ Ministry Of Information, R. o. L. (2018). *Lebanese Electoral Law*. <https://www.ministryinfo.gov.lb/en/22598>

⁴³⁶ Elghossain, A. (2017). One Step Forward for Lebanon's Elections. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/71496>

⁴³⁷ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

presence with six additional seats. Championing the case for disarming Lebanon’s powerful Hezbollah party, LF grew to become the largest single party in parliament.⁴³⁸

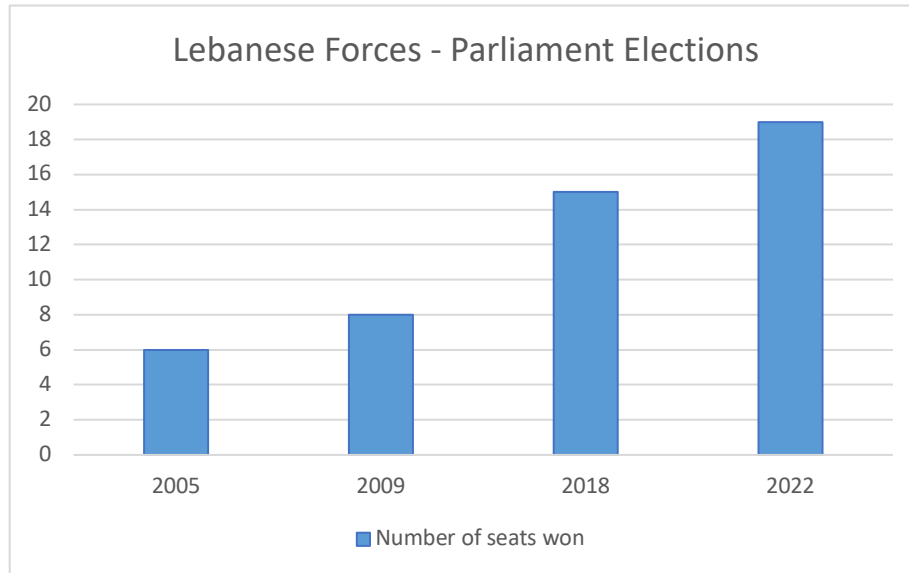


Figure 8: Lebanese Forces parliament elections results 2005-2022. Adapted from different sources

CONCLUSION

The electoral frameworks, whether maintained or revised, were not described by interviewees as particularly influential when it came to the different parties’ electoral performance. In Northern Ireland and in Colombia, electoral systems prevailing in the post-war period, represented a step towards improved representation. The 2017 electoral law in Lebanon, also promoted inclusion and improved representativity. In El Salvador, new institutions were introduced to ensure fair elections. These measures however had varied influences on the electoral results of the four cases studied. In the case of Colombia for example, despite an advantageous electoral law that encouraged the formation of new parties and reduced the dominance of the two traditional parties, the AD M-19 couldn’t

⁴³⁸ Gavlak, D. (2022). Lebanon's New Parliament Faces Problem of Hezbollah's Weapons. *voanews.com*. <https://www.voanews.com/a/lebanon-s-new-parliament-faces-problem-of-hezbollah-s-weapons-/6586948.html>

uphold its initial success. Similarly, the revised electoral code in El Salvador, played a minor role in boosting FMLN's results at the polls. With respect to Sinn Féin, the party's exponential growth in popularity in the South bore little relation to the electoral rules even if the proportional representation probably helped propel the party in the North in the post-agreement period. In Lebanon, the revised electoral law helped the party secure more seats in parliament. With the exception of the AD M-19, electoral wins certainly helped the parties assert themselves as relevant political players and motivated their members to push for bolder policies. Nonetheless, despite the electoral blunder, the AD M-19 can also count significant achievements that still reverberate in Colombia's political life.

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

When the war ends, former rebel organizations find themselves in an environment that, while peaceful, can be very hostile or difficult to navigate. The emerging political parties have to adapt their thinking in ways that are compatible with the wider socio-political context. Political stability, popular support, the institutional setting, and the regional context can all condition and impact the war-to-peace transition.⁴³⁹ The political context in which the four political parties emerged undoubtedly conditioned and shaped their behavior in the post-agreement era. While these new institutions' intra-party life could remain impervious to the environmental conditions, their political choices and outreach strategies had to adapt to the prevailing local environment and political climate. By and large, the emerging parties started their democratic lives in troubled environments. Despite having a prewar history as a political party, Sinn Féin's popularity in the South of Ireland was greatly tainted by an unpopular, protracted conflict. In the cases of Colombia and Lebanon, political violence and the continuation of the conflict created a deeply unfavorable political atmosphere. Lastly, in

⁴³⁹ DeZeeuw. (2007). *Understanding the Political Transformation of Rebel Movements*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

El Salvador, excessive distrust between former warring parties produced precarious conditions that decelerated the pace of the implementation of the peace agreement.

SINN FEIN

Sinn Féin's political life in Northern Ireland varies significantly from its political participation in the Republic. In both parts of the island however, the party faced a diverse range of challenges. While peace largely prevailed in Northern Ireland, low intensity violence persisted as a republican paramilitary group refused to endorse the peace process. Opposed to the peace negotiations and the political leadership of Sinn Féin, the "real" Irish Republican Army (rIRA) emerged in 1997. Using some old IRA equipment, the rIRA conducted bombings and occasional attacks in Northern Ireland and in England.⁴⁴⁰ In the North, Sinn Féin's popularity as a political party was unequivocal however, because of the nature of the Belfast agreement and the political stalemates caused by the power-sharing formula, political progress became an almost impossible undertaking.⁴⁴¹ Under the power-sharing rules that were set up as part of the peace process, cooperation between nationalist and Unionist parties became a prerequisite for forming a government. This safeguard was meant to ensure that all sections of the community equally participated in government and enjoyed protection before the law. In particular, the agreement required that key decisions -such as the election of the Chair of the Assembly, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, and budget allocations- are made on a 'cross-community basis,' either in parallel consent or by majority vote.⁴⁴² While aimed at ensuring equal participation and reassuring all parties in the post-agreement period, the power-sharing configuration eventually crippled the political process. Instead of stimulating effective cooperation between Unionists and Nationalists this power-sharing system, led to endless bickering and political stalemates. Recurring deadlocks, mistrust, and suspiciousness between Sinn Féin and the DUP crippled the

⁴⁴⁰ Melaugh, M. *'real' Irish Republican Army (rIRA)*

⁴⁴¹ Ó Hadhmaill, F. (2022b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁴⁴² Multi-party&Irish-British. (1998). *The Northern Ireland Peace Agreement*.

institutions and prevented real progress. Operating for 12 out of 20 years, the Northern Irish Executive collapsed on several occasions as unwilling partners lacked a joint vision for the region and used their veto powers to collapse the other parties' proposals.⁴⁴³ According to Ó Hadhmaill this arrangement handicapped Sinn Féin's ability to advance its goals including proposing bills and getting them approved. Political deadlock greatly restrained Sinn Féin's actions and performance as a political party. Proposed bills and new legislation were constantly blocked making it impossible to deliver on engagements.⁴⁴⁴ Other challenges pertain to the weakness of the cross-border bodies that were established by the Good Friday agreement. The North/South Ministerial Council -aimed at bringing together Northern Ireland and Irish Government executives to discuss matters of mutual interest- failed to achieve its intended outcome as meetings were often cancelled by one of the parties' unwillingness to attend. Similarly, the British-Irish Council (BIC) initially set up to promote cooperation and solidarity between the British and Irish islands, fell far short of expectations.⁴⁴⁵

In the Republic of Ireland Sinn Féin faced different challenges. Except from a modest proportion of long-term republicans, up until recently, support for Sinn Féin in the South was largely unfavorable.⁴⁴⁶ Even after the peace-sealing agreement, views of the party had grown more negative, Sinn Féin being associated with the IRA and the violence of the troubles. Despite strongly denying any links with the armed wing and effectively distancing itself from the IRA, Sinn Féin's image remained tied up with its military past. The transition into peaceful politics was quite complicated, the party being torn between the need to honor those who sacrificed with their lives for the right cause, and turning the page of the armed conflict. This moral dilemma would linger for a considerable period of time before the party was able to officially part from its military past. In April 2002, a widely-publicized event paying a final tribute to the IRA Volunteers who had died during the course of the conflict,

⁴⁴³ Mitchell, D., Tannam, E., & Wallace, S. (2018). The Agreement's impact on political cooperation. *Irish Political Studies*, 33(3).

⁴⁴⁴ Ó Hadhmaill, F. (2022b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

finally brought the war chapter to an end and ushered a new beginning for the party.⁴⁴⁷ But sporadic events such as occasional revelations of persistent links between Sinn Féin and the Provisional Army Council continued to occur reflecting negatively on the party.⁴⁴⁸ Also, Sinn Féin's strong association with what was perceived as the Northern Ireland conflict was also less appealing in the South of Ireland. For many in the Republic, the party was more concerned with the torments of the North and less preoccupied with the Republic's daily affairs. Shunned by other parties, Sinn Féin was regarded as a pariah and an unacceptable partner in a coalition government. Mostly attributable to the slow pace of the IRA decommissioning and Sinn Féin's perceived role in the demobilization process, for many years, this situation kept the party on the margins of mainstream politics in South.⁴⁴⁹ Unlike the other three cases studied, Sinn Féin's presence on the political scene far preceded the peace accord, and while the Good Friday agreement had emphasized Sinn Féin leaders' important role as peacemakers, the transition was less transformational. It would take many more years before the party's political appeal would hold sway.

It's only by 2020 that Sinn Féin's popularity in the South of Ireland would gain momentum. Equipped with a solid leftist program and capitalizing on the discontent generated by the recurrent economic crises, Sinn Féin gradually found ways to win over the hearts of the population and gather electoral strength.⁴⁵⁰ Eventually, its popularity would supersede that of the other main parties growing from 1.9 percent in 1987 to 24.5 percent in 2020.⁴⁵¹ But Sinn Féin's larger presence in parliament faced many obstacles, the legislative process in the Republic presenting its own challenges. In the Republic of Ireland, passing legislation for opposition parties proved quite complicated. Private Members' Bills -which are bills commenced by a TD or a Senator who is not part of the government party- rarely make it through both houses, mostly controlled by government representatives who can easily

⁴⁴⁷ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁴⁴⁸ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

⁴⁴⁹ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁴⁵⁰ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁴⁵¹ Statista. (2020). Irish Election: Sinn Féin's Rise. <https://www.statista.com/chart/20776/sinn-feins-share-of-the-vote-in-irish-elections/>

oppose them. Rarely initiated, these bills mostly aim at calling attention on pressing issues, or initiating a debate on legal loopholes.⁴⁵² According to Ó hAdhmaill, opposition parties' margin for maneuver is so limited, that measuring their contributions to democratic practices would entail an examination of their commitments to such practices rather than their actual legislative wins. To Ó hAdhmaill, party manifestos, parliamentary participation -in parliamentary committees, and through parliamentary questions- and Sinn Féin's media outreach should be considered as better indicators of the party's value system.⁴⁵³ But despite the hurdles, Sinn Féin's popularity growth reflected the party's ability to surmount obstacles and affect voters' perceptions of their issue handling competencies.

AD M-19

At the political level, the *Alianza Democrática* started its party life in a context of violence amidst complex political circumstances. When the peace agreement was signed, the guerrilla warfare was still ongoing with the two main armed groups, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-FARC) and the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Army-ELN). According to Franco, after the M-19 demobilization, the remaining armed guerrillas became fixated on downplaying the importance of the peace agreement. The FARC and ELN employed their best efforts to exhibit the flaws of the settlement and its failure to achieve peace, which led to an intensification of the armed guerrillas' military actions. According to Novoa, this continuous state of war complicated the relationship between the AD M-19 and the government, and negatively affected the performance of the party. He explained, "Unlike El Salvador, Colombia was still caught between war and peace. The state maintained a language of peace and a language of war and in that dichotomy, in that contradiction, the *Alianza* was trying to create a new political force in a counterproductive environment."⁴⁵⁴ Additionally, the

⁴⁵² Citizens Information. *Private Members' Bills*.

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/houses_of_the_oireachtas/private_members_bills.html

⁴⁵³ Ó Hadhmaill, F. (2022a). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó Hadhmaill* [Interview].

⁴⁵⁴ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

paramilitaries who were beginning to gather momentum, started perpetrating massacres and adopting a scorched earth policy, consolidating territories, and eliminating their rivals, former M-19 members being a prime target.⁴⁵⁵ The guerrilla having already suffered great persecution during the last years of the conflict, by the time it sealed the peace agreement, its leadership was so reduced that every additional casualty had devastating consequences.⁴⁵⁶

Aside from having to withstand social and military violence, the new party started its civil journey in a political environment where clientelism prevailed. The AD M-19's rivals mastered the art of patronage, distributing posts and favors in exchange for political loyalty. Franco explained,

“The competition was very unequal because the traditional parties had access to the state apparatus and to the budgets, whereas we didn't have access to anything. It was a political competition in a very clientelist system. At that time, people voted for 50,000 pesos. Nowadays social networks help raise awareness, but thirty years ago the clientelist system was very pervasive.”⁴⁵⁷

In reality, the general setting for the new party presented many challenges. Aside from a troubled environment, very few proactive measures were established to help the budding party establish itself as a durable force. One such shortcoming was the absence of laws regulating the internal functioning of political parties. Political considerations during the Constituent Assembly debates resulted in decisions that limited the role of the laws that govern political parties, making sure they wouldn't get involved in the internal affairs of those parties. This decision was allegedly taken to accommodate the situation of then assembly co-president Álvaro Gómez, a dissident of the conservative party, who needed room to manage his own dissidence within the conservative party.⁴⁵⁸ An ongoing state of

⁴⁵⁵ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁴⁵⁶ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁴⁵⁷ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

war, limited political experience and little knowledge of election tactics exacerbated an already fragile organization that was still trying to find its place in the complex world of Colombian politics.

FMLN

In the post-agreement period, El Salvador environment was characterized by widespread violence and intense polarization. Gang warfare, while pervasive since the 1970s, continued in the post-conflict period. Deep-seated economic problems produced high levels of violence where street gangs' confrontations -against one another and in opposition to the police and state- prevailed and persisted.⁴⁵⁹ In a highly divided country, measures were taken to reduce tensions and reestablish confidence. Many initiatives were carried out with the goal of reinstating trust between former adversaries, and promoting improved representation at the party level. These measures created a favorable context that helped the new party establish itself as a durable force in the political arena.

Twelve years of violent conflict and two years of negotiation, had greatly diminished the level of trust between the former warring parties. Throughout the negotiations, the FMLN's faith in the government's ability and willingness to institutionalize the provisions that were being discussed was very low. In addition, worn out by war, the population was suspicious and remained skeptical. Ana Guadalupe Martínez recounted that party supporters, while fully backing the peace process, privately worried that the final agreement would include compromises that would turn out detrimental to the popular base. One way of addressing these fears she related, was the establishment of a new National Civil Police with a completely revamped structure. It would include new cadres, new training mechanisms, and a new doctrine, and establish selection criteria based on the principles of non-discrimination against neither former members of the National Police nor ex-combatants of the FMLN.

⁴⁵⁹ Witte-Lebhar, B. (2017). *El Salvador Marks 25th Anniversary of Chapultepec Peace Accords* (Latin America Digital Beat (LADB), Issue. <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=11403&context=noticen>

Suggested by former FMLN leader and main negotiator Joaquín Villalobos, the idea of a restructured National Civil Police was aimed at fostering feelings of safety amongst the population.⁴⁶⁰

The consecutive Salvadoran laws on political parties helped the FMLN party consolidate its presence as a durable force in the political arena through helping it shape its internal functioning and ultimately contributing to its democratization. When the FMLN registered as a political party however, its initial statute was rejected for non-compliance with the Salvadoran law on political parties.⁴⁶¹ That law stipulated that individuals coming together to form a political party could not be affiliated with any other political party or organization.⁴⁶² This statute implied that the newly formed party members couldn't maintain their allegiances to the organizations that had served as their former armed groups. Former FMLN MP Roger Alberto Blandino explained that this process marked the beginning of a period of adjustment as the FMLN guerrilla -since its creation in 1980- had invariably functioned as a body of five organizations with five distinct personalities and ideologies. The rejection of the first version of the statute forced the emerging party to adapt to the legal requirement, and to present itself, at least officially, as a homogeneous group. Blandino recalled, "We had to re-shape our statutes to meet the requirements. The five organizations would in fact still exist, but formally and legally we became a single party organization. It's only in 1995 that the decision to completely dissolve the organizations was reached." This new arrangement was to influence the internal configuration of the party for next several years, rendering it a party of tendencies with members grouped according to their previous affiliations.⁴⁶³ The February 2013 new law on political parties⁴⁶⁴ mandated that party leaders and party candidates be elected according to rules of internal democracy to be

⁴⁶⁰ Martínez, A. G. (2018a). *Author's interview with Ana Guadalupe Martinez* [Interview].

⁴⁶¹ Blandino, R. A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Roger Alberto Blandino* [Interview].

⁴⁶² Asamblea Legislativa Republica de El Salvador. (2019). *Ley partidos políticos, decreto No. 307*. Tribunal Supremo Electoral

⁴⁶³ Blandino, R. A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Roger Alberto Blandino* [Interview].

⁴⁶⁴ *Ley de Partidos Políticos, Decreto 307*, Published in the *Diario Oficial #40, Tomo #398* February 27, 2013

established in the party statutes.⁴⁶⁵ According to Samayoa the decree 307 compelled the FMLN to follow a democratic procedure that was inexistent before. He explained,

“This reform was imposed by the court. Before that, the party’s political commission consisting of 20 to 25 people effectively took all the decisions and then these decisions were taken to a larger assembly of about 1,500 people for ratification only. This assembly consisted of the municipal and department delegates that were organically linked to the elite. Now things have changed, now militants can choose. It is an exercise with its own defects but quite respectable for both the right and the left.”⁴⁶⁶

These national laws forced political parties to adopt democracy-promoting measures that fostered trust and accountability at the internal level, ultimately helping the FMLN establish itself as a durable force better equipped to harness the battles ahead.

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Despite the signature of the Taef agreement and a general return to peace, post-war Lebanon remained a troubled country, rife with tensions and exposed to perilous disagreements. The postwar period for the Lebanese Forces was particularly oppressive as, soon after sealing the peace, its leader [Samir Geagea] was accused of perpetrating a church bombing and jailed until 2005. As a consequence of this proceeding, the Lebanese government ordered the dissolution of the party and the banning of its activities. It’s only in 2005, when Geagea was released from prison, that the party was able to resume its political activities and start regaining its popularity.

Moreover, Lebanon’s complex system of governance and its geopolitical situation make it vulnerable to political crises, regional conflicts, and external influence. The country’s power-sharing model, presents many challenges. Based on a consociational model of democracy

⁴⁶⁵ Asamblea Legislativa Republica de El Salvador. (2019). *Ley partidos politicos, decreto No. 307*. Tribunal Supremo Electoral

⁴⁶⁶ Samayoa, S. (2018a). *Author’s interview with Salvador Samayoa* [Interview].

designed in 1943 and revised in 1989, Lebanon's system of governance provided that religious sects would be equitably represented in the public sector and in ministerial posts. Nonetheless, while initially designed to make sure that no single political or religious group imposes its ideology on the others, the consociational model didn't prove opportune for Lebanon's social and geopolitical structure. Vulnerable to external interventions and religious divisions, Lebanon's power-sharing model failed to shield the burgeoning nation from domestic conflicts.⁴⁶⁷ Failure to deal with past abuses, rendered the country even more vulnerable, and more prone to internal conflicts that at times, turned quite violent.⁴⁶⁸ A wave of assassinations and clashes between Lebanese factions constantly threatened a fragile peace and maintained the specter of civil war alive. Between 2004 and 2013, it is estimated that Lebanon witnessed about 16 politically motivated murders and assassinations, and 3 murder attempts. The attacks targeted politicians, religious figures, intellectuals and journalists, and spread fear and uncertainty amongst the population.⁴⁶⁹

In conjunction with the above, the Hezbollah party, which had maintained a military arm, kept Lebanon on the verge of political and military troubles. In July 2006, a Hezbollah cross-border raid against an IDF patrol developed into a full-scale war that left much devastation and many civilians dead.⁴⁷⁰ In May 2008, a brief intrastate conflict between gunmen loyal to the Hezbollah party and supporters the main Sunni opposition spiraled out of control and further divided the country along sectarian lines.⁴⁷¹ Hezbollah's regional military

⁴⁶⁷ Makdisi, S., & Marktanner, M. (2009). *Trapped by Consociationalism: The Case of Lebanon*.

⁴⁶⁸ ICTJ, I. C. f. T. J. (2014). *Failing to Deal with the Past. What Cost to Lebanon?*

⁴⁶⁹ Magazine, T. M. (2021). 220 Political Assassinations and Murder Attempts in Lebanon (1943-2021)

https://monthlymagazine.com/article-desc_4964_

⁴⁷⁰ Molloy, J. (2016). A Reflection of 2006 War. *UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon*. <https://unifil.unmissions.org/reflection-2006-war>

⁴⁷¹ Perry, T. (2008). Lebanon Political Conflict Turns Violent. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-strike-idUSL0761005520080507>

interventions in neighboring Syria,⁴⁷² Iraq,⁴⁷³ and Yemen⁴⁷⁴ as well as its longstanding clashes and periodic conflicts with Israel were often met with growing discontent, and a widespread feeling of precariousness and instability.⁴⁷⁵ This tense atmosphere along with the fact that all the parties that emerged in the post-conflict phase were competing for political legitimacy in a fragmented society, kept the Lebanese forces on the lookout and influenced the party's development as a post-insurgent political party. Furthermore, the emergence of independent candidates at the 2022 elections and their winning of 13 seats in Lebanon's new parliament, revealed the development of a new constituency that resented the sectarian establishment that has ruled the country since the end of the civil war in 1990.

CONCLUSION

When the armed groups laid down their arms, they did so with the expectation that peace would be conducive to a favorable political environment but the conditions the ensuing parties were faced with, often contrasted with their anticipations. That was certainly true in the cases of Colombia and Lebanon where the new parties had to win their fights in the context of an ongoing state of war where tensions were high and armed conflicts were still prevalent. A wave of assassinations and an ongoing war at the Southern border in Lebanon spread fear amongst the population and complicated the transition. In Colombia, systemic persecution against the demobilized guerrillas and a ceaseless guerrilla warfare caused confusion and overburdened the newly established party. In Lebanon, the party leader's imprisonment and the Lebanese Forces' ban for 11 years meant even more hardship for the party and its supporters. The model of consociational governance in Lebanon and Northern

⁴⁷² CSIS, C. f. S. a. I. S. (2018). *The Escalating Conflict with Hezbollah in Syria*

⁴⁷³ Alarabiya.net. (2020). *Iran-backed Hezbollah steps in to support Iraqi militias after Soleimani's death*

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2020/02/12/Iran-backed-Hezbollah-steps-in-to-support-Iraqi-militias-after-Soleimani-s-death.html>

⁴⁷⁴ Alasrar, F. A. (2020). *Iran, Hezbollah operating with impunity in Yemen*

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1630276>

⁴⁷⁵ Robinson, K. (2020). *What is Hezbollah*

Ireland was also a main impediment to the political parties' performance, leading to political deadlock as powerless governments fought for legitimacy. It is no surprise that in both states, new political forces transcending sectarian divisions started to emerge, reflecting both societies' disaffection and resentment of the outdated arrangements set out in the peace agreements. While these results reflected a growing proportion of a disgruntled electorate, they don't seem to have adversely impacted the political performance of Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces, since both parties rose to become the fastest growing parties in both Lebanon and Northern Ireland. Nonetheless, passing legislation became extremely difficult and performing routine legislative duties a daunting task. Despite the many difficulties, the new political players kept making headways and were able to leave a positive footprint on the path to democratization.

ALLIANCES AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

INTRODUCTION

The role of regional and international support in the development and growth of political parties in post-conflict societies is well documented. Outside support to revolutionary-movements-turned-parties has been beneficial or of little consequences depending on the circumstances and the interests at stake (Giustozzi, 2007; Malaquias, 2007; Manning, 2007; Nindorera, 2007; Young, 2007). In many cases, international support has had an important impact on the transformation. Such is the case with the Mozambican Renamo, where logistical help, financial support, and capacity building helped build the party's confidence and assist the transition from violent behavior to political activities.⁴⁷⁶ Similarly, international programs in Burundi promoted trust and created an environment that helped

⁴⁷⁶ Manning, C. (2007a). Mozambique: RENAMO's Electoral Success. In J. d. Zeeuw (Ed.), *From Soldiers to Politicians: Transforming Rebel Movements After Civil War* (pp. 55-79). Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

the CNDD FDD's rebel-to-party transformation.⁴⁷⁷ In other cases, international assistance had little effect on the parties' development. Such is the case in Sudan where outside assistance made little difference on the SPLM/A's development as a political party.⁴⁷⁸ Similarly in Angola, international support couldn't fix the enormous post-independence challenges.⁴⁷⁹ International support in the forms of technical and political assistance was provided to all four political parties observed in this study. Yet, in the cases of Sinn Féin, the FMLN, and the Lebanese Forces, financial assistance was more substantial which seems to have played a key role in the parties' future development.

AD M-19

Despite a few memberships in regional and international organizations, the AD M-19 initiated its political life with scant international connections and inexperienced leaders receiving limited organizational and financial support.⁴⁸⁰ Unlike the other parties, the M-19 peace negotiations with the government were conducted with no guarantees nor international support neither from sympathetic countries, nor the United Nations. While some international financial support was granted to the government and civil society in general ahead of the Constituent Assembly, no financial recourses supported the new party's efforts to establish itself as a sustainable political option.⁴⁸¹

The AD M-19 was a member of the Socialist International and of the Permanent Conference of Political Parties in Latin America (COPPAL). These memberships facilitated the exchange

⁴⁷⁷ Nindorera, W. *Ibid. Burundi: The Deficient Transformation of the CNDD-FDD*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁴⁷⁸ Young, J. *Ibid. Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*.

⁴⁷⁹ Malaquias, A. (2007a). Angola: From Revolutionary Movement to Reactionary Regime. In *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties; Cases from Latin America and Africa* (pp. 10). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁴⁸⁰ Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author's Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

⁴⁸¹ Fox, D., Gallón-Giraldo, G., & Stetson, A. (2010). Lessons of the Colombian Constitutional Reform of 1991; Toward the Securing of Peace and Reconciliation? In L. Miller & L. Aucoin (Eds.), *Framing the State in Times of Transition* (pp. 467-482).

of information and the development of international relations with like-minded parties around the globe and in South America. The party was also engaged with the Workers' Party of Lula, the Sandinista Front in Nicaragua, the Socialist Party of Uruguay, and the Brazilian Social Democracy Party. To Villamizar, these relationships involved common activities and exchange of ideas but didn't necessarily yield substantive technical and financial support. As he reported, "There was training only once, and cooperation in a meaningful and effective ways was fairly limited."⁴⁸² In practice, real party-to-party cooperation or meaningful partnerships with other parties belonging to the same ideological family never happened.

FMLN

The situation in El Salvador varied considerably. When the FMLN formed its political party, it could count on the support of a large number of sister organizations at both the regional and international levels. According to former member Roberto Cañas, those organizations were mainly based in Guatemala, Colombia, Uruguay, and Argentina but also Cuba, Algeria, Vietnam. The assistance provided involved mostly training and diplomatic support with some financial assistance.⁴⁸³ According to Mata, the party was mindful of international interference, making sure its engagement with other organizations didn't interfere with party autonomy.⁴⁸⁴

With time however, FMLN's tight relationship with Venezuela led to a disproportionate support from that country, including tacit financial assistance. Eager to see the FMLN succeed and retain popularity, Venezuela's government provided it with important economic assistance. According to a number of reports, a subsidiary of Venezuela's state-owned oil company, *Alba Petróleos* (Alba Oil), was established in El Salvador and invested significant funds in support of the party. *Alba Petróleos* appears to have provided financing that targeted the Salvadoran media and promoted the party's social responsibility programs,

⁴⁸²Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author's Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

⁴⁸³ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁴⁸⁴ Mata, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

including school scholarships, student computers, sports events and the renovation of public schools. *Alba Petróleos* funds are also believed to have paid for publicity on Election Day.⁴⁸⁵ There were also reports that the oil company's financing played a part in the ascent of some party leaders and might have instituted corruption inside the party.⁴⁸⁶

SINN FÉIN

For decades, Sinn Féin's efforts to seek the support of organizations across Europe and the rest of the world were hampered by the party's close links to the IRA.⁴⁸⁷ In addition, during the troubles, British authorities sought to keep international attention at a distance, portraying the conflict as an 'internal' affair.⁴⁸⁸ These conditions changed significantly after the signature of the Belfast agreement. The peace negotiations shed new light on Sinn Féin and created the necessary conditions for international cooperation. In the post-agreement period, Sinn Féin started to seek advice from, and share experiences with South Africa, and offered advice to many similar movements around the world including the Basque separatist movement. Most importantly, the role America played during the negotiations and after peace was sealed proved instrumental. The U.S. government's involvement in the peace process brought the Irish issue to the center of international attention and gave credibility to the peace talks. The "Friends of Sinn Féin", a U.S.-based organization, fundraised vigorously for the party, converting Sinn Féin into the largest fundraising party on the island. While symbiotic in a number of ways, the relationship between Sinn Féin and the United States remained complex. The party's socialist rhetoric, its links to some revolutionary movements and countries, as well as other diplomatic incidents occasionally put a strain on this partnership.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁵ Robles-Rivera, F. (2018a). Financiamiento privado de las campañas electorales en América Central. *ResearchGate*, pp 155-161.

InSightCrime. (2018). *Venezuela: A Mafia State? Venezuela has become a hub of organized crime in the region Venezuela and El Salvador: Exporting Aid and Corruption*

⁴⁸⁶ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁴⁸⁷ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁴⁸⁸ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

⁴⁸⁹ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Throughout its history, and despite sporadic periods of discord, the Lebanese Forces could count on the support of the Lebanese Maronite church. Through their historic connections with western powers, Maronite patriarchs always strived to ensure that their followers were not discriminated against. More recently, when internal conflicts consumed the Christian community, the Maronite church provided the needed leadership.⁴⁹⁰ As the party resumed its political activities, it started fostering friendly relations both at the regional and international levels. Strong relations were cultivated with the Gulf countries, especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Good rapport was also maintained with the U.S.A. and various European nations.⁴⁹¹ Financially, LF can count on a substantial and generous diaspora community scattered around the world, and occasionally on the largesse of some of its regional allies.⁴⁹² According to Khoury, in addition to technical and financial support, these cross-border relations are mainly aimed at helping the party achieve its ultimate goal which is the promotion of a functional democracy in Lebanon.⁴⁹³ At the same time, the Lebanese Forces is a member of a global network of political parties, and actively participates in events and conferences organized by international institutions. Those include think tanks and NGOs engaged in the promotion of democracy on a global level.⁴⁹⁴

CONCLUSION

From a general perspective, international assistance, and especially financial support to the parties studied had an important influence on those parties' development. While having

⁴⁹⁰ McCallum Guiney, F. (2010). *The Maronites in Lebanon: An Historical and Political Perspective*

⁴⁹¹ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

⁴⁹² Kouyoumjian, R. (2017). *From Resistance Strategy to a State Project*.

⁴⁹³ Khoury, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Khoury* [Interview].

⁴⁹⁴ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

important implications on party survival it is difficult to establish that the absence of serious financial assistance would have hampered the new movements' democratic achievements. With the exception of the AD M-19, all the cases considered benefited from the largesse of friendly governments, groupings, or individuals who had an interest in seeing those parties thrive. Venezuela's indirect support to the FMLN, the Irish-American's financial contribution to Sinn Féin, as well as the diaspora's financial support to the Lebanese Forces turned out to be of great consequence. The AD M-19's lack of a meaningful source of funding assistance merits consideration and deserves to be further examined, especially in light of the party's crushing electoral defeat a few years following its emergence. But while limited funding might have contributed to the AD M-19's fate as a political party, it certainly didn't affect the party's ability to positively contribute to Colombia's democratization process. On the contrary, and although the party fell apart a few years after its inception, the new political player's role in stimulating the process that ultimately led to a new Constitution is well recognized and greatly valued.

PREVIOUS POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

INTRODUCTION

The political experience of parties emerging from violent conflict is a useful point of reference when looking at their post-war performance. Prior experience with political organizing through political parties or syndicates has shown to facilitate these group's transition into political life.⁴⁹⁵ Perhaps what sets the ill-fated Colombian case most apart from the others is precisely its lack of political experience. The AD M-19 fell into the traps set by more seasoned parties who had intimate knowledge of the country's political system, and was unable to grasp the socio-economic significance of the political developments of the time. Even more, the party's political amateurishness led to taking a number of decisions that

⁴⁹⁵ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

placed it at a great disadvantage in the electoral battles. In contrast, the Lebanese Forces and the Sinn Féin carried with them remarkable political knowledge that they had amassed over the years, with highly skilled politicians and renowned national figures with extensive experience in the art of strategic planning. In the same way, albeit to a lesser extent, the FMLN could count on the political experience of the FPL, one of the main components of the FMLN, and whose founder was a former leader of the communist party of El Salvador. The FPL leaders had acquainted themselves with the public domain as grassroots organizers and campaign strategists.

SINN FÉIN

Sinn Féin's political experience is by far the longest-standing amongst all four cases. Founded in 1905, the Sinn Féin party started its political activities almost a century before the end of hostilities, gaining ample experience that would prove quite valuable in the postwar period. Sinn Féin's experience includes parliament work, social engagement, public service, political outreach, and electoral campaigning.

Sinn Féin's effective political experience can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century when the party formed the first revolutionary parliament, the Dáil Éireann. The party's massive victory in the 1918 elections enabled the party to take over the civil administration of the country marking Sinn Féin's first public office experience. Controlling the Dáil, the party undertook bold initiatives including the establishment of a system of courts across the island -designed to replace those of the crown- with civil and criminal jurisdiction. Despite their subsequent abolishment, the Dáil courts marked many successes and functioned with great effectiveness.⁴⁹⁶

Following a long period of political decline, the party came back to life after the Second World War as the mouthpiece of the armed insurgency. Sinn Féin's political work was energized in

⁴⁹⁶ Casey, J. (1970). Republican Courts in Ireland 1919-1922. *Irish Jurist*, 5(2), 321-342.

the wake of the failure of the border campaign of 1956–62, when the party turned to propaganda and social agitation to regain popular support. The 1960s' political revival would have a profound impact on the Republican movement, generating a renewed commitment and winning over new converts. Despite the 1969 split, during that decade, the leadership succeeded in significantly shifting the party's ideology to the left, and advancing the republican political agenda through raising awareness about other similar radical movements around the world. This social agitation was complemented with active community involvement such as carrying out successful extra-legal actions for the benefit of community members.⁴⁹⁷ During that period, Sinn Féin also started establishing links with other political organizations such as the Communist Party of Ireland and trade unions. The emerging civil rights movement was also capitalized on as a possible springboard to further republicans' objectives.⁴⁹⁸

Despite the increasingly large role of the armed struggle from 1971 onward, Sinn Féin continued to play a vital political function, contesting elections, providing insight into IRA activities, and making sure the population remained connected to the cause. In the late 1970s, extensive social support experience was gained at the grass-roots level when Sinn Féin started operating centers servicing the communities. That was made possible when the 'incident centers', initially created to monitor the ceasefire that was agreed upon with the British authorities in 1975, were turned into 'advice centers' when the ceasefire ended. Taking advantage of the unused facilities, party members set up bases to attend local community members' concerns. According to Maillot, "This gave Sinn Féin activists more grounding in their communities, and ensured that they maintained a presence and a role that had not been fully explored up until that time". Sinn Féin's local engagement through the 'advice centers' generated interest in participating in local elections which the party started contesting in 1979 in the Republic. The election of Bobby Sands and two prisoners' representatives to the Dáil in 1981, and the bond that was created between activists and their communities at the 'advice centers' further convinced republicans of the potential

⁴⁹⁷ Cullinane, L. (2010). 'A Happy Blend?' Irish republicanism, political violence and social agitation, 1962-69. *Saothar, Published by Irish Labor History Society*, 35, 49-65.

⁴⁹⁸ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

benefits that elections could deliver. Gradually, Sinn Féin became more involved in politics, contesting local elections and gaining political experience at the ballot box.⁴⁹⁹ Sinn Féin's increased engagement in the local communities enabled it to recruit and train a disciplined and dedicated activist base that would effectively and efficiently mobilize people to vote during election times. According to Gupta, deeply rooted in the community, this 'organizational machine' would prepare Sinn Féin to become a serious challenger to its traditional rival, the SDLP.⁵⁰⁰

The party's publicity campaigns during the hunger strike, further improved Sinn Féin's mobilization abilities, creating mass media awareness-raising from inside the prisons to highlight the horrid conditions in the H-Blocks, and mobilizing public opinion at the national and international levels. As reported by Bosi and De Fazio, the prisoners' outreach efforts 'changed the republican movement from inside the prison'.⁵⁰¹ The hunger strikes, also sensitized Sinn Féin leaders to the importance of forging partnerships and engaging with other sectors of public life, not necessarily affiliated with their own organization, such as community groups or trade unions. In large part, this had been due to the impact of the National H-Block/ Armagh Committee. Created in 1977 to support the protesting prisoners, this committee included, in addition to Sinn Féin members, members of other organizations from both parts of Ireland. The powerful impact of the committee's efforts in mobilizing interest for the issue of prisoners' rights, made Sinn Féin aware of the benefits of coalition-building to broaden its outreach. From that time on, Sinn Féin began reaching out to other political parties, interest groups, and elected officials to form alliances on common issues and widen its support base. At the same time, the party started initiating internal discussions

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ Gupta, D. (2007). Selective Engagement and its Consequences for Social Movement Organizations: Lessons from British Policy in Northern Ireland. *Comparative Politics*, 39(3), 331-351.

⁵⁰¹ O'Hearn, D. (2017). Movement Inside and Outside of Prison, The H-Block Protest. In L. Bosi & G. De Fazio (Eds.), *The Troubles in Northern Ireland and Theories of Social Movements* (pp. 11-32). Amsterdam University Press.

on various subjects of interest to the community. According to Maillot, “this enabled more radical movements and individuals to contribute to the politicization of Sinn Féin.”⁵⁰²

Sinn Féin’s long history as a political party, its deep-rooted social links, and extensive political experience acquired over the years, undoubtedly shaped the party’s post-war politics, granting it an invaluable political capital that very few post-insurgent parties are endowed with. As Ireland’s oldest political movement, Sinn Féin’s political experience inarguably played a significant role in the party’s recent electoral ascent both north and south of the Island.

FMLN

The FMLN mostly owes its political experience to the communist party, the other four organizations that would the party having had scant political exposure. Having received its legal status in 1932, the communist party had briefly participated in municipal and legislative elections before being banned and persecuted by successive military governments from 1932 until 1979. Undeterred, the PCS had found ways to indirectly participate in several presidential, municipal and legislative elections through various legal channels, such as the Renewal Action Party (PAR) in 1967, and the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN) between 1970 and 1977. In the late 1970s the communist party formed an opposition unit called the National Opposition Union (UNO) along with the Christian Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party. Having been in existence until 1992, this union accumulated considerable experience over the years and learned many lessons that would prove to be useful to the FMLN when it formed its own political organization. The UNO counted among its active supporters many members of the armed organizations of the early 1970s who secretly supported its activities and acquired important electoral campaigning skills.⁵⁰³

⁵⁰² Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁵⁰³ Jovel, F. (2018a). *Author’s interview with Francisco Jovel* [Interview].

Some party members -especially those that had executive positions in political parties or unions before joining the ranks of the guerrilla- could claim some political experience and a fair knowledge of political organizing. Leadership and community organizing skills were often acquired at universities or through regional connections. Jovel recounted, “For example, I was the leader of the students’ union of the National University for several years until the military closed the University and forced me to go underground... Additionally, from 1976 to 1978 I lived in Costa Rica where I witnessed the electoral struggle and learned from other groups’ tactics and strategies.”⁵⁰⁴ Being closely linked to the population during the wartime, some FMLN guerrilla leaders also became seasoned grassroots organizers. According to Samaoya, this skill was acquired during the war days. He explained, “Since El Salvador was such a densely populated country, in order to survive, the guerrilla leader had to be a social organizer to acquire a support base in both rural and urban areas.” Samaoya recalled that the FPL, the largest organization within the guerrilla, had a massive popular front called the popular revolutionary block (BPR). This block organized big marches, rallies, and protests in collaboration with various organizations: teachers, students, high school students, and university students’ organizations. The block also enlisted the *Unión de Pobladores de Tugurios (UPT)* [Union of Slum Dwellers] representing unemployed inhabitants from marginal and disadvantaged neighborhoods. Being jobless, the UPT who were neither educated nor part of any union, formed part of the social base of the FMLN that the guerilla helped mobilize and organize. According to Samayoa, the guerrilla helped raise their awareness about their rights, and the social and economic problems that were creating and perpetuating social bias and economic inequalities.⁵⁰⁵ These valuable skills were beneficial for mobilizing support but also for collecting data and information that would prove to be a useful basis for crafting policies and devising strategies when the party ascended to power.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Samayoa, S. (2018a). *Author's interview with Salvador Samayoa* [Interview].

THE LEBANESE FORCES

While the LF political party only saw the light after the Taef accord, it's beyond question that the Lebanese Forces' political experience way predates the peace agreement. According to Kouyoumjian, being the heir of an institution that came about as a result of the merger of a multitude of smaller parties, the LF party accumulated a wealth of political experience that served it well in its future political undertakings.⁵⁰⁶ This political experience is mainly attributable to the political acumen of the militia's founding leaders and to the broad scope of its civilian activities during the war.

First established in 1976, the LF militia encompassed six armed groups connected with six political parties, some of which having been players of major importance on the Lebanese political scene.⁵⁰⁷ In response to the fighting that had erupted in April 1975, some of the leaders of the parties that formed part of the Lebanese Forces militia, along with other influential figures, gathered to devise a unified strategy under the banner of the Lebanese Front. Composed of renowned national figures and highly experienced politicians, the Lebanese Front's goal was to fill up the vacuum that was created by the collapsing government. In 1977, the composition of the Front would be modified to comprise only civilian political leaders and intellectuals. The core nucleus of what would become the political wing of the Lebanese Forces included among others, two former Presidents (Camille Chamoun and Suleiman Frangié), the President of the Kataeb Social Democratic Party (Pierre Gemayel), and former Minister of Foreign Affairs and United Nations representative (Charles Malik). Driven by prominent, experienced, and seasoned politicians, the political wing of the Lebanese Forces approached the country's issues in a

⁵⁰⁶ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵⁰⁷ Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek.

comprehensive manner, with full knowledge of the stakes involved and with the perspective of national leaders.⁵⁰⁸

In addition to a skilled political leadership staffed with highly experienced politicians, during the war, LF amassed considerable experience in public service, providing solutions to pressing problems, and attending people's needs in troubled times. In its portrayal of the LF militia, Aula describes it as a state within a state, an organization that had established sophisticated data processing and planning centers aimed at managing the day-to-day life in the sector under its domination.⁵⁰⁹ The Command Council of the Lebanese Forces -mainly composed of the heads of militias- was supported by the Delta and Gamma groups, two levelheaded structures dedicated to providing and organizing information in support of the group's general activities. The Delta group presented itself as the Lebanese Forces' data-processing center, providing automation to and systemic management of the militia's data and activities, as well as enabling easy access to information. The Gamma group on the other hand, was staffed with specialists and experts dedicated to studying Lebanon's physical and social infrastructure and devising policies for future reference. The subjects of the Gamma group's studies were so encompassing -touching upon economy, agriculture, industry, finance, electricity, water, sewage, roads, telecommunications and education- that they clearly reflected the group's mindset, seeing itself as a broad-based national political movement.⁵¹⁰

During the war, the Lebanese Forces assumed responsibility in the sectors that were under their control, providing assistance in areas where the State had become unable to meet citizens' needs.⁵¹¹ LF's social activities could be classified under four categories: public services, social relief, financial affairs and foreign relations. Emerging out of necessity, the office of public services supplanted the State's responsibilities when the latter could no longer perform its basic

⁵⁰⁸ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵⁰⁹ Aulas, M.-C. (1985). *The Socio-Ideological Development of the Maronite Community. The Emergence of the Phalanges and the Lebanese Forces*

⁵¹⁰ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵¹¹ Harik, J. (1994). *The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias*.

functions. Filling that void, LF provided transportation services, set up public beaches, organized traffic, controlled and regulated prices, ensured consumer protection, looked after public assets, and recorded major public service issues in Lebanon, namely, water, electricity, telephones, roads and traffic control. The Lebanese Forces also preserved law and order, and provided social relief to war victims. In addition, LF's foreign affairs committee mobilized the Lebanese diaspora across the globe and communicated the Lebanese Forces' political positions to governments worldwide. Lastly, the Lebanese Forces levied taxes to finance their operations. Much like other parties, LF had set up its own illegal ports in the areas under its control, charging for shipping and receiving cargoes. Until 1982, a substantial portion of LF's funding derived from the ports' transactions. Funding was also secured from taxes charged on cinema tickets, restaurant meals, and gasoline.⁵¹²

Additionally, LF established Popular Committees, initially a Kata'eb initiative aimed at enlisting the cooperation of non-party members, and intended to mobilize community resources to support the militias and perform public services.⁵¹³ These grassroots organizations were staffed with energetic and hardworking volunteers and put in place under the leadership of LF leader Bashir Gemayel with a structure that paralleled that of the state service agencies.⁵¹⁴ These highly organized committees (reaching a total number of about 122 in 1982) dealt with issues as varied as health, education, finance, environment, civil defense, municipalities, planning, information, social affairs, general inspection, sports and youth.⁵¹⁵ The Popular Committees included a Civil Defense Department handling repairs to damaged utilities and assisting the displaced communities, an Environment Office that collected waste, a Health Committee that oversaw the supply of medicine, and a Judiciary Committee staffed with legal experts that provided legal advice while courts were nonfunctional.⁵¹⁶ By virtue of the popular committees, the Lebanese Forces were credited with a series of

⁵¹² Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Harik, J. (1994). *The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias*.

⁵¹⁵ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵¹⁶ Harik, J. (1994). *The Public and Social Services of the Lebanese Militias*.

accomplishments that were highly visible at the grassroots levels. Those included establishing clinics and providing free medical treatment, offering vocational programs for the youth, and providing maintenance for water, electrical, and telephone systems.⁵¹⁷

Despite maintaining that their social activities were never meant to compete with the government, the Lebanese Forces' tax collection scheme and the militia's often unfettered conduct often called into question some of these claims.⁵¹⁸ For the most part however, the Lebanese Forces were closely allied with the government, enjoying a protective cover from the Lebanese State and from the Lebanese Army. According to Kouyoumjian, this strong relationship rendered the militia's political activities equally as important as its military operations.⁵¹⁹ Elected president in 1982 and assassinated less than a month later, the very charismatic Bashir Gemayel, epitomized the political success of the armed resistance. Summarizing the LF breadth of experience Kouyoumjian stated, "We were a military, a political, and a social resistance. We had our own mini-state, collecting taxes and providing social services. The head of the Lebanese Forces, would even be elected president."⁵²⁰

AD M-19

Being the first guerrilla in Latin America to lay down its arms, the M-19's transition into politics represented a unique phenomenon in the region. The new party could not count on lessons learned and experiences from other parties with a similar journey. At the same time, international interest in the conflict settlement was limited and was reflected in the modest international support received after the peace was signed. As Villamizar recalled, "The party couldn't benefit from the experience of similar cases in the region, and rode alone, poorly supported. Unlike the FMLN who received substantial regional and international assistance,

⁵¹⁷ Snider, L. (1984). The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics. *The Middle East Journal*, 38(1), 1-33.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Kouyoumjian, R. (2020). Author's interview with Richard Kouyoumjian. In.

⁵²⁰ Ibid.

the M-19 was a novelty in the region.”⁵²¹ Many interviewees reported that the budding party’s inexperience led to walking into many traps and frequently making the wrong choices. One such choice was the party leader’s decision to disqualify members of the Constituent Assembly from participating in the elections for Congress. This decision had detrimental consequences as without realizing it, the party had excluded its best candidates from running for the legislature. Traditional parties who had a better understanding of the workings of politics entered the agreement with a more sagacious plan. Their Constituent Assembly spots were filled with intellectuals, leaving their prominent political figures free to run when election came. As Posso put it, “The traditional parties were represented with what is referred to in soccer as ‘a reserve team’ whereas the AD M-19 members of the Constituent Assembly were the leaders of the movement.”⁵²² But this assessment also reveals the former guerrilla’s dearth of capable leaders and party cadres with leadership skills. After all, the Constituent Assembly only counted 19 members of the former guerrilla, but the party’s inability to find qualified candidates outside of that restricted circle, exposed the new party’s unpreparedness and inadequate ability to lead.

Still, many AD members had some previous political experience, several of them having been members of unions or dissidents of traditional parties however, promoting the new party required a different type of know-how.⁵²³ In addition to not understanding the power of electoral machinery, party members were naive and failed to grasp their opponents’ strategies. Inexperienced party leaders did not appreciate the complex world of campaign strategies and elections rhetoric.

Furthermore, the party lacked the vision needed to devise electoral strategies that reflected the complex nature of Colombia’s political reality. According to Patiño, the party failed to understand the relationship between drug trafficking and politics, at a time when drug cartel leaders strived to undermine the social and political gains that were made from the revised

⁵²¹ Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author’s Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

⁵²² González Posso, C. (2018). *Author’s interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

⁵²³ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author’s interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

constitution. Referring to the alliance between the Liberal Party and the Medellin drug cartel, Patiño pointed out to the AD M-19's naivety when it came to assessing that political dynamic. He observed, "We were not able to read what was happening at that time in the country... drug cartels exerted a lot of efforts to strengthen traditional parties... In 1994, Ernesto Samper wins the elections and the Liberal Party arrives to power with the support of the drug traffickers."⁵²⁴ Navarro conceded with some bitterness that candidness played a big role in the unexpected turn of events, "We must also accept one thing: to go from arms to politics is to get into a very unknown world, it is the world of elections. We still had never participated in elections, and never voted. If I had known in 1991 what I know today, this would never have happened."⁵²⁵ But if the party lacked vision and foresightedness, it was also a result of the absence of internal cohesiveness, and lack of unity. As will be discussed in chapter 6, the new party membership was notorious for its heterogeneous lineage and ideological diversity. These attributes would further impede the group's transformation into a viable political party.

CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, political experience plays a crucial role in the political performance of parties transitioning from arms to politics. Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces' remarkable ascent despite the enormous challenges faced, shows the importance of political know-how in electoral politics. Carlos Pizarro rightly talked about the "leap into the unknown" while describing the M-19's decision to give up arms while totally unprepared to confront the political battles ahead.⁵²⁶ The opposite Colombian experience presents evidence of the role played by political experience in future performance at the ballot box. The party's lack of political know-how in an environment where polarization was high and competition was fierce quashed its electoral bargaining. Nevertheless, while political inaptitude can be

⁵²⁴ Patiño, O. (2018a). *Author's Interview with Otty Patiño* [Interview].

⁵²⁵ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁵²⁶ Grabe, V. Peace Processes 1990-1994. 38-49.

considered an important element in the party's fortunes as a political actor, lack of political experience seems to have been inconsequential in relation to the party's overall accomplishments and its contribution to the expansion of the democracy at the national level.

CHAPTER 4: INTERNAL FUNCTIONING AND ITS IMPACT ON PARTY PERFORMANCE/ACHIEVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The internal functioning of political parties that emerge from violent conflicts have been the subject of many studies (Ibarra & Puig 2007; Manning, 2007; Ishiyama & Batta, 2011; Wade, 2007). The extent to which these factors have played a role in the parties' ability to advance democracy at the national level has been largely overlooked. In this section, I examine a number of elements that determined the internal functioning of the four parties under review to study the impact of these components on the parties' achievements. In the following chapter, I will give special attention to these parties' ideological evolution and its possible repercussion on their behavior in the postwar period. The elements considered in this chapter are:

1. Internal democracy and inclusiveness
 - a. Leadership selection and party discipline
 - b. Inclusion of women, youth, and minorities
2. Internal cohesion
3. Communication with the electorate and other stakeholders
4. Finances
5. Role of leadership

In three of these cases, women's active participation seems to have positively influenced the parties' agendas in advancing human rights in general. But the absence of an important female pressure in the fourth case -equally as successful on that front- suggests that female inclusion had less implications than could be assumed. Similarly, while the largesse of a generous diaspora and supporting allies proved crucial for ensuring sustainability, lack of funding didn't seem to negatively impact party achievements either. This is also true for leadership, and party cohesion. It's difficult to argue that the parties' democratic achievements were tied to the presence of powerful leaders or to party homogeneity even if

strong unifying figures and institutional unity, significantly reduced the risks associated with the transition and helped these parties survive and thrive. Same applies to communication skills even though in the cases of Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces, good political communication increased their ability to gain support and fulfil their roles as institutional intermediaries. Finally, yet importantly, the promotion of democratic practices at the national level didn't seem to be contingent upon the practice of democracy at the party level. Indeed, and despite their national contributions, shaky democratic procedures appear to have been key features of all four parties.

INTERNAL DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSIVENESS: BETWEEN PRACTICING DEMOCRACY AND PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION

Internal democracy within political parties refers to the methods used to ensure that members are engaged in decision-making. According to Norris, concrete steps towards reaching internal democracy include the decentralization of decision-making in the candidate selection process or promoting the inclusion of women and ethnic minority candidates for elected office.⁵²⁷ It is assumed that the rules and regulations included in the party bylaws comprise measures that would ensure that party activists are engaged in a meaningful way in the decision-making process at all levels of the party. These measures would include activists' participation in debates that discuss various issues related to elections, candidate selection, or party principles. According to Close and Prevost, the abandonment of verticalism, the command structure that characterizes military organizations, presents the biggest challenge facing this type of political parties. The author

⁵²⁷ Norris, P. (2004). *Building Political Parties: Reforming Legal Regulations and Internal Rules*.

observed that wartime habits usually spillover the peacetime behavior and slow the internal democratization process.⁵²⁸

The debate over these four parties' internal democracy operations happened at a time when the internal functioning of political parties in general was the subject of intense discussions and analysis. Upon demobilization, these parties used this opportunity to try to assert their difference and showcase their progressive practices. In addition to defining the rights and duties of party members, the bylaws adopted by these parties, ensured representation and accountability. Bylaws defined members' responsibilities at the local, regional, and national levels; the relationship between different bodies; and measures to seek input from membership in the decision-making process or while selecting candidates. However, a deeper look into these parties' operations shows that when applied in practice, these rules and regulations were often poorly implemented. While internal democracy seems to have been a major focus of the party statutes, centralized control and a weak democracy in the decision-making process often characterized these institutions, undoubtedly a legacy of their past as an armed organization. In the specific case of the AD M-19 the party bylaws were drafted but never approved nor applied even if in practice, the party seems to have been arguably the most open to internal debate.

As evidenced in the political parties' literature however, this feature is not unique to this type of parties. Many scholars noted similar conclusions in mainstream parties as well. These observations can be seen in Jeffrey Obler's (1974)⁵²⁹ work who, using the example of Belgian political parties observed that, while offering a democratic appearance, candidate recruitment processes usually limit the influence of party members and reduce the role of rank-and-file members to simple endorsers. Similarly, analyzing the candidate selection procedures within 83 parties in twelve West European countries, Krouwel (1999)⁵³⁰ had

⁵²⁸ Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

⁵²⁹ Obler, J. (1974). Intraparty Democracy and the Selection of Parliamentary candidates: The Belgian Case. *British Journal of Political Science*, 4(2), 163-185.

⁵³⁰ Krouwel, A. (1999). *The Selection of Parliamentary Candidates in Western Europe: The Paradox of Democracy*

concluded that those organizations follow oligarchic and rather undemocratic modes of parliamentary candidate selection. Interestingly though, Gallagher (1980)⁵³¹ who covered Irish parties' candidate selection processes, determined that ordinary party members in those parties have more power than their executive elite counterparts than in most countries, which might explain the higher internal democracy standard for Sinn Féin than for the other three parties studied.

LEADERSHIP SELECTION AND PARTY DISCIPLINE

Certification requirements for legislative candidates and party leaders are usually set by the parties' internal bylaws. These could require specific qualifications such as party membership for a certain number of years prior to candidacy; a specific type of experience; a particular type of background; or a certain type of education. Once qualified, potential candidates proceed to the nomination stage. Typically, the nomination process is clearly spelled out in the internal constitution however, in most parties, very little is known about the actual dynamics of the procedure. According to Norris, this procedure is considered crucial as it represents the degree to which leadership owns the decision-making, the breadth of participation, and the scope of decision-making.⁵³² The two primary elements holding back intra-party democracy in the cases studied, were found to be enduring leaderships and the nomination process. The limited choices for ruling positions and shaky democratic procedures in the selection process appear to be key features of the parties under review. Everlasting leaders at the helm of the Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces and a strong notion of democratic centralism in the FMLN reflected institutions that had retained some of the dispositions of their previous military organizations, a shared feature of post-insurgent parties. In the case of the AD M-19, party-building never constituted a priority and the carefully considered bylaws merely remained ink on paper.

⁵³¹ Gallagher, M. (1980). Candidate Selection in Ireland: The Impact of Localism and the Electoral System. *British Journal of Political Science*, 10(4), 489-503.

⁵³² Norris, P. (2004). *Building Political Parties: Reforming Legal Regulations and Internal Rules*.

AD M-19

Without any doubt, of all four parties, the AD M-19 had the loosest structure. Drafted in 1991, the party bylaws included a set of rules that defined the vision of the internal life of the party. The document comprised the organizational structure of the party, in particular the different bodies that would compose it at the national and regional levels as well as the rights and obligations of party members. The bylaws outlined the duties and responsibilities of party members and the workings of the various bodies and procedures: the national congress; the national directorate; the national executive committee; the ethics, guarantees, and conflicts and vigilance commission; the national audit commission; the departmental assembly and departmental directorate; the departmental executive committee; the municipal organization; and the applicability of sanctions.⁵³³

The first chapter of the bylaws, clearly stated that the AD M-19 would stimulate participation and collective decision-making. Article 1 of that chapter stipulated that the management positions and candidacies for popular election positions would 'preferably' have an elective character. Other than having attained the age of 14 years, candidacy requirements were rather unclear. The bylaws stated however that any member has the right to elect and be elected to positions of direction or popular elections, including the National Congress, the organ considered as the supreme authority of the party. Renewed every two years, the National Congress was tasked with approving the party documents and electing the members of the national directorate, executive committee and other national commissions. Candidacy for the National Directorate of the AD M-19, was also subject to the same requirements as those expected from the National Congress delegates. These were set to be elected through majoritarian secret vote. Voted for by the National Congress, the National Directorate comprised the president and vice-president of the organization, as well as the head and deputy head of the parliamentary bloc of the AD M-19.⁵³⁴ The bylaws granted

⁵³³ Proyecto de Estatutos, Documento de Discusion Febrero-Marzo 1991

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

complete freedom of expression and discussion, allowing partisans to disagree with the decisions of the different organs as long as they maintained unity of action in society. Currents of opinions within the party were allowed and considered a stimulant for debate.⁵³⁵

These bylaws however were never approved nor applied. Former member of the EPL, Alvaro Villaraga recounted that the internal regulations were drafted by a commission and submitted for review but there was never any follow-up.⁵³⁶ Since the bylaws were never approved, they were not really binding to party members. Villamizar, who holds the original drafts of the bylaws in his archives conceded that the essence of the party bylaws promoted the formation of internal tendencies -the PLA for example had formed a very clear tendency- and resulted in internal divisions that the party struggled to dissolve.⁵³⁷ But while not ideal, the party's internal democracy was rather functional. According to Villamizar, despite the common perception that the selection of the Constituent Assembly members and the national elections lists were '*el boligrafo de Navarro*' (Navarro's pen) the party had significant levels of internal consultation. National assemblies were held where delegates were elected in various parts of the country. Various bodies were also democratically chosen including a superior command, a five-person collegiate directorship, an ethics committee, and a political training commission. As he put it, "The party tried to avoid the individual centric approach. These were forms of participatory democracy, the selection of candidates was a very debated issue".⁵³⁸ Despite the loose organization, and weak structure, AD M-19 party members actively participated in the internal debates and the decision-making process.

Commenting on the "*Navarro's pen*" allegation, Navarro pointed out that the party's internal functioning was the furthest away from authoritarianism and even claimed that the *Alianza* would have benefited from a measure of self-control and orderliness. Referring to Eric Hosbawm's description of the 'Leninist cadres' -the working-class leadership in the

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Villaraga, A. (2017). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵³⁷ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

communist parties- Navarro sought to highlight the non-authoritarian nature of his leadership by drawing a difference between this type of membership -fully committed and unconditionally loyal to the party- and that of the AD M-19. To the former party President, the party would have encountered a totally different fate had it followed the Leninist style, not so much in terms of ideology but as a type of organization. Instead, he noted, the AD M-19 turned out to be similar to the Salvadoran *Democratic Party*, a centrist political party formed by Joaquín Villalobos. According to the former leader, the AD M-19 and the *Democratic Party* had political practices that left too much room for debate and consultation. Both parties he said, would disappear. Using the examples of the Cuban Communist, Soviet, Vietnamese, and Chinese Parties he explained his approach,

*“The party of cadres is a very strong form of organization. In the FMLN, the most Marxists [members], having had a party structure of cadres, have survived; the most liberal ones have not. We never had this practice of party of cadres, the good and the bad, that allowed the rest of the FMLN to survive. We were social democrats. The FMLN is very orthodox but very organized. Even in Colombia the communist party still lives on through the Union Patriótica [Patriotic Union]. The party was founded in the early 1920s and is still alive! If we were a Leninist party, we would have survived”.*⁵³⁹

In fact, the AD M-19’s members were more suggestive of Durverger’s ‘cadre parties’ members, the restricted group of influential, well-connected people that receive little or no political education from the party. To many, Navarro himself was largely responsible for this failure to create an effective organizational structure. According to Boudon, Navarro’s leadership and pragmatic approach -emphasizing deal making and electoral competition rather than organizational development- is chiefly responsible for the electoral collapse of 1994. To the author, the AD M-19’s party leadership neglected institutional building and disregarded its duties with respect to strengthening the party’s internal functioning. Consequently, the party leadership wasted an opportunity to build solid foundations that would have ensured the sustainability of the political project after the Constituent Assembly

⁵³⁹ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

had completed its task. Boudon argued that Navarro and other leaders' inability to run for congress after the 1991 congressional elections should have motivated them to devote themselves to internal matters and to prevent the differences in opinion from becoming more entrenched. A squandered opportunity that might have saved the party from its inexorable decline.⁵⁴⁰

FMLN

Contrary to the AD M-19, the FMLN had a skeleton of a party structure since the war days. With an outline of a national structure already in place, after peace was signed, the newly formed party needed to create the mechanisms that would make the organization functional in a non-clandestine world, and more appealing in El Salvador's rough political environment. Having been constituted by five organizations with different ideologies and organizational practices, the FMLN had to convene to agree on a common plan of action. As an offshoot of the Salvadoran communist party, the FPL was best prepared to take the lead in the organizational efforts since it had consistently been at the fore of the coordination between the armed insurgency and its support groups in the community. Since the early days of the struggle, the FPL had created a structure that linked urban commandos to organized sectors of the society including students, teachers, peasants, workers, and residents of underprivileged neighborhoods. The FPL had set up a commission tasked with coordinating the actions of the urban commandos with those of the social organizations with which it had established contact. As the regime intensified its authoritarian practices, the commission's functions were expanded, and the militants of the urban guerrilla gradually assumed control of the popular movement. In July 1975, the FPL consolidated the activities of the popular organizations that were already under its sphere of influence and formed the so-called Popular Revolutionary Bloc (BPR).⁵⁴¹ Describing the valuable role that the FPL played during this process, Salvador Samayoa noted, "Once again the most hierarchical, most

⁵⁴⁰ Boudon, L. (2001). Colombia's M-19 Democratic Alliance. A case Study in New-Party Self-Destruction. *Library of Congress*, 28(1), 73-92.

⁵⁴¹ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

structured, and most ideological unit was the FPL, the group that held a communist ideology. The FPL helped create a structure for electoral purposes, and party committees in each municipality; a kind of local-level organization we did not have before.”⁵⁴² The structure of the FMLN party was designed to comprise four different levels, the national, the departmental, the local and the sector-based levels.⁵⁴³ The FPL had taken the lead in developing the organizational structure of the party, a key role that would propel the FPL’s prominent position within the newly formed party.

Until the party became subject to external regulation, internal democracy within the FMLN was slow to take place. Lack of internal consultation created major discontent amongst the progressive thinking members as decisions were usually made by the political commission and only ratified by the rest of the party members. Many former party members reported that the democratic transformation from armed group to political party was very sluggish.⁵⁴⁴ Cañas recalled that when the party was formed, it still behaved like a military organization. He remarked, “The military does not consult to make decisions and guerrilla organizations are military organizations. The FMLN made an incomplete democratization effort because it always gave more weight to the decisions of the leadership rather than the opinions of the party members.”⁵⁴⁵ But this domineering approach would soon lead to a rise of unhappy and disgruntled members who grew increasingly frustrated with the authoritarian atmosphere.

In the mid-nineties, differences between two FMLN organizations and the rest of the *Frente* started becoming more obvious with the RN and ERP’s call to abandon Marxism-Leninism and gear the FMLN toward a social-democratic party.⁵⁴⁶ These two organizations opposed the party’s shift towards “democratic centralism” which they saw as the equivalent of an authoritarian type of governance. ERP and RN members believed that the new party’s

⁵⁴² Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁴³ Estatuto del Partido Politico Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, FMLN, (2017).

⁵⁴⁴ Author’s interviews with Cañas, 2018; A.G. Martínez, 2018; and Samayoa, 2018.

⁵⁴⁵ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁴⁶ Martín Álvarez, A., Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies, & Berghof Forschungszentrum für Konstruktive Konfliktbearbeitung. (2010). *From revolutionary war to democratic revolution : the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador*. Berghof Conflict Research.

internal governing system applied a pretense of internal democracy when in fact, it was closer to authoritarianism. As Ana Guadalupe Martínez exclaimed, “The party applied *democratic centralism* around the historical leader of the Communist Party, Schafik Handal... That is a Marxist term that means that there is a central direction but then it is not democratic, no!”⁵⁴⁷ The *orthodox* trend favored the restriction of internal discussions and introduced concepts of forced discipline. Samayoa remembered that the opposite trend referred to as the *renovators*, vehemently opposed these ideas and posited that discipline had to be advised rather than imposed. He explained,

“*Democratic centralism*, which was a Marxist-Leninist management style used in communist parties, meant that the party organisms could deliberate and give their opinion, which is why they used the word ‘democratic’, but in the end the verdict was centralized in the sense that once a decision was taken by the political commission, practically everyone had to follow it. There was partisan discipline in that”.⁵⁴⁸

Joaquín Villalobos, leader of the ERP and outspoken critic of the traditional idea of socialism advocated by the communist branch of the party, suggested the establishment of a modern party based on social democracy. According to Jovel, the *renovating* trend headed by Villalobos was looking to adapt to the new world conditions, and embrace a more democratic approach. He explained, “The renovating current believed that in the aftermath of the peace agreement it was necessary to take into consideration the collapse of the socialist camp. At that time, Latin America was also striving to reinvent its leftist movements especially after Nicaragua’s Sandinistas’ electoral loss.”⁵⁴⁹ It’s only in February 2013 that a new law, regulating political parties within the norms and principles of representative democracy, introduced best practices and improved the level of consultancy at all levels of the party.⁵⁵⁰ This law would mark a turning point in the party’s internal democracy practices, reducing centralization and enhancing the decision-making and deliberation processes.

⁵⁴⁷ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁴⁸ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁴⁹ Jovel, F. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁵⁰ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

Many party members would voice their satisfaction with this evolution, with many praising the extra efforts made at the party level to show that members' opinions are valued, and make sure that decisions reflect widespread support. After two decades and half of party life, the party could finally claim that its internal democracy was fairly functioning. According to Charlin Suniga, the Political Commission and Youth Secretary General, the party regularly conducted evaluations to gauge members' satisfaction and was generally open to dialogue even if party decisions ought to be followed by all.⁵⁵¹ Internal elections took place by secret ballot and involved all members. According to Mata, in the May 2018 internal elections, 70% of about 40,000 members voted to elect the party's presidential candidate Hugo Martínez, without anyone contesting the results. But by that time, the party had silenced dissent and consolidated the ranks of the party to include mostly members who were loyal to party leadership.⁵⁵² Despite praising their organization's efforts, many members recognized the need to make further improvements on both the legal and capacity building levels. Members' engagement they would claim is impeded by many members' passive attitude and lack of initiative. As Blandino put it, "Much of what is missing has to do with political education. Some colleagues say that decisions are made without taking their opinions into consideration but if you do not participate, they will not take your opinion into account!"⁵⁵³ On the whole, despite championing democracy at the national level, the FMLN remained largely autocratic during the first two decades of its political life. And while intra-party democracy greatly improved over time -as a consequence of both national measures and internal efforts- many deficiencies and concerns remained.

SINN FEIN

The Sinn Féin party bylaws specify the party's principles and objectives and detail the structure and rules of the organization including election rules to party office

⁵⁵¹ Suniga, C. (2018). Interview with the author. In.

⁵⁵² Mata, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁵³ Blandino, R. A. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

responsibilities, and candidacy to government positions. The document also details the party's financial management, the organization of the annual conference as well as the duties and responsibilities of the organization's various bodies. Despite the absence of a term limit for the leadership position, an annual re-election of party leadership is included in the party provisions. According to Whiting, the possibility for any party member to contest the position of leader attest to Sinn Féin's commitment to inclusivity and leadership accountability.⁵⁵⁴ Many party members interviewed indicated that, except for marginal issues, Sinn Féin is by and large fairly democratic internally, representatives being elected according to the bylaws, and positions given serious consideration by contenders (Gibney, 2019; MacDonncha, 2019; Walsh, 2017). According to Jim Gibney, the views of the locally-based *An Cumann* structures are the foundations upon which party decisions are based. Describing the bottom-up approach Gibney noted, "The base of the party is the foundation of the party. The *An Cumann* which is the ground floor of the party, is the structure around which the party operates in every part of Ireland."⁵⁵⁵ This view, prevalent within the party, tends to overlook what many observers see as a certain level of regimentation and a management style that at times, engages in arbitrary practices.

Sinn Féin's hierarchical nature of the decision-making process has often been criticized as far too driven by leadership. Maillot (2005) reported that, being a party of activists, it is striking that effective participation of Sinn Féin members in the governing of the organization at various levels of the institution is rather limited.⁵⁵⁶ The re-election of same leader for 35 years corroborates these claims. According to disgruntled former party members, fictitious debates within the party, often concealed deeply entrenched authoritarian practices. Former member, Ruadhán Mac Aodháin explained,

"Every year they have a conference where everyone can put their name forward but that's not how it works. In fact, no one dares to challenge the supreme leader. There is a

⁵⁵⁴ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

⁵⁵⁵ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

⁵⁵⁶ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

tiny group of people that make all the decisions. Bylaws are a rubber stamp. The reality is that there are six persons on the executive committee that make all the decisions. It's a patronage system".⁵⁵⁷

According to Whiting, despite progress, the party's revolutionary past still weighs heavily on the management system and features such as central control and party discipline are still prevalent.⁵⁵⁸ The 2018 leadership elections where only one candidate was nominated to replace historic leader Gerry Adams who had led the party for the past 35 years is one such example. Despite leadership claims that there were no restrictions on any other candidates, the message was clear after Sinn Féin Vice President, Mary Lou McDonald succeeded Adams. Explaining the leadership decision, Mac Donncha argued that the long-term leadership of some political figures is a consequence of a shortage of candidates, not the result of restrictions being imposed on other candidates. He explained,

"I know the media tries to portray us in a sinister way as very strictly ruled or administered but that's not true... many people saw Mary Lou as the natural successor since she was the vice-president... Sometimes it's hard to find people to move forward to these positions, it's not that democracy is not adhered to, it's to get enough participation."⁵⁵⁹

Being a party of activists, a high level of commitment and dedication is expected from Sinn Féin members. Members are expected to follow seven two-hour training sessions outlined in a members' guide document on various topics such as republican principles and ideology, socialism, feminism, media awareness, and historical analysis.⁵⁶⁰ Supporting party policies at election times is of vital importance across the island. This particularly applies to Northern Ireland where Sinn Féin's strong electoral machinery plays a vital role, motivating the electorate and ensuring that the vote comes out on election day. As Ó hAdhmaill explained,

⁵⁵⁷ Mac Aodháin, R. (2019b). *Author's interview with Ruadhán MacAodháin* [Interview].

⁵⁵⁸ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

⁵⁵⁹ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁵⁶⁰ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

“In my home area of Belfast where I come from, Sinn Féin would estimate that 80% of the population would vote Sinn Féin so the important thing for them at election times was to get everybody out to vote because they knew that 8 out of 10 people were going to vote Sinn Féin. In the South of Ireland, the numbers differ and the area is much vaster. Party activists are less numerous and would have to cover bigger areas where party support is much less important.”⁵⁶¹

According to Whiting, central control and party discipline are essential features of the organizational structure of Sinn Féin. Mostly inherited from Sinn Féin’s history and previous connection to the Provisional IRA, this tight intra-organizational discipline is discernable through members’ deep loyalty to party leadership.⁵⁶² Ó hAdhmaill conceded that there is a notion of democratic centralism within Sinn Féin. He indicated that the party was democratic enough in terms of the mechanics of decision-making however, and while members can voice their opinions freely, leadership decisions have a binding effect on everyone in the party. Intraparty differences are discussed internally, usually at the *Ard-Fheis*, the annual convention where members can freely express their views and show support or opposition for certain positions or a potential candidate, but party decisions are expected to be publicly supported by all. As he noted,

“There are discussions, there are votes, and then decisions are made. Once the decisions are made, people are expected to agree to the decisions. In other parties, people can publicly attack their leadership, have differences of opinions, and manifest those differences in their voting behavior; this conduct wouldn’t be tolerated in Sinn Féin.”

One such decision was the party’s abortion policy. Ó hAdhmaill remembered that on abortion, Sinn Féin’s stance was very firm, “Most parties would say to their members you can have a personal vote on this, whereas Sinn Féin would say ‘this is the party policy and

⁵⁶¹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author’s interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁵⁶² Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

you have to have this vote.”⁵⁶³ But getting members to unconditionally support party policies was a double-edged sword and didn’t come without challenges. Media outlets frequently accounted for allegations of bullying and intimidations within the party. Over the past few years, a series of resignations, suspensions or expulsions targeting more than a dozen elected representatives have been reported, tarnishing the party’s image.⁵⁶⁴ These failings however, didn’t seem to deter voters, the party’s recent electoral victories bearing witness to the party’s approval rate and general endorsement despite the shortcomings.

THE LEBANESE FORCES

When it was brought back to life in 2005 after 14 years of suspension, the LF party adopted a set of internal bylaws establishing the party structure, the rules of representation, and the rights and duties of party members. Drafting statutes that promoted internal democracy proved to be a challenging task. Habchi indicated that the creation of the document in itself was a source of controversy inside the party, many LF members feeling uneasy with too much democracy. He recalled, “Some leaders were convinced that Lebanese parties were not ready to create such a democratic institution. Others believed that we had to start somewhere.”⁵⁶⁵ After more than three years of discussions, debates, and extensive research, the party put together a very elaborate 43-page document detailing the functioning of the party organization, its philosophy, purpose, and finances.

The Lebanese Forces management is mostly administered through memos. The party issues memos on various subjects regulating attitude and behavior. Memos can be destined to all members or only certain member categories. Elected representatives and government officials maintain different channels of communication than other members. Zarifeh explained that while regular party members are expected to abide by all party decisions, Members of Parliament (MP) and Ministers follow a different procedure. He explained,

⁵⁶³ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁵⁶⁴ Irish Examiner. (2018). Bullying claims return as SF awaits new leader
Irish Examiner.

⁵⁶⁵ Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

“Ministers and MPs have their own rules. However, when it comes to the general guidelines, they also follow the party decisions. All party members are subject to disciplinary proceedings clearly spelled out in the party bylaws.⁵⁶⁶

In its bylaws, the LF party established mechanisms allowing party members to efficiently communicate their concerns to the leadership, including the capacity to outreach directly to the upper management when needed. Wisam Raji, reported that this feature is very unique to the LF. He explained, “The way the system works allows the people at the base to transmit their concerns whether small or big. They can even have a personal discussion with the leader to get his feedback on a specific issue if needed. The system is designed in gradual hierarchy, not vertical decline in hierarchy.” Raji also noted that broad consultations often take place to gauge members’ satisfaction and get their feedback on procedures and policies. Meetings and formal gatherings, as well as written requests are some of the avenues used to stimulate internal dialogues and facilitate communication.⁵⁶⁷ But despite clear internal rules and procedures regulating the democratic mechanisms of internal decision-making, the party’s internal democracy has been far from perfect.

Party bylaws stipulate that elections should be held every four years to renew the president’s mandate and those of the heads of local and regional centers. To this day, very few such elections have taken place and party chairman Samir Geagea has been heading the party for almost three decades without being reelected a single time. When asked about the lack of democracy inside the party, Geagea conceded to flaws in the system but also pointed out to the fact that democracy within a party is not as critical as in other instances. To Geagea, the liberty to join or leave a party is in itself a free election. He explained, “People join a party, knowing who the leader is and how it works and decide to remain in the party also knowing who heads it and how decisions are made.”⁵⁶⁸ The high retention rate in the Lebanese Forces party does bear witness to the members’ overall satisfaction with the inner workings of the organization. In fact, while not holding elections, the party developed ways to engage

⁵⁶⁶ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

⁵⁶⁷ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

⁵⁶⁸ Geagea, S. (2022). *Author's interview with the leader of the Lebanese Forces* [Interview].

members in different forms of consultations on a regular basis. It is common practice at the Lebanese Forces to hold extensive deliberations on all sorts of issues. Khoury emphasized that in the party, freedom of opinion is encouraged and internal dialogues, extensive deliberations, and even internal disagreements are very common especially at the level of leadership. The party's shadow government he argued, is a clear example of the party leadership's openness to internal criticism and free expression of thoughts. The behind-the-scenes team of experts that advises LF members of government he contended, can often be in disagreement with the party ministers. This team of six to ten people he reported, often engages in heated debates about positions held by LF ministers or their performance as members of the executive branch.⁵⁶⁹ But participation at the lower-levels of the organization remained less obvious and a better understanding of the reasons behind the holding back of elections revealed a number of difficulties that the party is struggling to overcome.

The issues brought out included family feuds, geographical obstacles, and security paranoia. According to Baraghid, while party members' allegiance to their historical leader is unquestionable, internal disagreements between party members are ubiquitous. Conflicts within the party mostly happen at the local branches' level where two or more families usually compete for the control of the party office. Baraghid reported that these family disputes rendered internal elections very polemical. In order to circumvent internal clashes, management was forced to resort to more participative approaches such as consensus building and consultations to renew leadership positions. He explained,

"We are trying to find alternative solutions. One way is to try to obtain unanimity on a name, not a neutral person but a person that enjoys consensus. Another way is to consult with members asking them who they want, it is not an election but sort of a survey. If we find out that the majority favors one name, we go for it. If consensus building or consultations don't work, then we will have to abide by the bylaws and hold elections whatever the results."⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁹ Khoury, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Khoury* [Interview].

⁵⁷⁰ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

Defending the consensus building method, Head of LF Foreign Affairs Department Elie Hindi pointed that, in addition to avoiding the anticipated confrontations generated by a forthcoming elections, this method increased participation while retaining membership. He argued,

“We don’t do elections for the sake of elections... In the party, the moment you say: we are going for elections, you will have two to three groups fighting and competing with each other. Why? Just to say we have democracy? If we can get 90% of the people to agree on a suitable person to lead the party in a specific town without elections, why wouldn’t we go with it?”⁵⁷¹

To Hindi, in addition to averting intraparty clashes, the consensus building method offered fringe benefits. The numerous meetings and debates that take place to reach an agreement, gave the leadership the opportunity to listen to the members’ grievances and suggest creative solutions. Another reason for not holding internal elections, Hasbani argued, is the need to save much-needed energy that would be consumed by tensions over internal elections. Those tensions he contended, would divert attention from important developments in the country. As he stated, “Any elections in a party, a country or an institution, build up tensions because they generate rivalry, create factions and defocus people from the job. Also, democracy takes time to evolve. Is it a 100% perfect? No. But we’re not looking for perfection, we’re looking for results.”⁵⁷² Finally, logistical difficulties generated by the geographical spread of the party were also mentioned as another obstacle. Being an organization that comprises more than 30,000 members, the Lebanese Forces was reported to be much larger and more spread-out than other Lebanese parties, which rendered the task more difficult.⁵⁷³ In essence, despite appreciating the importance of elections, most interviewees made it clear that, given the country conditions, internal

⁵⁷¹ Hindi, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Hindi* [Interview].

⁵⁷² Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

⁵⁷³ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

democracy remained of secondary importance and that building a strong and undivided party was ultimately what mattered the most.

But these justifications also revealed the persistence of the verticalist command structures that prevailed during the conflict. Weak internal democracy can also be traced to a history of internal uprisings. Economic advisor to the party, Mr. Roy Badaro revealed that this history led to a security paranoia. He noted, “Loyalty is more important than competence... The Lebanese Forces has only one candidate, he is the life leader of the party. The party defends his existence and the leader is the last resort... Lebanese Forces representatives have to be ‘obedient’ people”.⁵⁷⁴ While definitely turning the page of war, it is unequivocal that the Lebanese Forces has retained a military spirit. Party members recognize it and at times, take pride in it. As Raji put it, “When duty calls, you will find us there.”⁵⁷⁵ But former Vice Prime Minister Ghassan Hasbani explained that this discipline is now geared towards civil purposes. Because the party originated from a military structure the organization operates with rigor, “It operates with military precision but for civil purposes.” But Hasbani also highlighted the fact that this military precision is intended to serve party members and their needs which is why communication is considered a high priority. Leadership, he reported, is constantly listening to the base and communication remains a priority. As he put it, “While the structure is very rigid, communication channels are very fluid and information quickly flows, both upward and downward...”⁵⁷⁶ Undoubtedly, the party made some headways on the road to internal democracy but progress has been slow and gradual. Baraghid would concede that it’s time for a leap forward and that the time is now ripe for holding elections for the chairman, the vice-chairman, and all the members of the executive committee according to the bylaws.⁵⁷⁷ As is the case with the other parties, internal democracy at the Lebanese Forces remains incomplete, and while efforts were made to address the issue of representation in creative ways, the party remains a long way from applying candid forms

⁵⁷⁴ Badaro, R. (2017). *Author's interview with Roy Badaro* [Interview].

⁵⁷⁵ Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

⁵⁷⁶ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

⁵⁷⁷ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

of democratic governance that involves members in the decision-making process in a meaningful way.

CONCLUSION

The four cases' postwar behavior as political parties has revealed their revolutionary past's dual heritage. On the one hand, it perpetuated the cult of the historic wartime commanders, and on the other, it exposed the persistence of their wartime organizational cultures: disorderly in the case of the AD M-19, highly hierarchical for the FMLN, very militant in the case of the Sinn Féin, and highly structured for the Lebanese Forces. While the practice of internal democracy in the parties studied varies widely from one case to the other, all these parties' internal democratic features can be -or could have been- further improved. The AD M-19's disorderly culture has demonstrated the importance of institutional building and exposed the perils of a loose structure. Embracing a more democratic centralist approach, Sinn Féin, the Lebanese Forces, and the FMLN were able to keep their parties together through tight intra-organizational discipline but often fell into the other extreme. Significantly however, in most cases, internal democratic practices tended to improve in the course of time. Looking at these parties' achievements, it is quite clear that their internal democracy practices do not necessarily reflect their performance as democracy promoters on a national level. Indeed, and regardless of their intraparty democratic shortcomings, all these parties championed democracy and made it a key priority of their national policies, promoting legislation and advocating for measures that strengthened democratic practices. This section also found a causal relationship between party discipline and party success, democratic centralism having helped the new political players establish themselves as a viable political force.

INCLUSION OF WOMEN, YOUTH AND MINORITIES

INTRODUCTION

All four parties examined in this research made gender issues a top priority from the very outset. Despite the often-pervasive patriarchal culture that characterizes military organizations, women combatants had important responsibilities during wartime and continued to play prominent roles after peace was signed. Undoubtedly, the brightest example is that of Sinn Féin with the electoral victories of two women candidates for the 2004 European Elections and the election of Mary Lou McDonald as party leader in 2018. These notable successes were rewarded by a strong Irish female support in the 2020 general election. Adopting quotas for women representation, both Sinn Féin and the FMLN demonstrated explicit support for women empowerment and pressured their governments to impose quotas for more female participation at the national level. Despite the absence of party policies favoring women, the Lebanese Forces pushed for a strong female presence in the top-tier level of the organization, and succeeded in having a female party member in the executive and legislative branches of government. In Colombia by contrast, apart from one woman elected to congress, the *Alianza's* genuine support for women yielded little results. While gender issues typically took central stage, inclusion of members from other religious, ethnic or cultural backgrounds seemed to be less of a priority. Despite positioning themselves as non-sectarian entities, the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin remained composed of mostly one ethnic/religious group. Sinn Féin however actively championed the causes of ethnic minorities, asylum seekers, travelers' community, and the LGBTI. It should be noted however that in both of these cases, we noticed more stable organizations, supported by a loyal, largely homogeneous constituency, especially at election times. For the FMLN and the AD M-19, the sectarian question was less relevant since none of these countries' conflict was concerned with sectarian issues. The rights of ethnic minorities in Colombia -while actively debated within the AD M-19- were mostly cared for by the indigenous people's

organizations, which attracted most of the ethnic minorities in Colombia into their ranks. With the exception of the AD M-19, party youth wings were set up to stimulate the younger generations' interest in public life and sensitize them to the political parties' platforms.

AD M-19

Women

The M-19 guerrilla opened genuine spaces for women to participate in guerrilla operations and thrive as militants. Gender equality had always been at the very heart of the guerrilla convictions with responsibilities shared in almost every respect. Carmenza Londoño, alias “La Chiqui”, who captured media attention during the Dominican Republic Embassy siege in Bogota in 1980, is remembered to this day as the female figure of the early days of the insurrection. Vera Grabe, one of the founders of the armed group, made it possible for women to attain high military ranks in the guerrilla and become members of the Santander command.⁵⁷⁸ But aside from these unique cases -and notwithstanding the fact that the M-19 had more women amongst its top commanders than any other guerrilla- no specific positive actions were taken to promote gender equality. Women still had to navigate through a male-dominated environment to advance their rights and make their voices heard. Over the years however, they were able to achieve some successes. Grabe would later recount a number of victories on that front. Citing some of these successes, she would report, “No to domestic abuse, yes to abortion, yes to the right to birth control, egalitarian treatment and education for women in the movement” (Quoted in Durán, 2008, p:13).⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁸ Montreuil, F. (2020). Relations de genre dans le projet insurrectionnel Colombien: Le cas de combattantes des FARCS-EP et du M-19. *Histoire Engagée*. https://histoireengagee.ca/rerelations-de-genre-dans-le-projet-insurrectionnel-colombien-le-cas-des-combattantes-des-farc-ep-et-du-m-19/#_ftn42

⁵⁷⁹ Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue.

Women's role in the organization became more visible when, upon demobilization, two women integrated the *Constituent Assembly*, and when the party selected several female members to head its electoral lists for Congress, municipal councils and mayorship.⁵⁸⁰ According to Patiño, unsatisfied with the meager participation of women in politics, party leader Carlos Pizarro sought to advance women representation in state institutions, making gender issues one of his top priorities. "It was a genuine concern" he reported, "not a matter of quotas."⁵⁸¹ While the party bylaws didn't call for quotas, they ensured that women played a leading role in the organization. Article 32 of the AD M-19 bylaws for example, stipulated that the National Executive Committee would comprise, among other organs, a Women Secretariat aimed at increasing the social and political participation of women.⁵⁸² Despite all these efforts however, women's roles in the party continued to be constrained and, aside from the election of Vera Grabe to Congress, AD M-19 women's participation and achievements in the political sphere remained rather limited.

Minorities

Minorities in Colombia are mostly composed of a variety of indigenous people and Afro-Colombians who, according to a 2005 census respectively represented 3.4 percent and 10.6 percent of the population.⁵⁸³ Despite advocating for minorities' rights, the AD M-19 didn't include many figures from Colombia's minorities since those were already largely represented by other parties and organizations.⁵⁸⁴ Organizations such as the National Afro-Colombian Peace Council, the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC), the National Afro-Colombian Peace Council (CONPA), and ASI Indigenous Social Alliance (ASI), represent the majority of indigenous peoples in Colombia. Quintin Lame, a Colombian

⁵⁸⁰ Grabe, V. (2000). *Razones de vida*. Planeta.

⁵⁸¹ Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁸² González Cogollos, L. V. (2017). *Mujeres excombatientes del M-19 en Bogotá. Caminos hacia la vida civil en búsqueda de la construcción de paz* Pontificia Universidad Javeriana]. <https://repository.javeriana.edu.co/bitstream/handle/10554/22262/GonzalezCogollosLauraVictoria2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁵⁸³ Minority Rights Group. (2020). *Minorities and indigenous peoples in Colombia*

⁵⁸⁴ Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

guerilla operating in close conjunction with the CRIC (Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca) -an association of indigenous authorities- fought on behalf of the indigenous people.⁵⁸⁵ After demobilization the Quintin Lame created a flourishing political party with a wide national presence, and became the mouthpiece for Colombia's native population.

Youth

Besides calling for the creation of a Women Secretariat, article 32 of the AD M-19 bylaws stipulated that the National Executive Committee would comprise a Youth, Sport, and Culture secretariats intended for the empowerment of young adults to actively participate in national life. However, other than acting as party activists, Colombian youth never had a significant role in the party.

FMLN

Women

Women participation in the FMLN is rooted in a long history, dating back to the founding of the organization. Lil Milagro Ramírez, a female poet and revolutionary leader, tortured and murdered by the Salvadoran revolutionary guard, inspired generations of young women to join the armed insurgency. Ana Guadalupe Martínez recalled,

“In the founding group, in 1970, there were a man and a woman, Alejandro Rivas Mira and Lil Milagro Ramírez. She was brilliant, a law school graduate, highly regarded by her peers as an elite student. He had won a scholarship to Germany being one of the top pupils in the country. The two, with similar characteristics, were the soul and the

⁵⁸⁵ Minority Rights Group. (2020). *Minorities and indigenous peoples in Colombia*

example. From then on, you couldn't find anyone saying *no she can't* because she was a woman. This created a special status for women [in the FMLN guerrilla]."⁵⁸⁶

Although no active discrimination against female members was reported during wartime, women emancipation as a concept and as a demand did not figure among the issues debated or even addressed during that period. According to Luciak, despite women's active involvement in the armed insurgency and the participation of high-ranking female commanders in the peace negotiations, women issues received very little attention during that process. Nevertheless, when the party was formed, explicit support for women's rights was expressed in the party program, owing to an increasingly vocal women's movement but also as the result of the organization's eagerness to attract resources from development agencies who were looking to invest in strengthening women's organizing.⁵⁸⁷

In 1993, the party statute established the National Women's Secretariat as a body aimed at advancing women's interests and women's rights. Various initiatives and policies were also created to ensure that the party complies with its commitments to empower female members and Salvadoran women in general (FMLN Bylaws, 2017). According to Luciak, this Secretariat played an important role in seeking to end women subordination within the party.⁵⁸⁸ In the 1994 party convention a 30 percent quota for the participation of women was established and two years later the percentage was increased to a minimum of 35%.⁵⁸⁹ Denouncing the culture of patriarchy, Blandino indicated that the party prided itself on having been the only Salvadoran party to practice a true equitable gender distribution,

"In the assembly, of 23 deputies we have 12 women. Half of the political commission, the highest governing body in the party, is composed of women despite the fact that the statute establishes a minimum of 30% female representation. We have exceeded our

⁵⁸⁶ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁸⁷ Luciak, I. A. (2001). *After the Revolution : gender and democracy in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁹ Blandino, R. A. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

own standards. The good thing is that nobody feels uncomfortable with it, men don't find this distribution abnormal."⁵⁹⁰

Despite relinquishing membership, Ana Guadalupe Martínez -signatory of the Chapultepec peace agreement and one of the most prominent FMLN female figures- indicated that, she never felt undervalued as an FMLN woman. Martínez highlighted the 'horizontal' relationship between men and women in the guerrilla. As she pointed out, "We were two women in the commission that signed the peace agreements: Nidia Días and myself. My word was quite listened to... I had the ability to help or hinder the negotiation process." Martínez argued that discrimination against her wasn't a result of her gender but targeted her on account of her freethinking and audaciousness.⁵⁹¹

There is no doubt that party's gender policies contributed to the promotion of a gender perspective on a national level. According to Blandino, seeing FMLN's bold gender policies, the government was pressured to reform the Salvadoran law on political parties making it more mindful of women representation. He reported, "Thanks to FMLN's efforts, the current law requires political parties to present a minimum of 30 percent female candidates for the legislative assembly, the Central American parliament, and the municipal councils."⁵⁹² But this balmy picture also concealed some important facts. According to Garibay the debates that had arisen within the party at the time of the adoption of regulations for gender equality, as well as the discussion of the modalities of their application, had in some way limited the scope of the demands of feminist groups. Rather than expressing a genuine concern for the future of women, Garibay argued that the regulations adopted reflected the party's ambitions to position itself at the forefront of the global debate on gender issues. Driven by a self-interested agenda, the party strived to present itself as the most radical movement within the country's political system.⁵⁹³

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁹² Blandino, R. A. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁹³ Garibay, D. (2006). Un partido de izquierda radical frente a las reivindicaciones de género: entre el estancamiento de los números y la afirmación de la radicalidad. *El caso del FMLN en El Salvador. Política*, 46, 141-171.

Irrespective of the party's initial intentions, FMLN female members would quickly take control of the gender agenda, making sure to position women at the helm of the gender-related programs and legislation. FMLN women leaders would play a crucial role as important reforms concerning women were being discussed, in particular the reform of the penal code. Outreaching to their female counterparts on the opposite side of the political spectrum, they took the lead, building strong coalitions to push for the much-needed changes. Former Vice-President of the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly, Lorena Peña explained, "Coming right out of the peace talks, the negotiating delegation had just acquired communication and bargaining skills. I think that women were those who knew best how to make the most out of those special circumstances." Of utmost importance, she reported, were the definition of sexual crimes, and the recognition that violence against women was a 'public crime'.⁵⁹⁴ FMLN female members pushed for reforms that would bring forward important advances for Salvadoran women, giving them greater control over the decisions that concern their lives and dismantling the country's gender discriminating laws.

Youth

Along with the women quota, the delegates at the 1994 convention agreed to establish a quota for youth participation in party activities. The participation of members aged thirty-one and under was set at a minimum of 25 percent of total membership.⁵⁹⁵ As of 2018, around 20,000 young militants formed part of the FMLN party, 1,800 of whom led municipalities. This strong local presence helped establish close ties with local residents, which Suniga said inspired party policies, "As young leaders we try to create new methods and new strategies adapted to reality, and inspired by the specificities of the population."⁵⁹⁶ According to the National Secretary of the FMLN Youth, the party not only established a

⁵⁹⁴ Peña, L. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁵⁹⁵ Estatuto del Partido Político Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, FMLN, (2017).

⁵⁹⁶ Suniga, C. (2018). Interview with the author. In.

quota for youth participation, but also gave true representation to young people in the decision-making process. He explained,

“FMLN youth’s participation in the party is very dynamic and its presence in the Political Commission is essential. There are four of us in the political commission and we participate in major discussions, we debate about who is going to lead the country and about cultural, social and economic reforms.”⁵⁹⁷

But according to Samayoa, these initiatives were more cosmetic than substantial. To Samayoa, the FMLN leadership was not genuinely concerned with engaging youth in the policy-making process and high bureaucracy squashed their initiatives. As he explained, “The party never gave youth -and youth never asked for- the ability to influence decisions. The FMLN youth didn’t show autonomy and leadership.” All in all, despite their active involvement in party activities and meaningful participation in the democratic debates, the FMLN youth remained largely absent from the decision-making process and its influence remained marginal.

SINN FÉIN

Women

Gender equality and women’s rights have always been a genuine interest within the Sinn Féin party even if, for quite a long time, the party was modeled on the Irish patriarchal model of society, giving center stage to men. Despite this longstanding position, it’s only in the early 1980s that Sinn Féin started proactively embracing women issues with the establishment of a Sinn Féin women’s department and the active promotion of the role of female party members. Sinn Féin’s clear stance in favor of abortion in 2001, and the party’s bold efforts to redress gender imbalance at the level of policy making on a national level cast more light on these efforts and placed Sinn Féin at the forefront of the fight for gender equality on the

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid.

island. A measure of positive discrimination, reserving four seats on the party governing body to women, was introduced in the party constitution at the 2003 *Ard Fheis*. This measure was added to a system of quotas on women participation that allowed women to be co-opted even if it didn't automatically guarantee them a seat on the *Ard Comhairle*.⁵⁹⁸

According to Mac Donncha, the party's efforts to advance women representation came as a result of Sinn Féin's ambition and determination to become a leading force in that battle.⁵⁹⁹ But the promotion of gender equality didn't go without a level of resistance within the party as many ambitious male members felt it was putting their candidatures at a disadvantage. Mac Donncha remembers that former and current Sinn Féin presidents, Gerry Adams and Mary Lou McDonald, faced fierce resistance during their campaigns to promote women candidates. As he reported, "Sometimes Sinn Féin had to impose woman candidates on constituency associations where they had refused to nominate sufficient females. This has often caused conflict, and even some resignations from party membership."⁶⁰⁰

A number of milestones illustrate Sinn Féin's battles to put women front and center. In particular, the election of two women candidates for the 2004 European Elections, the appointment of a female leader in the North, and the election of Mary Lou McDonald as president of party in 2018, were seen as major breakthroughs. The election of McDonald at the helm of Sinn Féin was hailed as a trailblazing move. McDonald's would proudly state, "Sinn Féin is probably the most exemplary party when it comes to girl power at this stage in Irish politics."⁶⁰¹ It should be noted however that McDonald's first months as Sinn Féin's president was no simple task. Closely scrutinized, the new party leader became subject to much criticism from both opponents and supporters. McDonald's election as the successor of a Sinn Féin historical leader was a delicate position. Describing the challenge Gibney

⁵⁹⁸ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁵⁹⁹ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁰¹ Roberts, R. (2018). Mary Lou McDonald becomes first woman to lead Sinn Fein in modern times after succeeding Gerry Adams. *The Independent*.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/mary-lou-mcdonald-sinn-fein-president-leader-irish-republican-party-gerry-adams-succeed-unity-ireland-a8169966.html>

observed, “What you have to remember is that Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness were national and international figures... they were the equivalent of a Nelson Mandela and a Yasser Arafat. There is always a period of time needed for the new leadership to settle in.”⁶⁰² Nonetheless, in the Republic of Ireland, McDonald’s leadership would ultimately precipitate an increase in female voters. A much welcome spin since up until recently, -and despite having put women’s issues to the fore for about three decades- Sinn Féin’s popularity in the Republic appeared to stem primarily from male voters. The 2020 Irish general election, would signal a shift in the party’s voter profile, marking a surge in popularity among young women.⁶⁰³

Protestants

Sinn Féin is mostly composed of Catholics but as many interviewees insisted, this affiliation is more cultural than religious and comes as a result of the native colonist history rather than an ethnic divide. According to Ó hAdhmaill, the party is profoundly secular encompassing members who are nowhere near being catholic in faith. He explained, “I would say that the vast majority of the people who are members of Sinn Féin would be culturally Catholic but it’s not a Catholic party by any stretch of imagination, it’s a secular party and there are many people in Sinn Féin who would be very anti-Catholic.”⁶⁰⁴ While the sectarian nature of the historic discrimination had led to a disproportionate number of Catholics joining the party, the geographical divide further hindered sectarian diversification.

In Northern Ireland, the geographic segregation inhibited social integration and reinforced sectarian divisions making it difficult to attract protestant members to the party. This geographic isolation made it difficult to canvass and recruit supporters in Protestant areas.⁶⁰⁵ According to Gibney, the controversy has always been political rather than

⁶⁰² Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

⁶⁰³ Cassidi, A. (2020). Is there something about Mary? Sinn Féin and the hidden female vote. <https://www.image.ie/life/something-mary-sinn-fein-hidden-female-vote-175776>

⁶⁰⁴ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

religious. He explained, “In the North of Ireland you are either a Unionist and support partition or you are a *nationalist* and support a United Ireland. It’s coincidental that Unionists are protestants and *nationalists* are Catholics, it’s completely coincidental.”⁶⁰⁶ Ó hAdhmaill stressed that Protestants’ support of unionism stemmed from their fear of becoming a minority and suffering racism and exclusion on the grounds of religious characteristics. He explained, “Most people who come from a protestant background will support the union with Britain since the 18th century because they always felt that if they supported Irish independence that would lead to them being a minority in Ireland and they may suffer as a result.”⁶⁰⁷ But as seen in the previous chapter, the growth in size and strength of the Alliance Party, a middle ground movement drawing support from both Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland seems to challenge the century-old Unionist versus nationalist cleavage.

In the Irish Republic the dynamic differs. Despite an overwhelmingly Catholic membership, Sinn Féin can count on many protestant supporters on the Northern border of the Republic. According to Mac Donncha these supporters vote for the party for what he referred to as “normal factors”. He explained,

“In those 3 counties of Ulster which are not in Northern Ireland, there would be a more significant Protestant population and there would be a section of this population that would vote for Sinn Féin. In some cases, because they agree with our politics; in other cases because they like the representatives, they think they do a good job and they know them personally... Normal factors.”⁶⁰⁸

The Catholic church’s historic role in the South of Ireland undoubtedly left its mark on the collective norms of the republic. Ó hAdhmaill reported that up until 1993, it was a criminal offense to engage in homosexual acts and contraception wasn’t made legal until the 1990s. Even when legalized, he contended, abortion was performed on the basis of doctors’

⁶⁰⁶ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author’s interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

⁶⁰⁷ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author’s interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁶⁰⁸ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author’s interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

prescription, and only to married people.⁶⁰⁹ But being Catholic in the Irish Republic doesn't imply any political affiliation since the country is mostly populated with Catholics who are well represented by a number of other parties. Furthermore, as is the case in Northern Ireland, and despite the Catholic church's historical role, interviewees reported that religious identification in Ireland had lost a lot of its appeal and religious affiliation in the South doesn't indicate any political tendency. As Ruadhan declared, "No one is Catholic anymore; people go to church for baptisms and first communions; there is a huge loss of support for the church in Ireland."⁶¹⁰ Despite its strained relationship with the Catholic Church with many leaders openly critical of it, Sinn Féin would remain in the minds of many a symbol of the legacy of freedom struggle that opposed Catholics to Protestants.

Other minorities

Seeing itself as the party of the oppressed, Sinn Féin took it upon itself to defend all types of injustices. When Sinn Féin's Alex Maskey was elected Lord Mayor of Belfast, he pledged to reach out to all communities, including ethnic minorities, asylum seekers and travelers, also known as White Gypsies.⁶¹¹ This policy would become a trademark of the party. Sinn Féin's stance towards the migrant crisis in 2015 and again the Ukrainian refugees in 2022 -calling for generosity and opposing limits on asylum seekers- bear witness to the party's open immigration policy.⁶¹² Sinn Féin also championed the causes of gays, lesbians and bisexuals. In 2014, Sinn Féin's presented a document that catalogued the strides made in favor of, and the challenges facing the LGBT people in Ireland. The document presented the actions required to eliminate discrimination in the form of 10 key proposals.⁶¹³ Sinn Féin's fight for an inclusive and multicultural Ireland where all people are equal under law, would also be

⁶⁰⁹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁶¹⁰ Mac Aodháin, R. (2019a). *Author's interview with Ruadhán Mac Aodháin* [Interview].

⁶¹¹ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁶¹² Scallan, B. (2022). Sinn Féin Calls for no Limit on Numbers of Ukrainian Refugees

Gript.ie. <https://gript.ie/sinn-fein-calls-for-no-limit-on-numbers-of-ukrainian-refugees/>

⁶¹³ Sinn Féin. (2014). *Equality, Diversity, Solidarity: Fighting with Pride for LGBT rights in Ireland*

reflected in the party's proposed legislation and its advocacy campaigns at both the local and the regional levels.

Youth

Sinn Féin's youth wing was established in 1998 after party members realized a need to engage the next generation ahead of the 1997 general election in Northern Ireland. Dedicated to young people 16 to 27 years of age, the Ógra Sinn Féin targeted the rising generation who had an interest in party politics.⁶¹⁴ Ambitious and zealous, Ógra Sinn Féin members developed a reputation of a radical organization that often attracted the attention of the media. For example, in 2004, SF's youth organization was in the limelight for selling products with a petrol bomb design - a motif it had adopted in its logo.⁶¹⁵ In 2007, Ógra Sinn Féin also came into notice when it openly opposed a Sinn Féin party vote to end the boycott of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, a decision considered historic given Sinn Féin's classification of police officers as 'legitimate targets' during the troubles.⁶¹⁶ Ógra Sinn Féin is represented at the Ard Fheis by fifteen delegates and has a member on the party's national governing body. The youth party typically campaigns for equal opportunity for all races, combating drug addiction, promoting LGBTI rights and other issues that matter to young republicans.⁶¹⁷

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Women

⁶¹⁴ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁶¹⁵ Blain, E. (2004). Sinn Féin wants you to go to college and join the party, go online and buy its T-shirt. *independent.ie*. <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/sinn-fein-wants-you-to-go-to-college-and-join-the-party-go-online-and-buy-its-t-shirt-26226162.html>

⁶¹⁶ Murray Brown, J. (2007). Sinn Féin votes to end police boycott. *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/0d3bbb3c-af06-11db-a446-0000779e2340>

⁶¹⁷ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge. and *Ógra Sinn Féin Instagram Account*.

Apart from providing for the creation of a department aimed at activating the role of women in society (Article 131), the Lebanese Forces bylaws make little reference to women in its statutes.⁶¹⁸ But despite the absence of positive measures to empower women and promote gender equality, women occupy an obvious place in the LF party and LF policies. The LF party counts numerous prominent women playing leading roles and holding key positions in the organization. According to Baraghid, in 2020, women represented 35 to 40 percent of party membership.⁶¹⁹ The female composition of the party stands out especially given the absence of quotas for gender representation. Many interviewees indicated their firm conviction that achieving numerical parity is not the right approach to promote gender equality. Quotas, they argued, conflict with the concept of meritocracy which they believe, is conducive to perceptions of unfairness and would be degrading for women. To Baraghid, adopting quotas would indicate that women are incapable of earning the merit of rising to the highest ranks on their own. Instead, the Lebanese Forces created a special department aimed at activating the role of women in the party. By 2019, the top-tier level of the Lebanese Forces boasted several women including a Minister, a Member of Parliament, the Party Secretary General, and several department leaders including the legal, social affairs, public policy, socio-professional/pharmacy, human resources, media office, and women role activation departments.⁶²⁰ It is noteworthy however that the Lebanese Forces has only one female member of parliament, who is none other than the party leader's wife. Sethrida Geagea had headed the movement while her husband was incarcerated and retained a key role in the party after 2005.

Youth

The Lebanese Forces bylaws premised the establishment of a youth activities section (Article 131) and a students' subdivision (Article 132).⁶²¹ The students' subdivision of the Lebanese Forces operates independently under the supervision of the Secretariat of the

⁶¹⁸ النظام الداخلي Lebanese Forces Statutes.

⁶¹⁹ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ النظام الداخلي Lebanese Forces Statutes.

professional/academic subdivisions' affairs. It has its own structure including offices for public affairs, media relations, elections, alumni, and external affairs, among others. The young activists' subdivision is divided in several departments including universities (divided by languages) and technical schools departments. The students' section plays a vital role in the party. It publishes its own magazine, and provides a space for young Lebanese to meaningfully participate in political life, alongside the main party structure. Its primary function is to promote LF's ideology and goals in the academic environment in such a way as to attract new members. It is represented at the party's General Assembly, where it conveys the views, concerns and demands of the students, and receives political directives for its activities. The student's subdivision also helps LF students access better educational opportunities and thrive academically, and assists students with job placement. This branch is also in charge of organizing various activities at both the local and national levels. In addition to sports competitions, activities include awareness raising campaigns to inform youth about drug addiction; and promote road safety, human rights, women's rights, and environmental protection.⁶²²

Minorities

The Lebanese Forces' party membership is overwhelmingly composed of Christians with a negligible proportion of Muslims (mostly Sunni) members.⁶²³ While welcoming membership with no discrimination on the basis of religious background, the party is not actively looking to alter this configuration. According to Zarifeh, despite deeply valuing its Muslim members, the party doesn't actively seek to diversify its sectarian composition, preferring to attract the enlistment of deeply committed individuals rather than members lured by a recruitment campaign. To Zarifeh, this policy ensures new members' high dedication to the party's core values.⁶²⁴ While these claims seek to highlight the secular

⁶²² Lebanese Forces Students Website. *Who we are*, من نحن. <https://students.lebanese-forces.com/about>

⁶²³ Badaro, R. (2017). *Author's interview with Roy Badaro* [Interview].

⁶²⁴ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

nature of the party, the Lebanese Forces remains a party that retains a preeminently Christian character.

CONCLUSION

An important female presence in Sinn Féin, the Lebanese Forces, and the FMLN -parties that have promoted women's rights at various levels- could indicate that women's active participation in these parties positively influenced their agendas in promoting human rights and women's rights in particular. This role however, appears to be more obvious in the case of the FMLN than in the cases of Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces. A growing female presence within the FMLN is definitely credited for drastically improving gender representation in El Salvador and initiating an ambitious program aimed at improving the living conditions of Salvadoran women. Sinn Féin's clear stance in favor of abortion and its bold efforts to redress gender imbalance could reflect the sway of a strong female presence within the party. Similarly, The Lebanese Forces' draft legislations to protect and defend girls and women abound. The party helped repeal an archaic law on honor crimes and presented several legislations aimed at preserving women dignity and physical integrity. While not necessarily championed by women, these changes reflected the party's deep commitment to gender equality. The role of the AD M-19 women in promoting a rights-based agenda is less obvious. The Constituent Assembly in which the M-19 played an important role, included very few female members -4 out of 84, and only 2 from the former guerrilla- despite its immense contributions to gender equality and women's rights.

INTERNAL COHESION: WHEN MONOLITHIC STRUCTURES YIELD STRONGER MOVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

In a post-war setting, it is not uncommon that fissures emerge between former fellow warriors. As party members, some feel ready to start composing with other political forces, while others remain committed to the former group's revolutionary ideology. Political cleavages can generate important pressures that need to be accommodated and could threaten the stability of an institution that is in the process of redefining the scope of its engagement with society.⁶²⁵ Bringing in new blood and creative minds is also a challenge as wartime leaders are more accustomed to recruiting submissive warriors than clever politicians. Surprisingly, in the cases of Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces, two organizations the histories of which had been rife with internal conflicts, the post-agreement period went with no major splits. Resulting mostly from disgruntled members, defections rarely reflected differences along ideological lines. Strong, indisputable leaders remaining for decades at the helm of the institutions, were the glue that helped keep the groups together. In El Salvador, cognizant of the importance of ideological homogeneity, the FMLN leadership felt compelled to carry out purges and statutory reforms to consolidate the ranks of the party and eliminate factions. Strikingly though, these often-harsh adjustments were largely overlooked by supporters whose resentment towards the old elite and its excesses upstaged party divisions. Unlike the aforementioned cases, the AD M-19's lack of a unified vision became the trademark of a party that represented people holding sometimes extremely opposite beliefs and opinions. This lack of ideological unity is often believed to have led to the party's ill-fated outcome.

⁶²⁵ Ishiyama, J., & Batta, A. (2011). Swords into plowshares: The organizational transformation of rebel groups into political parties. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44(4), 369-379.

AD M-19

Perhaps the party that included the widest array of ideologies at the time of its transition into political life was the AD M-19. According to most interviewees, internal cohesion was a delusional idea since there was so little in common between the people who formed part of the party. Some blamed it on the way the party transitioned from armed group to political party, others on the absence of a clear vision, pointing out to the ideological diversity within the party which drew people further apart as time went by. According to Patiño when the M-19 demobilized, it did not mutate from armed organization to political party. Instead, it simply disbanded in a disorganized manner expecting the party to emerge naturally from that transition. He explained,

“The AD was a reflection of a confluence of forces rather than a mutation from a guerrilla to a political party. The FARC party for example, experienced a proper mutation in the sense that it retained the same FARC members but without weapons. In our case, we ceased to exist as an armed organization and gave freedom to all the members to participate or not in the political party.”⁶²⁶

That lack of planning he observed, is clearly reflected in the name the party chose to adopt. The name he contended, *Alianza Democrática M-19*, comprised of a first name (*Alianza Democrática*) and a last name (*M-19*), alluded to two contradictory concepts: the new alliance of democratic forces, and the former guerrilla. To Patiño, keeping the reference to the guerrilla was very misleading. He explained, “Keeping the acronym M-19 gave an illusion of continuity with the former M-19 guerrilla but not all members came from the guerrilla. Those members who did not come from the M-19 wished to take away the ‘last name’ and those who came from or sympathized with the M-19 wished to remove the ‘first name’.” This design error he explained, where the party tried to create a new democratic force that is not exclusively leftist (because part of the leftist forces were not democratic) and included members from the traditional sectors that the former guerrilla previously opposed, was built

⁶²⁶ Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

on shaky ground. The AD M-19 was not able to constitute itself as a unified entity but as the expression of a group of forces with distinct ideologies, distinct structures and distinct group behaviors. As he put it, “The prefix *Alianza Democrática* presupposed that there was a prior agreement between the various groups within the party but that was not the case. In fact each group, and especially the leftist ones, pushed for their own interests within the party instead of working for a far-reaching project.”⁶²⁷ For many members, the M-19’s conversion into a peaceful actor and its participation in the Constituent Assembly were in themselves extraordinarily successful outcomes. The creation of a cohesive and durable party, while desirable, was not addressed in a systematic way but treated as a natural consequence of the disarmed party’s initial successes.

As in the case of other parties with similar trajectories, those ideological discrepancies dated back to the war days. Unlike other parties however, there was no serious effort at the level of leadership to streamline the political orientation. Franco recounted that for example, Petro's line of thought was very different to Navarro’s and that this lack of ideological cohesion became obvious in the wake of the 1994 elections, which was the main driver behind the party’s electoral defeat. He explained, “If you look at the 14 lists that were registered in the 1994 Senate elections... I can’t recall how many were put forward by the M-19 but I would say at least 8... The AD M-19 was not even unified to go to the Senate! Every leader was on a list... Leaders had personal interests and took the wrong political decisions.”⁶²⁸ The wasp operation (list proliferation), skillfully used as an electoral strategy by the Liberal Party, became a self-centered electoral tool for members of the AD M-19. Rather than reflecting political acumen, that electoral choice was an exemplification of internal divisions and institutional weakness. Furthermore, the party never established a governance mechanism for responsible decision-making and policy formulation. As Pabon recounted, “Each person had an idea of a country of wonder as in Alice in Wonderland. There were no convergence of views or general agreements.”⁶²⁹ This situation reached its breaking point during the 1994 campaign for presidency when party members couldn’t agree on

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁸ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁶²⁹ Pabon, R. (2018). *Author's interview with Rosemberg Pabon* [Interview].

supporting the same candidate. Franco recalled, “If you follow the May elections for presidency, since February that year you could already see three separate directions; Everth Bustamente, Rosemberg Pabon, and Annibal Palacio supported Samper; Gloria Quinceno supported Pastrana; and others continued to support Navarro. These disagreements shattered the movement.”⁶³⁰ While not unseen in Colombian politics, where party leaders would often support other parties’ candidates, this behavior was an additional indication of the party’s lack of coherence and foreshadowed the party’s disintegration and ultimate demise.

Party organization

While many argued that ideological differences impeded the development of the party, some contended that these disagreements were in fact the result of a poor institutional structure. According to Villamizar, the *Alianza* leadership did not invest enough time to create a party that would have the capacity to operate in a professional and organized manner. Instead, the party was left to evolve in a confused manner, which resulted in a weak structure that was further weakened by a candidate-centered approach.⁶³¹ But there wasn’t enough interest in organization building either. As Patiño reported, “The electoral defeat was a consequence of the party’s failure to constitute itself, not the cause of it. The reason was that there was no collective will that was strong enough to sustain what I believe was the victory of 1991.” Patiño deplored that the *Allianza’s* elected representatives were after their own political gains and that the party’s prominent figures, many of whom had considerable capacity and experience, spent a great deal of energy crafting strategies to dominate the party instead of investing time in building it. He explained,

“This is very typical of the Colombian left instead of building a strong and united political force. Navarro’s focus on the presidency came at the expense of building a strong political party with strong representation in parliament; and the AD congressmen who had political power did not work hard enough or with enough determination to support the

⁶³⁰ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁶³¹ Villamizar, D. (2017a). *Author's Interview with the Darío Villamizar* [Interview].

candidacy of Navarro, which weakened his prestige little by little. While the candidate-centered approach worked well in 1990 and 1991; in the 1994 elections it worked in an adverse manner.”⁶³²

This statement is all the more interesting given that, at that time, Patiño himself was at the helm of party organization. But Patiño’s post factum observation was well reasoned. Party representatives who were already in the Senate and in Congress [namely Vera Grabe, Rosemberg Pabon, Everth Bustamante, Gustavo Petro and others] and those who participated in the Constituent Assembly believed that they were entitled to reelection, convinced that they had the necessary popular backing. As Franco recounted, “Each one had his arguments, his reasons and his beliefs that led him or her to run again and we ended up with 14 lists.”⁶³³ All too often, party leaders sought to put their interest first at the expense of a party that they saw more as a tool to succeed than an organization to defend.

FMLN

Intraparty ideological conflicts started to emerge in the FMLN during the first regular convention in September 1993 when the ERP⁶³⁴ General Secretary Joaquín Villalobos called for a renewal of the leftist movement, inviting the party to embrace social democracy as a way forward. The ERP and the RN had reckoned that, in order to find solutions to the country’s pressing issues, the party should be open to building alliances with former adversaries, including FMLN’s former nemesis, the ARENA party. Villalobos’ proposal alarmed the more radical groups in the party who vehemently opposed any alliance with non-revolutionary political actors. In an effort to marginalize the maverick, the party leadership reformed the party structure and decision-making process in a way that greatly disadvantaged the ERP and the RN.⁶³⁵ According to Roberto Cañas, former party member

⁶³² Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶³³ Franco, C. (2018). *Author’s interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁶³⁴ Renamed Renewed Expression of the People

⁶³⁵ Allison, M. E., & Alvarez, A. M. (2012). Unity and Disunity in the FMLN. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 54, 89-118.

who relinquished his membership in 1993, the party was very resistant to new ideas and reluctant to change. It became guarded against recruiting or working with people that didn't fall into their frame of reference. To Cañas, the party leadership feared that the new recruits would bring ideas that would alter the essence of the revolution, but also dreaded the young recruits' superior technological and educational skills. He explained, "[The leadership] feared it would be auto-destructive and said they wanted to 'order the house first'. In reality, they were scared that if they opened the door to new recruits and new ideas, people who perhaps had an academic education would eclipse ex-guerrilla members who didn't."⁶³⁶ While this view reflects the frustration of a disgruntled dissident, it would be shared by a number of other former members who deplored the leadership's resistance to change.

Disagreements reached a point of no return when ERP and RN legislators broke party discipline in May 1994 accepting positions on the Board of Directors of the Legislative Assembly in an obvious collusion with ARENA. The legislators were suspended from the party and in December 1994 the ERP and the RN left the FMLN. Both groupings later formed their own party the PD (Democratic Party) along with the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR).⁶³⁷ Explaining the rift, former ERP member Ana Guadalupe Martínez indicated that her organization's ideology -being closely linked to social Christianity (or social democracy) and established with guidance from the Catholic Church- opposed the then prevailing Marxist ideology within the party. She explained, "We were closer to the social doctrine of the church; the immense majority of our people were brought up precisely by the Catholic Church with its commitment to the poor, not the Marxist way on the contrary, we were raised as defenders of essential freedoms. But our ideas were considered a betrayal of the revolution and a capitulation to the Salvadoran right."⁶³⁸ At the moment, the ERP's arguments did not convince many supporters and as Salvador Samayoa recounted, accusations of treasons shook parts of the community. As he reported, "Peasants in the rural

⁶³⁶ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶³⁷ Allison, M. E., & Alvarez, A. M. (2012). Unity and Disunity in the FMLN. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 54, 89-118.

⁶³⁸ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

communities were crying that it was a betrayal, that they had been abandoned by the ERP.”⁶³⁹

After this first rupture, the FMLN began a process of reunification and at the second Regular Convention in 1995 the party amended its statute redefining itself as party of tendencies. While the concept was created to allow members to align themselves according to their former organizations’ ideologies, by mid-1997 two major tendencies emerged as dominating trends, the *orthodox* and the *renovators*. Schafik Handal (PCS) and Sánchez Cerén were at the forefront of the orthodox tendency while Facundo Guardado (former member of the FPL political commission) and Raúl Mijango (former ERP commander) led the renovating trend. Yet again, these tendencies were at the origin of a power struggle within the party that lasted until 2005. In 1999 this power struggle culminated with a dispute over the selection of a presidential ticket, which crippled the party’s already tarnished image. At the Tenth Special Convention in 1999 the orthodox group’s control of the Political Commission and the National Council marked the beginning of a period of greater coherence within the party that would ultimately lead to an eventual disintegration of the renovating group. At the December 2000 convention, a statutory reform prohibiting the existence of internal tendencies and insisting on the revolutionary socialist character of the party was adopted. This measure was aimed at creating greater harmony within the party but internal differences resurfaced again when in May 2001 the renovating current (the word tendency had been replaced by the term current) headed by Guardado and Jovel decided to boycott the special convention in protest against the National Council’s decision to extend its own mandate. This move eventually led to Guardado’s expulsion from the party. Party elections in 2001 settled the issue of ideological heterogeneity when the orthodox group regained control of important positions. Following the elections, a series of altercations prompted the expulsion of six members of the renovating current including Francisco Jovel.⁶⁴⁰ Recounting the incident, Jovel explained

⁶³⁹ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁴⁰ Allison, M. E., & Alvarez, A. M. (2012). Unity and Disunity in the FMLN. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 54, 89-118.

that nothing would stand in the way of the orthodox and recalled that his and Guardado's expulsions created much discouragement in the party,

"Keep in mind that Facundo Guardado was the founder of one of the guerrilla organizations, numerically the largest. He had been a prisoner of war, general secretary of the party, and presidential candidate, but was still expelled. As for me, I was the founder of one of the organizations of the front, was member of parliament for two terms, member of the general command of the FMLN throughout the war, member of the political commission throughout the post-war period, deputy coordinator, and for a brief period I was also coordinator of the party. They drove me out anyway."⁶⁴¹

Another attempt by Oscar Ortíz to undertake internal reorganizations was met with the same fate when the orthodox current retained the majority at the 2004 party elections. At the 2005 convention, a reform was proposed to eliminate internal elections replacing them with a mere ratification of candidates and party officials who were already nominated by the leadership. Before this new measure could be implemented several deputies and mayors along with 350 militants from the renovating trend left the party marking the beginning of the consolidation of the orthodox current over the party's organizational resources and ideological principles.⁶⁴²

The orthodox members' fight for the control of the party was also waged through waves of *depuraciones* or purges of reformist elements. Party membership was reduced from more than 125,000 in the early 1990s to a bit more than 20,000 in 2010. Paradoxically, in many instances those same people that were expelled from the party still voted for it at election times, a choice driven by limited options. As Jovel reported, "These people were not interested in voting for any other party, they always ended up voting for the front. They had no other alternative, they remained loyal to the FMLN."⁶⁴³ Those purges followed new

⁶⁴¹ Jovel, F. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁴² Allison, M. E., & Alvarez, A. M. (2012). Unity and Disunity in the FMLN. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 54, 89-118.

⁶⁴³ Jovel, F. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

regulations that classified party members according to specific categories distinguishing hard-core militants from those whose ideological adherence to the program was less reliable. Samayoa who left the party in 1994 explained the difference, “The party leadership argued that they had to distinguish between militants who had organic rights to vote and participate in elections, and the others such as sympathizers, collaborators, affiliates, friends etc....” Despite remaining a party supporter, Samayoa indicated that these purges cut out quality and diversity, and reduced membership to a limited group of ultraconservatives.⁶⁴⁴

Despite suffering important internal divisions, the FMLN party was able to resist turmoil and retain popularity. Jovel indicated that this resilience was attributable to the expectations that originated at the time of the peace agreement. Back then he argued, the FMLN epitomized resistance to the Salvadoran right and represented hope for a better future. Salvadorans who opposed the regime put all their faith in the emerging party and were often oblivious to the mistakes and excesses. Jovel remembered that people would define themselves as either with the right or with the *four letters* referring to the party acronym. He recalled, “In both rural and urban areas people would say: “*Soy de las cuatro letras*” [I am with the four letters]. Jovel compared this endorsement to the unconditional support for Christian Democratic Party leader Napoleon Duarte when he lost what was seen as the fraudulent 1972 elections, “At that time the popular slogan was ‘*con Duarte aunque no come*’ [with Duarte even though one does not eat].”⁶⁴⁵ Internal discord would remain pervasive until the 2014 election of the Salvador Sánchez Cerén’s / Oscar Ortíz presidential ticket, after which the FMLN would cautiously evolve towards more representation, with some members spearheading efforts for change.

SINN FÉIN

The Good Friday agreement didn’t generate a major split in the Sinn Féin party. This peaceful intra-party transition came as a surprise to many as the history of Sinn Féin had been rife

⁶⁴⁴ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁴⁵Jovel, F. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

with conflicts, internal disagreements, and dissensions. Despite sharing the same historic goal, namely independence from England, Sinn Féin members went through a century of internal disputes and divisions.

The first split came about in December 1921 after the signature of the Anglo-Irish treaty creating an Irish Free State. The agreement created deep divisions between those who pragmatically accepted the Free State and those who saw it as a continuation of British hegemony over Ireland, the six Northern counties being excluded from the new State. This first split degenerated into a civil war where pro-treaty Free State forces prevailed.⁶⁴⁶ The divisions spread to the IRA who, the following year, also split between supporters and opponents of the Treaty, the latter later referred to as the 'irregulars.' The cracks continued during the 1920s as many influential figures abandoned the party. Treaty opponent De Valera's decision to found the Fianna Fáil party and the subsequent departure of a number of prestigious leaders, represented a major blow and resulted in a loss of substantial support. The party's fortunes further deteriorated when the IRA voted its independence from Sinn Féin in November 1925 for fear that the party's divisions spread to its own ranks, and openly supported Fianna Fáil during the 1932 electoral campaign. Another rupture emerged in the 1960s when the leaderships of Sinn Féin and the IRA started advocating for more political engagement, which antagonized those that favored a more militaristic approach and ultimately led to the famous split between the factions that came to be known as Officials and Provisionals.⁶⁴⁷ The approval of the amendment urging the dropping of abstentionism for the Dáil in 1986 created yet another split in the party. Led by Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness, and Danny Morrison, the change in policy antagonized many who had suffered repression at the hands of the Irish Free State. The opponents would create two rival social movements, the Republican Sinn Féin (RSF) and the Continuity IRA. More factions would

⁶⁴⁶ Hearty, K. (2017). Understanding a Fraught Historical Relationship. In *Critical Engagement: Irish Republicanism, Memory Politics and Policing*. Liverpool University Press.

⁶⁴⁷ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

emerge in 1997 when a group of activists opposing the Provisional IRA's ceasefire in 1997 and, later, the Good Friday agreement created the 32 County Sovereignty Committee.⁶⁴⁸

The period of stability that followed the signature of the Good Friday agreement was surprising to many given the party's strife-torn history. As new recruits enlisted in the party, internal disputes occasionally resurfaced and at times resulted in defections, some of which concerned elected officials whose resignations made headlines. Rarely due to ideological differences, defections were mostly the result of polemic behavior from the old-timers, directed towards the new recruits. Mac Aodháin explained, "Because they come from a military organization, they are not good with people. They had lots of defections from the party not some much for political disagreements but because some members were treated badly; there is a lot of internal disputes and bullying."⁶⁴⁹ As the party transitioned from a 'revolutionary' party to an 'ordinary' party, tensions between the two generations started to emerge. Describing the frictions between the old and new members, Ó hAdhmaill observed,

"You may get people... that have different values and different levels of commitment... The party has expectations of his members but some of the new members may not have felt they had to live up to those expectations because all they were doing was joining a party...and you can see tensions and frictions developing."⁶⁵⁰

According to Mac Donncha, because the conflict had been centered in Belfast, differences in opinion and disagreements over course of action continued to occur between party members in Northern Ireland and those based in the South.⁶⁵¹ Yet, these frictions remained marginal and despite the challenges, party loyalty was rarely questioned.

⁶⁴⁸ White, R., & Demirel-Pegg, T. (2017). Social Movements and Social Movement Organizations Recruitment, Ideology, and Splits. In L. B. a. G. D. Fazio (Ed.), *The Troubles in Northern Ireland and Theories of Social Movements*. Amsterdam University Press.

⁶⁴⁹ Mac Aodháin, R. (2019a). *Author's interview with Ruadhán Mac Aodháin* [Interview].

⁶⁵⁰ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁶⁵¹ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Internal cohesion

During the war, the Christian militia was ill-famed for its internal fighting. Numerous purges intended to consolidate the ranks of the resistance occurred at various intervals. Clashes between the Kataeb and the Noumour militants in 1979 and the violent altercation following the Tripartite Accord in 1986 are registered in history as painful reminders of the violent confrontations that stained the Lebanese Forces' militia's past.⁶⁵² Strikingly, and although the road to unity was paved with difficulties, the LF party germinated an institution with a great level of cohesion. Despite the often-reported tribal rifts between members of antagonistic families in rural areas, LF party members have showed remarkable unity since the creation of the party. Most party members interviewed reported almost no ideological disagreements and a high degree of unity, mostly as a result of the political clout of the undisputed party leader. Minor issues would occasionally generate tensions between members but never reach an irreversible point of rupture so as to cause major defections from party loyalists.⁶⁵³ While some of these disputes originate from tensions between the old and the new generation, LF was successfully able to build an effective multi-generational cooperation.

Old generation v/s new generation

When the Lebanese forces registered as a political party, it put in place an educational program aimed at assisting party members navigate the transition into civilian life. The program included training that addressed participants' psychological needs, and helped them develop social, professional and personal abilities. The trainings sought to help participants acquire new skills, in particular those that would make them endorse and

⁶⁵² Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek. , Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

⁶⁵³ Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

promote nonviolent political activities. Classes administered included group dynamics, leadership, public speaking, report writing, meetings facilitation, and conflict resolution. According to Habchi, this education program was of short duration, the party being put under extreme pressure from pro-Syrian Lebanese authorities, and later banned from any political activity. It's only 15 years later that the party could resume its didactic programs.⁶⁵⁴

When the party reestablished itself as a political party in 2006 the old generation members resumed trainings and were joined by new recruits who gradually enlarged the ranks of the party with a younger generation that had no fighting history. According to Hasbani, cohabitation between old members and new recruits generated tensions that were cleverly navigated by party leadership. The party high command strove to strike the right balance between honoring those who fought during the war and welcoming newcomers who were revitalizing the organization with new ideas and new credentials. Hasbani reported that extensive efforts were exerted not to alienate war veterans who were considered the backbone of the party. He described the stake, "These are people who offered significant sacrifices at a personal level, who have been persecuted and were subjects of all sorts of harassments. They create the link between the past and the future of the party." According to Hasbani, the party is currently going through a transitional phase during which the war generation and the new generation are cohabiting until the new generation replaces the old one and takes over most of the responsibilities and public office positions.⁶⁵⁵ The transition is handled with care by the party leadership as cohabitation presents many challenges. According to former LF Minister of Social Affairs Richard Kouyoumjian, striking the right balance between the old and the new is a tough equation as some old members carry a distinct identity that should be cared for. As he explained, "You cannot strip old members of their identity. These people were the defenders of Lebanon's sovereignty and of the Christians' existence. Sometimes they take pride in actions that the party doesn't necessarily agree with, but they need to be handled skillfully."⁶⁵⁶ This careful consideration along with

⁶⁵⁴ Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

⁶⁵⁵ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

⁶⁵⁶ Kouyoumjian, R. (2020). *Author's interview with Richard Kouyoumjian*. In.

the great deal of attention given to tribal sensitivities played a central role in preserving party cohesion and avoiding party defections.

CONCLUSION

Post-war FMLN and M-19 were characterized by ideological divisions that led to internal schisms that surfaced soon after the parties were formed. Conversely, and despite having been known for their wartime quarrels, the Lebanese Forces and the Sinn Féin displayed a remarkable level of institutional unity after peace was signed. The Lebanese Forces skillfully managed the relationship between old-timers and new recruits, showing appreciation and gratitude towards combat veterans, but also enlisting new members that would bring fresh ideas and revamp the image of the party in the post-conflict setting. By contrast, the FMLN resisted the transfusion of progressive ideas, fearing change would dilute the ideology and corrupt the cause but strong leaders were able to unify the party through a series of purges and statutory reforms. In the case of the AD M-19, the assassination of AD M-19's wartime hero boded ill for the party's post-agreement unity. A weak structure and ideological ambiguity prevented cohesion and dispersed the party. Sinn Féin and Lebanese Forces' leadership continuity certainly played in their favor. Both groups' wartime leaders cemented their positions during peacetime enjoying widespread support. Contrastingly, While Handal's undeniable authority persisted after peace was signed, in the eyes of many, his leadership reflected the views of an orthodox faction, which led to many disagreements and a number of defections. The contrasting findings of this section suggest that the implications of party cohesion were not very consequential in explaining the parties' achievements. Despite its chaotic party life and future dispersion, post-agreement M-19 played a key role in opening space for an improved democracy. So did the other three cases regardless of the dynamics that prevailed within their institutions as political parties. Beyond their ideological rifts, and their capacities to address their internal problems, these party's contribution to democracy remains undeniable.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE ELECTORATE AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

INTRODUCTION

Communication with the electorate is considered an essential element of political parties' operations. By their very nature, political parties are meant to crystallize people's interests and carry citizens' concerns to the government. In addition to reflecting public sentiment, political parties also provide a system for governments to communicate with the society and in some cases use their leverage to manipulate public opinion.⁶⁵⁷ Parties communicate using the various ways available to them at the time of their development. Face-to-face meetings and rallies have traditionally been the most widely used means of communication between party members and their constituencies. Albeit still in use, in the second half of the twentieth century, mass media outshone these methods, notably with the emergence of television networks. Over the past couple of decades, political communication gradually moved to the electronic environment. Social networks became the most prominent part of political communication and campaigning, and the new low-cost medium of exchange between politicians.⁶⁵⁸ Among the cases studied, there are vast differences in the way the four parties communicated and in the results of these efforts. These disparities were determined by the tools at their disposal but also by the parties' strategies and distinct communication abilities.

AD M-19

Perhaps the most famous political advertisement campaign of Colombia's recent history, and certainly the most eccentric one, was the one that presented the launch of the M-19 guerrilla.

⁶⁵⁷ Sartori, G. (1976). *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

⁶⁵⁸ Römmele, A. (2003). Political Parties, Party Communication and New Information and Communication Technologies. *Party Politics*, 9(1), 7-20.

On the morning of January 14, 1974, a curious black and white notice in the *El Tiempo* newspaper read: “Parasites... worms? Wait, M-19”. During the following three days, in that same spot, more notices with similar messages emerged: “Decay... lack of memory? Please wait, M-19” or “Lethargic...Idle? Wait, M-19”. The campaign was simultaneously replicated in other newspapers, namely, *El Espectador* and *El Bogotano*. On the day that the new armed insurgency stole the sword of Simon Bolivar, the notice read: “It’s coming... M-19” unveiling the political nature of the advertisement.⁶⁵⁹ As an armed group the M-19 continued to capture Colombians’ attention with high impact operations, using powerful symbols to get its messages through. But as the group transitioned into political life, the message lost strength, and the methods used to convey it became less novel.

The AD M-19 party communicated with its constituents using the conventional communication channels of the early 1990s. Messages were delivered mostly through radio, television, and written press. The party published magazines such as *2010* and *Mayorías Internacionales*, it also owned a radio, *Radio Macondo*.⁶⁶⁰ Using attractive cover page designs, the party magazines covered various national and regional issues, usually putting special emphasis on the benefits of peace dividends. The magazines also included interviews with party leaders and reported on the achievements of the party’s elected representatives.⁶⁶¹ According to Franco, the party’s communication methods were rather inefficient. The party didn’t have a system for gauging citizens’ needs and couldn’t rely on data or figures from any grassroots organizations. As he recalled, “At that time both media and grassroots organizations had less outreach, they were less intense, more sporadic, and less far-reaching.” Furthermore, as Franco reported, community-based exchanges, whenever they occurred, were egocentrically exploited by some party members for their own electoral benefits, with little consideration for the party’s interest as a whole.⁶⁶² Generally ill-planned and amateurish, AD M-19’s communication strategy was almost nonexistent. In their

⁶⁵⁹ Villamizar Herrera, D. (2002). *Jaime Bateman : biografía de un revolucionario*. Editorial Planeta Colombiana.

⁶⁶⁰ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁶¹ AD M-19 Archives. Obtained from Darío Villamizar in 2017. In.

⁶⁶² Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

political addresses, members focused on political positions rather than on a clear political program that responded to their constituents' needs. In their outreach to voters, party members mainly concentrated on what they felt were important issues. For the most part, they emphasized the 1990 peace agreement and the party's role in the *Constitutional Assembly*, accomplishments in which the party took great pride. According to Patiño, at that time, the peace agreement was so groundbreaking that it stole the spotlight and overshadowed all other issues. He described,

“We thought that putting the accent on the peace agreement and the Constituent Assembly served much more than political programs. 1990 and 1991 were two magical years because they represented a pivotal transformation in the country's history. The air of hope that came with the end of the war and the prospect of a democratic opening seemed much more effective than political platforms, in a country where traditional parties remained hermetic.”⁶⁶³

But the hype around the peace accord deprived the party of good judgment and obscured its vision, preventing it from perceiving the more pressing issues that the country was facing. Excessive focus on topics that meant little in people's daily lives, gradually insulated the party from its supporters. As the peace rhetoric became outdated, a growing gap would emerge between the party and people it aimed to represent.⁶⁶⁴ Remarkably, the middle-class urban guerrilla that had started its military journey with an astonishing advertisement campaign and had epitomized ordinary citizens' aspirations, had failed to devise a successful communication strategy in the postwar period.

FMLN

As a party, the FMLN was able to distinguish itself through its unique four-letter brand and a well-organized presence on the ground. Snubbed by the mainstream media -mainly owned

⁶⁶³ Patiño, O. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁶⁴ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

by the political right- the party relied mostly on face-to-face communication but also on social media and constituents' feedback. FMLN militants knock on people's doors to inquire about their individual needs and levels of satisfaction. According to Suniga, militants would ask simple questions such as "how is it going? How have the changes been?" to gather information and collect data. In addition to door-to-door canvassing, the party conducted regular surveys as a consultation method to help adapt their policies to people's needs. Suniga detailed, "Every two months we conduct surveys of different sectors of the population to evaluate people's perception of our work so we can improve our performance and gain more credibility. Surveys' topics include: Politics, social issues, cultural issues, health, and security". In an effort to expand its influence beyond its traditional base, the FMLN reached out to untapped communities of voters such as the artists community. Having created the Sexual Diversity Division in 2010, the FMLN could also count on the support of the LGBTI community. Suniga explained, "Young artists are not militants but they are sympathizers that end up indirectly supporting the FMLN. At this time, we are surveying the LGBTI community and the Salvadoran youth living in the U.S. and in Belize. The analysis will help us understand their demands and cater to their needs."⁶⁶⁵ In her analysis of the communications strategies of the FMLN, Alisha C. Holland noted that the nonideological nature of subnational politics helped the party demonstrate its governance potential which in turn helped garner support for national races. Unlike the AD M-19, the FMLN's efforts to build on its strong organizational base as well as its subnational electoral strategies contributed to the party's ascent to power.⁶⁶⁶

Social media also played an important role, the party relying heavily on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Party members occasionally gave TV and radio interviews when invited. That didn't happen frequently, the media generally being disinclined to give more exposure to the party. Being less accustomed to media appearances, the FMLN lacked the skills of self-promotion that were mastered by its main opponent, ARENA, whose heavy media presence

⁶⁶⁵ Suniga, C. (2018). Interview with the author. In.[Interview].

⁶⁶⁶ Levitsky, S. (2016). *Challenges of party-building in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press. , Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

was supported with pompous advertisement of its own achievements. In a self-critical assessment, Suniga recognized the weaknesses of party's communication skills. Pointing out to the FMLN's amateurish approach he observed,

“In El Salvador we say ‘the [political] right is like the chicken; it lays the egg and goes crowing’. We are like the turtle; we remain silent. We have not been able to communicate to the people all the achievements we have made and we accomplished so many of them in agriculture, health, and education with free university now for all.”⁶⁶⁷

Self-promotion was unquestionably a skill mastered by the young politician who defeated the FMLN in the 2019 presidential elections. Nayib Bukele's social media savviness and his masterly use of digital communication to highlight his persona -in a sensational manner-⁶⁶⁸ contrasted with FMLN's heavy-handed use of social networks and outdated communication strategies.

SINN FÉIN

For many years, the Republic of Ireland's Broadcasting Act complicated communication between Sinn Féin and its potential audience. Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act gave the government the permission to ban the broadcast of anything that, in the government's opinion, incited to crime or undermined the authority of the State. From 1972 to 1994 this censorship law was applied to the IRA and Sinn Féin.⁶⁶⁹ This contradictory situation where a legal party allowed to operate and file candidates for elections in the Republic was not allowed to access the media, constrained the work of journalists and put Sinn Féin at a great disadvantage. According to Maillot, this climate of censorship pushed the party to grow more self-reliant and become acquainted with, and subsequently master the techniques of self-

⁶⁶⁷ Suniga, C. (2018). Interview with the author. In.

⁶⁶⁸ Ruiz-Alba, N., & Mancinas-Chávez, R. (2020). The Communications Strategy via Twitter of Nayib Bukele, The Millennial President of El Salvador. *Communication and Society*, 33(2), 259-275.

⁶⁶⁹ BBC news online. (2014). Twenty Years on: The Lifting of the ban on broadcasting Sinn Féin *BBC*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-25843314>

promotion.⁶⁷⁰ An exercise that was easily assumed by the party, after all, Sinn Féin's founder, Arthur Griffith, was himself the editor of a radical newspaper, the *United Irishmen*, the precursor of Sinn Féin's official monthly publication *An Phoblacht*. According to the *An Phoblacht* website, this Irish republican magazine, both printed and available online, was first established as a weekly paper in 1906 under its English name *The Republic* and relaunched in 1970 under its current name. First magazine to go online in Ireland, *An Phoblacht* still publishes on a monthly basis reporting on Irish republican news.⁶⁷¹

Having always been central to Sinn Féin's operation and identity, communication features prominently in the party's operations. The party communicates with local constituencies through social media, local media, regular town hall meetings, political canvassing, home-delivered leaflets, and local bulletins.⁶⁷² According to Maillot, the republican discourse is well thought-out and carefully designed, characterized by repetition, cohesion, and consistency. Using sound bites and clear messages, Sinn Féin's discourse usually steers clear of nuances to avoid assumption-based confusion. Equipped with direct and clear messages, Sinn Féin members master the art of conveying them in concise ways.⁶⁷³ While Spencer reported that this aptitude is largely due to the hierarchical nature of the party and its capacity to operate in unison,⁶⁷⁴ Sinn Féin credits its communication adeptness to the fact that messaging emanates from the people that the party aims to represent. Messages are decided upon collectively within the party, based on the feedback from party activists.⁶⁷⁵

Traditionally, electoral expectations were easier met in Northern Ireland than in the Republic as the party's popularity in the North made campaigning simpler, chiefly as a result of the abundance of volunteers. Ó hAdhmaill described, "In the North, their pool is much bigger so they have a lot of helpers and supporters whereas in the South of Ireland it is a

⁶⁷⁰ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁶⁷¹ Website, A. P. *About us*. <https://www.anphoblacht.com/about>

⁶⁷² Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

⁶⁷³ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁶⁷⁴ Spencer, G. (2006). Sinn Fein and the Media in Northern Ireland: The New Terrain of Policy Articulation. *Irish Political Studies*, 21(3), 355-382.

⁶⁷⁵ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

much smaller party in terms of numbers with the result that they cannot engage in the same type of election campaign.”⁶⁷⁶ Over the past few years however, Sinn Féin’s ability to outreach in the South made dramatic improvements. As could be seen in the 2020 elections, the party’s popularity in the Republic witnessed an explosive growth, making it the most popular party in Ireland with a 24.5 percent share of the popular vote, a 10.7-points increase since previous elections.⁶⁷⁷

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Since its inception, the Lebanese Forces regarded communication as a tool of central relevance to its operations. In 1985, as an armed group, LF had established its own private television network, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC), the first non-government owned TV station in Lebanon. A fight over management and then ownership of the broadcast channel triggered a prolonged legal fight that ended more than a decade after the initial proceedings, with LF losing the battle.⁶⁷⁸ Deprived of its prime communication instrument, LF strived to compensate for this loss using a multitude of other options. When the party resumed its political activities in 2006, it set up an efficient communication system aimed at ensuring that communication flowed easily within the party and with the society at large.

As a political party, LF mainly communicated with the public through a self-owned radio RLL (*Radio Liban Libre*), the party website, a monthly magazine (*Almasira*), and a monthly student’s magazine (*Afak Al Chabab*). According to LF’s head of media Charles Jabbour, more than a 100 people work round-the-clock to convey LF’s messages, and always making sure the information published doesn’t include defamatory material. LF’s communication officers are present in all government agencies, parliamentary discussions, syndicates, municipalities, and professional associations. LF media outlets seek to convey party

⁶⁷⁶ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁶⁷⁷ BBC. (2020). Irish General Election: Sinn Féin celebrate historic result
In.

⁶⁷⁸ LBCwebsite. *LBC website*. <https://www.lbcgroup.tv/news/d/lebanon-news/100869/two-court-cases-a-prince-a-former-lebanese-warlord/en>

positions on current and general issues, on a daily basis and across Lebanon, and to make sure that LF's elected officials' positions are aligned with that of party leadership.⁶⁷⁹

LF's radio station is considered the party's primary communication instrument. Enjoying a wide geographic spread, RLL is easily accessible and is renowned for hosting guests holding a wide range of political views. According to Jabbour, the radio, just like other LF media tools, transmits the party messages in a subtle way, making sure it doesn't offend listeners who hold opposing views. The only time the radio conveys the party's political positions is during the news bulletin's introduction.⁶⁸⁰ Former Editor in Chief of RLL, Antoine Mrad, explained that the radio plays a pivotal role in party life as it has a reach that spreads beyond the party supporters. On this point, Mrad points out to the radio's popularity in the Chi'i area, known to be politically antipodal to the party. In large part, he contended, this popularity is due to RLL's professional and respectful interaction with the guests, and to the programs' hosts' political sensitivity, abiding by the principle *La liltajreeh wala liltabkheer* (*no to defamation and no to incensing*).⁶⁸¹

Having lost its own TV network, LF looked for other ways to gain television exposure and found an ally in the MTV (Murr Television Station). According to Jabbour, MTV's political orientation was aligned with that of LF which allowed "friendship without affiliation."⁶⁸² MTV covers LF political activities almost on a daily basis giving wide exposure to LF leader and party candidates. It is noteworthy that this tight knit relationship is widely perceived by opponents as political bias; MTV having been repeatedly accused of acting as the party's propaganda machine, a claim plainly refuted by the LF party whose head of media maintained that the affinity stems from the fact that both institutions share similar values and principles.

⁶⁷⁹ Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview].

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁸¹ Mrad, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Mrad* [Interview].

⁶⁸² Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview].

In addition to radio and TV activities, LF has an active website and a strong presence on Twitter and Facebook. It also publishes two monthly magazines, *Almasira* (The Journey) and a students' magazine *Afak Al Chabab* (Horizons). *Almasira*, intended for both general readership and party members, presents the party's perspectives on politics, economics, and even culture. Party members are urged to read *Almasira* to expand their knowledge base, and gain a better understanding of the party perspective. LF is currently working on a book and documentary film chronicling the history of the party, intended principally at acquainting members and sympathizers with the movement's history from the party's perspective.⁶⁸³ LF has a strong presence in the Lebanese diaspora across the world. Through this wide network of supporters, the party's political activities are vibrant in Europe, Canada, the U.S., Russia, and the Golf Countries. A team of Lebanon-based members make sure the diaspora is kept abreast of local developments and of party positions. Information is conveyed through the website and social media as well as local publications produced by LF supporters in the diaspora and disseminated to sympathizers.⁶⁸⁴

Over the past few years, the Lebanese Forces worked on revamping its image, presenting itself as a modern political party, championing the fight against corruption, and against Hezbollah's armed presence in Lebanon. Attracting competent and experienced technocrats, the party was keen to come across as a serious political player, committed to promoting real democratic practices. One such technocrat is former Minister and Vice Prime Minister Ghassan Hasbani. Former businessman and consultant, Hasbani remarked that the new leadership revitalized the party, bringing in new faces with good reputation and technical expertise. As he reported, "The role we played in government showed a quantum leap in performance... Recruiting qualified people helped the Lebanese Forces double its size in parliament."⁶⁸⁵ Besides introducing new talents and technical expertise, introducing new blood produced a change of perception of a party that for years was closely associated with war and its horrors. Commenting on this issue, Baraghid stated, "People are seeing that LF

⁶⁸³ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁵ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

representatives are not militia members anymore but they are thinking as statesmen... Our ministers are recognized, even by opponents, as high-profile officials that elevate the standards of politics in the country.”⁶⁸⁶ In conjunction with the leadership infusion, LF honed its communication skills, refining its discourse to discard any divisive connotations, and using phraseology that promoted inter-sectarian cooperation. The introduction of revitalizing forces into the leadership along with the revised discourse, attracted young recruits not drawn from LF’s traditional support base, enlarging and diversifying LF’s partisan base.⁶⁸⁷

CONCLUSION

All the cases considered in this study experienced difficulties, albeit with various degrees, with communication. FMLN was scorned by mainstream media, Sinn Féin interviews were banned from broadcast, and the Lebanese Forces lost their TV network in a legal battle. While Sinn Féin and the Lebanese forces were able to overcome the constraints and hone their communication skills, adapting them to their circumstances, the FMLN suffered the consequences of media exclusion without being able to break down the isolation barriers. SF’s and LF’s tour de force were due in great part to the parties’ extensive experience in self-promotion, the Lebanese Forces having had their own Television Channel and Sinn Féin having been producing written publications since the beginning of the twentieth century. The FMLN, on the other hand, lacked experience in the skills needed to overcome the challenges and struggled to find alternative ways to champion party values and achievements. Nevertheless, the party’s canvassing efforts and pragmatic choices were rewarded by significant electoral successes. The experience of the AD M-19’s proved even more challenging. Despite the armed group’s performance of highly symbolic operations and experience in the designing of creative advertisement campaigns, the party’s postwar communication strategy lacked strength and persuasiveness. Lacking a sound outreach

⁶⁸⁶ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author’s interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

⁶⁸⁷ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author’s interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

strategy and marred by individualism, the party was unable to build on its earlier successes and gradually drifted away from its constituency.

FINANCES: FINANCIAL STABILITY AND ITS LIMITS

INTRODUCTION

Access to funding is an essential component of party operations as it helps parties get their messages through and enlarge their list of supporters. Party funding can come from several different sources, party membership being the most evident one. Other sources include private funding, and direct and indirect state subsidies.⁶⁸⁸ In the past few years, the latter two means of funding have gained prominence as member fees have grown to be increasingly insignificant. Both state and private funding however pose challenges. In its *Handbook on Political Finance*, IDEA rightly points out to the fact that individuals and corporations' largesse towards certain politicians undermines the basic tenets of democracy where votes are meant to represent individual votes rather than vested interests. Furthermore, opposition parties are often at a disadvantage with regards to business donors' generosity as government parties are more likely to receive donations in exchange of favors. Then again, according to the same report, public funding, while lauded, is often contingent upon vote shares and is usually insufficient, covering an insignificant proportion of the overall expenses, and overturning the initial purpose of equalizing the opportunities.⁶⁸⁹ The cases covered in this thesis have had various levels of funding derived from different sources. But while funding strength impacted their political success, lack of funding doesn't seem to have adversely affected their achievements.

⁶⁸⁸ Norris, P. (2004). *Building Political Parties: Reforming Legal Regulations and Internal Rules*.

⁶⁸⁹ IDEA, I. f. D. a. E. A. (2014). *Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns, A Handbook on Political Finance*.

AD M-19

Membership fees at the AD M-19 were voluntary. The internal statutes stipulating that party members were welcome to contribute donations according to their economic situation, the party could only rely on state contribution and private donations. According to the Colombian electoral law (Law 1475 of 2011), the State should contribute to the financing of the good functioning of political parties and movements with legal status, through the National Fund for Political Financing, in proportion to the number of seats obtained in the last election.⁶⁹⁰ When the AD M-19 participated in the *Constitutional Assembly* elections in December 1990, it received 27.3% of the votes and thus benefited from a substantial share of State funds. But according to Franco, in 1991 the new party's popularity started to gradually wane and as its share of votes declined, sources of funding also dried up. He explained, "The main source was the law of parties but it is a vicious circle, you get few votes, they give you less money, you do less politics..." When State funding declined the party sought other types of funding relying on personal initiative but wasn't very successful. To Franco it's a chain reaction, "All the businessmen were looking for Navarro during the party's apogee (*Constitutional Assembly* period) but when you start losing, nobody likes you and you look for people, but no one answers you."⁶⁹¹ But the party's handling of its finances was also a reflection of its institutional capacities. Relying upon political enthusiasm rather than systematized fundraising methods, the AD M-19's coffers dried up much faster than expected which inescapably affected the party's already fragile methods of operation.

FMLN

When the FMLN was formed, it could count on several sources of financing: government funding, elected officials' contributions, membership fees, and private donations. Article 210 of the Salvadoran Constitution grants political parties government financing or *deuda politica* [political debt] aimed at promoting the parties' 'freedom and independence'. The

⁶⁹⁰ Colombian Congress. (2011). *Ley Estatutaria 1475 de 2011*

⁶⁹¹ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

Salvadoran Law of Political Parties, defines this *deuda politica* as a sum of money for each valid vote obtained in the elections for President and Vice-President of the Republic; Deputies to the Central American Parliament and Legislative Assembly; and for Municipal Councils. It also states that the amount would be the same as in the previous elections, increased by the cumulative inflation. In addition, that same law stipulates that each participating political party or coalition is entitled to an advance equivalent to seventy percent of the votes obtained in the previous (same type) election in which it participated.⁶⁹²

Apart from government funding, the FMLN party requires funding support from its own members. Party members' financial support includes two main contributions: management team members' permanent financial contributions, and elected officials and public servants' donation of a proportion of their earned salaries.⁶⁹³ In addition, party members and activists are asked to give a monthly voluntary contribution. As Mata reported, "The amount is left for them to decide; it depends on their income, that usually spans from one dollar to hundreds. Mandatory fees are only applied to party officials."⁶⁹⁴

In conjunction with the above-mentioned sources of funding, FMLN raises money through private donations and fundraising activities. As previously noted, FMLN also benefited from an additional undeclared source of financing that contributed significantly to the party's budget: *Alba Petróleos* [Alba Oil]. The subsidiary of Venezuela's state-owned oil company contributed to funding the party's activities through the Salvadoran municipalities controlled by the FMLN. It was reported that *Alba Petróleos* invested significant amounts of money in the media promoting the party's social responsibility programs including school scholarships, student computers, sports events and the renovation of public schools. Funds also paid publicity on Election Day.⁶⁹⁵ But while external funding helped the party sustain

⁶⁹² Asamblea Legislativa, R. d. E. S. (2019). *Ley partidos politicos, decreto No. 307*. Tribunal Supremo Electoral

⁶⁹³ Estatuto del Partido Politico Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, FMLN, (2017).

⁶⁹⁴ Mata, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁶⁹⁵ InSightCrime. (2018). *Venezuela: A Mafia State? Venezuela has become a hub of organized crime in the region Venezuela and El Salvador: Exporting Aid and Corruption*, Robles-Rivera, F. (2018b).

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itself, it also compromised the party's independence and its ability to respond to genuine need, free from outside constraints.

SINN FÉIN

Sinn Féin has various sources of financing, America being the most important source of funding for the party. Mainly carried out through the "Friends of Sinn Féin" organization, fundraising in the U.S.A. started when the IRA was withdrawn from the list of designated terrorist organizations in 1995. Despite some periods of tension, the U.S. has consistently been the largest funder of Sinn Féin making it the party that generated the most income on the island.⁶⁹⁶ Other sources of funding include State funding, elected representatives' voluntary contributions, and local fundraising events.

In the Republic of Ireland, government funding is based on the number of representatives and the percentage of votes received. Under the Irish Electoral Act, parties who have at least one member elected to the lower house or elected or nominated to the Senate qualify for the parliamentary activities allowance. In addition, party candidates who have received at least 2 percent of the total first-preference votes at the most recent general election qualify for a payment.⁶⁹⁷ It is common practice that Sinn Féin parliamentarians' salaries be split between the elected representatives and the party. TDs usually retain the "industrial wage" and donate the rest to the party.⁶⁹⁸ Other sources of funding include membership fees -with employed members paying twice the fee of unemployed ones-⁶⁹⁹ as well as fundraising events organized by various party departments.⁷⁰⁰ An additional revenue source came to be known in 2020 when news broke out that an English national, had donated £1.5m to the

ResearchGate, pp 155-161.

⁶⁹⁶ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁶⁹⁷ SIPO, S. i. P. O. C. *State Financing*

⁶⁹⁸ O'Halloran, M. (2020). Sinn Féin TDs 'donate €2,500' to party out of €96,000 salary

The Irish Times. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/sinn-féin-tds-donate-2-500-to-party-out-of-96-000-salary-1.4173101>

⁶⁹⁹ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

⁷⁰⁰ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

party. According to the Economist, the Englishman's gift represented 'the biggest donation in the history of Ulster politics.' Hampton's largesse continues to flow to the party as his assets are liquidated.⁷⁰¹

THE LEBANESE FORCES

The Lebanese Forces party is mostly financed by the Lebanese diaspora scattered around the world. Other sources of financing include local donors, membership fees, property yields and returns, as well as periodic and seasonal fundraisers.⁷⁰² Occasionally, the LF would benefit from the largesse of regional allies.

Most interviewees reported that the diaspora is the Lebanese Forces' largest source of financing as LF supporters across the globe contribute donations to the party on a regular basis. The biggest contributors are members located in the Gulf countries, the U.S. and Australia.⁷⁰³ The party can also count on the generous donations of party sympathizers, some of whom choose to remain anonymous and donate to the party on a regular basis.⁷⁰⁴ Membership fees, a fixed amount disbursed by all party members, is another important source of funds for the party.⁷⁰⁵ Consistently increasing over the years, the contributions reached their all-time highs over the past few years.⁷⁰⁶ Additional to that, the party owns numerous assets including stores, buildings, and lands. Sales and rental proceeds from these wartime properties also contribute to the yearly budget.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰¹ The Economist. (2021). How Sinn Féin, the political successors to the IRA, became so rich. <https://www.economist.com/britain/2021/06/10/how-sinn-fein-the-political-successors-to-the-ira-became-so-rich>

⁷⁰² Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview]. , Khoury, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Khoury* [Interview]. , Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

⁷⁰³ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

⁷⁰⁴ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Khoury, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Khoury* [Interview].

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid, Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

In addition to these funding streams, fundraisers are organized on a yearly basis at various levels of the party organization. To fund its radio station, the Lebanese Forces party usually holds an annual upscale dinner that draws large numbers of attendees. Baraghid reported that the funds collected help cover the expenses of the radio including staff salaries for at least six months. In addition, LF university students organize annual fundraisers with famous Lebanese celebrities attracting the younger crowds of sympathizers. Baraghid noted that the LF administration constantly encourages the various departments to make efforts to fundraise. The LF also reaches out to wealthy sympathizers inviting them to commit to yearly donations that can range from 2,000 to 10,000 USD.⁷⁰⁸ According to Fady Zarifeh the pro-bono services provided by party members should also be counted as an indirect source of funding. Zarifeh reported that these volunteer services save the party what would have been very heavy expenses. As he explained, “The second biggest source of financing is *us*, it’s the volunteer work that many of us do. 95% of the party runs without overhead charges. We have 26 coordinators and 13 heads of professions that are not remunerated, and many more responsibilities undertaken free of charge.”⁷⁰⁹ Lastly, it is not unusual that regional allies step in. One such example is the Saudi Arabian contribution to the March 14 alliance -a coalition of anti-Syrian political parties- ahead of the 2009 elections. According to Kouyoumjian this type of donations is solely based on the longstanding friendship between the two entities and is totally non conditional.⁷¹⁰ Despite these claims, Saudi Arabia’s assistance to the Lebanese Forces would often be pointed out by the LF detractors as a proof of the party’s subordination to Saudi Arabia’s regional policy. But generally speaking, given the absence of direct public funding to political parties in Lebanon, the Lebanese Forces’ broad range of income sources is believed to ensure a certain level of autonomy and independence.

⁷⁰⁸ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

⁷⁰⁹ Zarifeh, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Fady Zarifeh* [Interview].

⁷¹⁰ Kouyoumjian, R. (2020). *Author's interview with Richard Kouyoumjian*. In. [Interview]

CONCLUSION

Political party financing stems primarily from membership fees and states contributions to political life. Except for the AD M-19, all parties considered in this study were able to secure additional funding from a close network of local or foreign sympathizers. Quite obviously, parties that were able to survive and uphold their successes benefited from the largesse of either a supporting diaspora, generous regional allies, or both. In the case of the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin, the diaspora played a significant role in beefing up party budgets and was able to step in, in times of crisis. Venezuela's interests in El Salvador also resulted in the country investing significant amounts of money to promote and support its strategic ally. In Colombia by contrast, little investment in party organization and the almost total absence of serious fundraising efforts led to gradually depleting the party's coffers with no financial recovery plans. While the Colombian experience suggests that financial support plays a crucial role in institutional survival, a direct causal connection between the availability of financial resources and democracy promotion, is hard to establish. As the above information reveals, the AD M-19's outstanding contribution to an improved democracy was inversely proportional to its financial strength. That being said, Colombia's unique circumstances at that juncture shouldn't be overlooked. The AD M-19's participation in the process that led to the enacting of a new Constitution came as a result of a combination of socio-political circumstances that allowed the movement to play a historic role in unique setting. The guerrilla's disarmament coincided with the culmination of a movement that had started about 10 years earlier and concluded with the enacting of a new Constitution. But while the former guerrilla rode the wave, it also played an important role in the changes that were about to take place.

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The role of political leaders in the evolution of post-insurgent parties has been duly documented (Deonandan et al., 2007; Manning, 1998, 2007; Wade, 2007; Young, 2007). Examples include Wade's exploration of the FMLN leaders' role in overcoming the many internal disputes that emerged in the post-agreement period, and the role they played in turning the former guerrilla into a successful venture.⁷¹¹ The impact of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) leader's death on the development of the party was also explored in Young and Beneditti's studies.⁷¹² Manning also studied that relationship in the Mozambican Renamo, a personalized party that relied heavily on the leadership Afonso Dhlakama.⁷¹³ Weinstein reported on the influence of the Tupumaros' founding member on the political party that came to be associated with it.⁷¹⁴ Leaders' role in fostering an authoritative culture in this type of parties was also well documented. The hierarchical leadership structure inherited from the war days often leads to keeping power concentrated in the leader's hands in the postwar period.⁷¹⁵ With respect to the four cases considered in my study, leaders' charismatic personalities played crucial roles during the war and continued to assume critical functions in the post-war setting. In particular, the presence of

⁷¹¹ Wade, C. (2007). *El Salvador: The Success of the FMLN*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁷¹² Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁷¹³ Manning, C. (2007c). Revolutionaries to Politicians: The Case of Mozambique. In K. Deonandan, D. Close, & G. Prevost (Eds.), *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties, Cases from Latin America and Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁷¹⁴ Weinstein, M. (2007). *The Left's Long Road to Power in Uruguay* Palgrave Macmillan.

⁷¹⁵ Ibarra, C. F., & Puig, S. M. (2007). *Guatemala: From the Guerrilla Struggle to a Divided Left* Palgrave Macmillan.

strong unifying leaders in the Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces parties significantly reduced the risks associated with the transition.

AD M-19

Colombia's political culture has long been dominated by *caudillos* [strong old-fashioned political leaders]. Dating back to the fight against Spanish domination, *caudillos* were local partners of national notables who brought together clients from their departments to help super patrons achieve presidency.⁷¹⁶ Even as Colombia entered the modern era, the *Caudillos* culture persisted and continued to play a leading role in political life. According to Posso, political parties in Colombia still reflect that personalist leadership style and the dynamics it created between local leaders and their constituencies. Posso indicated that one of AD M-19's goals was precisely to break up with that archaic practice and promote a new leadership model anchored around organizational values, performance and accountability. Assuming leadership of the movement after the death of Carlos Pizarro, Navarro hoped to bring a new vision for doing politics in Colombia. But Navarro's new leadership style didn't resonate well in a society where the power dynamics were still defined by the *caudillo* culture. To Posso, Navarro's leadership style -based upon extensive negotiation and participative democracy- would even damage his own party. He reported, "Navarro was a negotiator, he lacked individualism, if Navarro was a *caudillo* the party would have been more functional".⁷¹⁷ This vision was shared by Novoa who also indicated that Navarro's conciliatory approach proved to be very costly. He described how, during the 1994 electoral campaign, Navarro's conciliatory approach and non-confrontational style undermined the party's electoral fortunes. The fear of upsetting party candidates who felt entitled to lead their own lists led him to take to make a wrong move. He explained,

⁷¹⁶ Archer, P. R. (1990). The transition from traditional to broker clientelism in Colombia: political stability and social unrest. *The Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies*.

⁷¹⁷ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

“All eyes focused on Navarro, but I think that Navarro couldn’t make a cohesive list for fear that the movement would break. He did not know whether to be strong with his leadership or give freedom to those who wanted to get elected, and in that ambiguity, everyone decided to go with the wasp operation”.⁷¹⁸

To this day, Navarro’s role in the party’s rise and fall is still debated. While recognizing the role of the electoral decision in the 1994 debacle, Navarro admitted that he never could and never wanted to convince the candidates to go for the closed list option. The decision he would argue, had to be taken by consensus whatever the consequences.⁷¹⁹ The consequences were fatal as in a single election, the party’s share in congress decreased from 19 to one at a time when, shrewdly navigating the election system, traditional parties were able to recover their majorities.

FMLN

In El Salvador, there is widespread recognition that Schafik Handal is ‘the most prominent figure in the pantheon of the Salvadoran left’.⁷²⁰ Acclaimed and praised by many former and current party members, Handal’s leadership dominated the FMLN party from 1997 to 2003, when the faction he led, gained prominence as the party was being ripped apart by internal strife. Handal has a street named after him, a monument on one of the main highways, and a museum dedicated to his life and achievements. It is also not uncommon to find his effigy on walls and building facades in traditional FMLN strongholds.⁷²¹

Having headed the Salvadoran Communist Party since the 1950s, Schafik Handal was key in forming the alliance that would give rise to the FMLN. During the conflict, Handal was one of the most influential leaders and served on the general command of the guerrilla. A key

⁷¹⁸ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁷¹⁹ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁷²⁰ Sprenkels, R. (2011). Roberto d'Aubuisson vs Schafik Handal: Militancy, Memory Work and Human Rights. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 91, 15-30.

⁷²¹ Ibid.

member of the peace accord negotiation team, Handal founded the National Commission for Consolidating Peace (COPAZ),⁷²² and served as the Secretary General of the FMLN party for 14 years.⁷²³ After being twice elected to the legislative assembly, he ran as FMLN's candidate in the El Salvador's 2004 presidential election. A strong advocate of popular deliberations, Handal created the 'Popular Tribunes' in *Plaza Barrios* encouraging party leaders to engage in dialogues with the population and build ties with the general public. But despite this penchant for public debates, Handal was deeply aware of what he considered the dangers of 'excessive democracy'. In 2005, after his faction gained prominence in the party, Handal pressed for the elimination of internal elections, leaving the decision-making for selecting candidates to the ruling leadership. His top-down authoritarian approach was received with a great deal of criticism as the party gradually slid towards authoritarianism. With Handal's death in 2006, the FMLN lost its most glorious figure as none of his successors had his charisma and popular appeal. But the change of leadership also ushered a new era of ideological flexibility that might have been unthinkable under his lead. Handal is mostly remembered for putting an end to factionalism, a trend that would continue after his death.⁷²⁴ The influential leader was succeeded by several leaders, all projecting power and authority, albeit not with the same aura. But while the frequency of turnover at the helm of the party was a matter of concern, the strong grip that the consecutive leadership kept over the organization preserved unity and prevented dispersion.

SINN FEIN

Without any doubt, Sinn Féin's traditional leaders played a significant role in the success of the party. Unanimously endorsed and enjoying undisputable popularity, the successive party leaders' authority was rarely questioned. Gerry Adams' authority in particular, was unparalleled. Both a wartime leader and a chief architect of the Good Friday agreement, the

⁷²² The body responsible to arbitrate disagreements that might arise from the implementation of the accord

⁷²³ Pullin, L. (1993). Comandante Schafik Handal, 1930-2006. *Green Left*(655).

⁷²⁴ López Bernal, C. G. (2016). Schafick Jorge Handal y la "unidad" del FMLN de postguerra: entre la memoria y la historia. El Salvador, 1992-2015. *Diálogos*, 20(2), 13-29.

30-year president of Sinn Féin was widely recognized as an undisputable pacesetter for the party.⁷²⁵ Describing Sinn Féin leaders' influence Ó hAdhmaill stated,

"If Gerry Adams would come out and say 'this should be the policy', most members would probably say 'yes we agree'. The same with someone like Martin McGuinness. Both of them have a great deal of authority and support within Sinn Féin because of their republicanism and their leadership".⁷²⁶

Gerry Adam's sudden replacement with Mary Lou McDonald in 2018 shook the party and prompted waves of uncertainty about the party's future. But despite a rough start, the 50-year-old middle-class politician's stance on social issues attracted new followers and ushered a new era for the party.⁷²⁷ Sinn Féin's electoral breakthrough in the Dáil Éireann February 2020 general elections validated the judiciousness of the choice with the party winning 24.5 percent of the first-preference vote, doubling its share from the previous elections.⁷²⁸ Commenting on the relationship between the change of leadership and elections results, Ó hAdhmaill noted that the image of a strong leader no longer carried the same weight it did in the past. That was especially true in the South he reported, where the 'fear factor' amongst nationalists had less impact on voting behavior. The type of loyalty that stemmed from the feeling that a strong leader can help steer the community away from danger was gradually losing ground. At the present time he argued, in the Republic, Sinn Féin's popularity is determined by social and economic issues rather than leadership style. Issues such as Brexit, abortion, same-sex marriage, and the environment have greater influence on people's decision to join a party or the selection of elected representatives. But McDonald's female figure also brought a fresh perspective and attracted voters who didn't necessarily associate with Sinn Féin's the military past. This was especially true for women

⁷²⁵ MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁷²⁶ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁷²⁷ McCormack, J. (2020). Irish general election: Who is Mary Lou McDonald? *BBC*.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-51401416>

⁷²⁸ The Guardian. (2020). Sinn Féin declares victory in Irish General Election. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/10/sinn-fein-declares-victory-irish-general-election>

voters. As Ó hAdhmaill reported, “With Marie Lou McDonald being the leader, Sinn Féin is no longer seen as [a militaristic party] and so many more women are voting Sinn Féin in percentage terms.”⁷²⁹ McDonald’s record however is not without controversy. Her late blooming political career, her mysterious transition from Fianna Fail to Sinn Féin, and her meteoric rise through the ranks of Sinn Fein remain a puzzle to many. But McDonald’s lead brought structural and cultural changes that reinvigorated the party and outperformed historical precedents.

THE LEBANESE FORCES

A highly controversial figure, the Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea has been at the helm of the organization since the war days. Adulated by most party supporters and despised by his detractors, the historical leader plays an instrumental role in the LF party life. Most party members interviewed credit much of the success of the party to the personal attributes of Geagea. Unanimously perceived as a legendary leader whose life journey is held in high regard, Geagea’s popularity is credited to the various choices he made at every critical juncture. Khoury recounted many of those, including his decision to reject a U.S. embassy offer to make arrangements for him to escape the country in 1994, and his decline of a cabinet position offered to him by post-Taef agreement president Georges Hraoui. To Khoury, Geagea had refused to betray his principles at the cost of enormous sacrifices but eventually, his loyalty to his convictions and supporters paid off. He explained, “Why are we so attached to Samir Geagea? Because Geagea didn’t leave the soldiers behind when he had better options... He went to prison not knowing what his destiny would be, not knowing if he would come out dead or alive”.⁷³⁰ Confirming this perception Habchi added that, to his supporters, Geagea is a role model serving as an example to be followed. His humble background and merit-based ascension in the militia, earned him the kind of trustworthiness that made him creditable even when making controversial choices. Habchi explained, “He had the courage to be where his conscience led him; he had the courage not to run away and

⁷²⁹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁷³⁰ Khoury, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Khoury* [Interview].

bear the consequences of his acts; and when he saw an opportunity for peace, he had the courage to say 'no' to war and everyone followed".⁷³¹

Alongside charisma, Geagea is also valued for his approachability. The *hakim* (doctor) as he is commonly referred to, personally provides guidance to party members when needed and is the ultimate authority that members turn to when they have troubles or difficulties. Geagea devotes an enormous amount of energy to ensure the well-functioning of the party, making sure members feel valued and are given attention when needed. Raji explained, "Dr. Geagea cares a lot, of course, about the political situation and about our political impact; how we are perceived, and how we market ourselves as a political power. But he also puts a lot of efforts internally, making sure the body is healthy and able to deliver".⁷³² Despite a highly institutionalized party with decentralized command structures, Geagea remains the ultimate recourse for many party members. As Hindi reported, "Some problems still don't get solved unless the people in the village personally go to see the *hakim* so he can find solutions to their problems; that is because they are attached to their leader not because he chose it to be like that."⁷³³ Without any doubt, Geagea's persona and decades in power makes a smooth change in leadership seem unlikely. No party members interviewed could bring to mind even a remote possible replacement. As Hindi put it, "I don't know who would take over. Above all, I don't know if party members would accept the results of an election so yes, it's a serious issue but an issue that the leadership is aware of and is trying to mitigate."⁷³⁴ Of all four parties studied, the Lebanese Forces is the only one that hasn't witnessed a change of leadership. When asked about the party's sustainability plan, Geagea replied that the party has one but that he wasn't willing to share it.⁷³⁵ While the party's highly institutionalized structure suggests that a smooth transition could be possible, a replacement of such an iconic figure could also generate unpredictable reactions, and possibly unleash internal infighting between longtime suppressed enmities.

⁷³¹ Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

⁷³² Raji, W. (2019). *Author's interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

⁷³³ Hindi, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Hindi* [Interview].

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ Geagea, S. (2022). *Author's interview with the leader of the Lebanese Forces* [Interview].

CONCLUSION

In Ireland and Lebanon, the wartime leaders' skills, personal ambitions, resilience, and political experience vastly contributed to transforming the former armed groups into successful parties. The uncontested authority of strong and resolute leaders that served as a model to follow for party members certainly played a role in the future development of both Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces. While not enjoying unanimous support, Handal's authoritative leadership of the FLMN preserved party unity and ensured FMLN's survival and subsequent ascent to power. In the case of the AD M-19, the absence a forceful political leader able to take bold decisions is believed to have negatively impacted the party's internal cohesion, and contributed to the party's ultimate disintegration. Nonetheless, while strong leadership played an important role in party survival, it's difficult to argue that the parties' democratic achievements were tied to the presence of powerful leaders. The AD M-19's role in the historic reform of the Colombian Constitution was not contingent upon the command of a strong leader and in many ways, equaled the achievements of other parties in furthering democracy in a meaningful way. The foregoing findings suggest that leadership style or conditions have little influence on the parties' abilities to contribute to positive change when the fighting is over.

CHAPTER 5: IDEOLOGY AND IMPLICATIONS ON DEMOCRACY PROMOTION: EVOLVING VIEWS, INVARIABLE COMMITMENTS

When former armed groups integrate the political battlefield, they face the challenge of defining their political identity and harmonizing their beliefs along the lines of a mainstream political ideology. But many such groups find it difficult to agree on a set of ethical ideals or principles, especially when the post-war party is a reflection of cluster of armed groups with philosophical and strategic differences. Furthermore, electoral participation often pushes the new political actors to moderate their views to influence election results in their favor. Similar to most studies that focused on the ideological positions of post-insurgent parties, I found that the four parties started their post-war journey with ill-defined ideological identities. But while ideological ambiguity prevailed, these parties retained moral commitments that would survive the war-to-peace transition. I found that in all four cases, the moral commitments that were generated by the grievances that prompted the armed struggle remained constant and transpired in the parties' post-war actions and behavior.

IDEOLOGY

AD M-19

Ideological ambiguity

When asked about the political ideology that shaped the policy debates and the choices of the AD M-19, former members offer a whole range of explanations. Answers include liberal democracy; representative democracy; liberal democracy with a social democratic

approach; democratic nationalism; liberal reformism; and social capitalism. While the foundational document of the AD M-19 declares that the party would strive to promote democracy, independence, social justice and peace, most former members agree that very few could clearly define the ideological underpinnings of the movement. To this day, it is difficult to assess what the extinct party's ideology consisted of. Interviewees' answers range from "It was social democracy and nothing else"⁷³⁶ to "What ideology? There were so many currents of thought that we never even managed to discuss to agree on an ideological position."⁷³⁷ What was certain, reported Franco, was that the AD M-19 never adopted the ideology of the former M-19 guerilla. The former member indicated that the party included such a high proportion of members that had no linkage to the former guerilla, that it would have been impossible to advocate for the same issues that prevailed during the war days.⁷³⁸ The diversity of political personalities that joined the movement demonstrated that it well deserved the "Colombian Sancocho" designation that the guerilla founder once used to describe the guerrilla's aspirations. Bateman was referring to the Colombian traditional soup containing an unexpected large number of different meats and vegetables.⁷³⁹ Given the ideological confusions, Franco indicated that it would be more pertinent to speak of political definitions rather than political ideology. He explained,

"The political definitions were that the armed struggle was over in Colombia and that peace and reconciliation were what is agreed on; and that the party program was not socialism but social democracy. But those were very general definitions and are more political than ideological. There was talk of national sovereignty without making clear what that was exactly, or even talk of a foreign policy like that of the non-aligned and the right to self-determination."⁷⁴⁰

According to Franco, the party did not have time to brainstorm about an ideological framework. Constantly racing the clock, the budding party was faced with too many

⁷³⁶ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁷³⁷ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁷³⁸ Ibid.

⁷³⁹ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

⁷⁴⁰ Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

consecutive deadlines. Several elections, too close together, were always fast-approaching: the Constituent Assembly election in December 1990, the congressional elections in December 1991, local elections in March of 1992, and congressional elections in March of 1994. These elections, Franco suggested led to exhaustion, and this constant race against time didn't work to the benefit of the party.⁷⁴¹

A leftist party with no leftist ideology

Novoa's personal observation led him to conclude that the AD M-19 was a leftist party devoid of a leftist ideology -as typically understood by European socialist parties. The party he explained, had its own ideas of democratic nationalism just as the guerrilla of the M-19 had its own ideas of armed liberal reformism, not necessarily inspired by a Marxist ideology. As he reported, "The M-19 was not a communist guerrilla and never promoted a Marxist discourse but adopted the ideology of some great liberal leaders such as Simon Bolivar, Jorge Eliécer Gaitan, etc ..."⁷⁴² To Posso the AD M-19 vision was epitomized in the Constituent Assembly. As he described, "The *Alianza* had a nationalist program but the central flag was representative democracy... If you look at the Constituent Assembly, and the behavior of the AD M-19, it represented a commitment to liberal democracy with a social democratic approach."⁷⁴³ Undoubtedly, the party's ideology was a confusing topic for most party members. Even with the benefit of hindsight, when former members strived to theorize their former politics, the result remained elusive and both logically and politically inconsistent.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁷⁴³ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

FMLN

The incoherent ideology of the early stages

When the FMLN guerrilla was formed the different organizations that composed it maintained their own organic structures. They each had their own financing and elected their leaders independently. At that time, members often disagreed about a vast number of issues such as the need to pursue a prolonged popular war or the scope of their political activities. In fact, ideology was so diverse that some members even opposed concepts such as social democracy, reformism, or even elections. Members would only agree one matter: the organization's socialist agenda.⁷⁴⁴ It was no surprise therefore that when the FMLN formed as a political party, it emerged as an incoherent group with very little ideological uniformity.

Martinez remembered that when the war ended, the majority of former combatants had guerrilla loyalty but no ideological claims. The ideas and ambitions that drove the decisions of the leaders was foreign to most group members or supporters. He explained,

"The ideology of the group was always very loose and only concerned the leaders. The rank and file had no idea what the FMLN ideology was about. The Christian Catholics for example were supportive of the cause but against the armed struggle, so was the Archbishop of San Salvador, Óscar Romero... When the peace was signed, the new party had to choose an ideology so it did."⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴⁴ Allison, M. E., & Alvarez, A. M. (2012). Unity and Disunity in the FMLN. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 54, 89-118.

⁷⁴⁵ Martínez, J. J. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

Samayoa related that during its transition into peaceful life the party leadership scrambled to create an image that would reflect its mission because the objectives were not quite clear. What the party was positive about he relates, were the numerous things it was against. As a general rule, it opposed free trade agreements, privatization, and development programs with negative environmental impact. As he put it, “The party disagreed with the programs of the right but did not know what to propose as its own model. Of course, it had a programmatic platform in the elections but it never had a clear model of its own.”⁷⁴⁶ In the refoundation statute of 1992, the party’s ideology was defined as “democratic, pluralist and revolutionary”, willfully refraining from any mention to socialism or Marxism (as cited in SPRENKELS, 2019).⁷⁴⁷ It’s only after the 2010 purges that a clear switch in ideology surfaced. As that point, the party geared towards the left and adopted a more radical tone.

Incongruous behavior

Even though that significant shift came to define the FMLN for the following years, it is often believed that the party’s radical discourse was insubstantial and was quickly relinquished when the FMLN rose to power. As a ruling party, the party’s leftist agenda was hardly translated into action as the FMLN was forced to capitulate on many of its socialist reforms battles.⁷⁴⁸ Samayoa related that when it came to apply what it preached, the FMLN sinned more in words than in deeds as its government policies failed to undertake the measures that were touted in their election speeches. Samayoa attributed this ‘schizophrenia’ to the party’s inability to deliver, constrained by its legislative size. He explained, “They continued to say in their speeches that they were revolutionaries and that they were socialists but they were trapped between what they could achieve and their ideological discourse. They kept that discourse unchanged out of fear that they would betray their principles.”⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁶ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁷⁴⁷ Sprenkels, R. (2019b). Ambivalent Moderation: The FMLN’s Ideological Accommodation to Post-War Politics in El-Salvador, Government and Opposition. *Cambridge University Press*, 54, 536-558.

⁷⁴⁸ Young, K. A. (2019). *El Salvador’s FMLN and the Constraints on Leftist Government*

⁷⁴⁹ Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

According to Sprenkels, the FMLN party became an “ideological composite” with two distinct discourses, one for the internal and another one for the external audience, “Revolutionary and patrimonialist repertoires were employed more frequently within the party; democratic repertoires more frequently with external audiences.”⁷⁵⁰ In fact, once in power, FMLN leaders sought cross-party consensus on many issues. Young explained that a biased media, lack of legislative majority, the country’s shortage of lucrative natural resources, and extreme reliance on migrant remittances made El Salvador vulnerable to U.S. and right-wing pressure. As he explained, “The battles over particular reforms, however fierce, took place within a broad cross-party consensus on the maintenance of capitalism. Top FMLN leaders either avoided references to socialism or redefined the concept in a ‘non-radical’ way.”⁷⁵¹ Garibay argued that the success of the FMLN guerrilla to turn itself into a durable party resided precisely in its ability to disconnect from the specific context of its transformation from guerrilla to political party and to embrace the already existent national partisan divisions. He indicated, “This process presupposes a change, where the internal references linked to the armed struggle period gradually fade away without necessarily being discarded, and yield to the [needs of] the electoral battle.”⁷⁵² While acknowledging this evolution, party members insisted that many fundamental principles remained unchanged. In particular, they cited the party’s outright opposition to capitalism and its determination to achieve equality. Blandino indicated that he liked to think of the FMLN doctrine as a socialist ideology that is tailored to the Salvadoran society. Citing one of the group leaders’ moto he stated, “El Salvador has to be as socialist as its people wants it to be.”⁷⁵³

⁷⁵⁰ As cited in Sprenkels, R. (2019b). *Ambivalent Moderation: The FMLN's Ideological Accommodation to Post-War Politics in El-Salvador, Government and Opposition*. *Cambridge University Press*, 54, 536-558.

⁷⁵¹ Young, K. A. (2019). *El Salvador's FMLN and the Constraints on Leftist Government*

⁷⁵² Garibay, D. (2005a). De la lutte armée a la lutte électorale, itinéraires divergents d'une trajectoire insolite. Une comparaison à partir des cas centraméricains et colombiens. *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 12, 170.

⁷⁵³ Blandino, R. A. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

Dissolved by the system?

Slowly however, a growing divide between the FMLN party and its constituents started to emerge. Increasingly preoccupied with their own political and economic interests, party leaders were seen as unresponsive to popular needs and too accommodating to the preexisting system. Former member Roberto Cañas argued that the FMLN integrated the system to be dissolved by it rather than to change it. Referring to a quotation by FMLN's historical leader Schafik Handal he stated, "There are two alternatives to joining the system, either you enter the system to change it, or the system dissolves you."⁷⁵⁴ Commenting on this matter, Ana Guadalupe Martinez denoted the hypocrisy and endemic corruption that characterizes many party leaders whose personal situation improved dramatically as they came into power. This situation, she noted, stood in stark contrast with their constituents' socio-economic conditions. She stated, "It's the false communism of many leaders of the FMLN who lead a more or less good life as politicians, secure their children in fairly well-paid positions, and most importantly are extremely corrupt!" Martinez indicated that the growing disconnect between leaders and their constituents was further exacerbated by the fact that 25 years after the signature of the agreement, the new generation grew less emotional about the war, and young people's focus shifted towards other issues such as social welfare and economic stability. As she put it, "The new generation wants jobs and opportunities; it also wants to see new faces."⁷⁵⁵ While the FMLN integrated the political system and didn't quite live up to its leftist promises, it did deliver important achievements on the democratic front. As is often the case with the other parties, although the FMLN's ideological commitments were betrayed, the party's legislative and advocacy efforts yielded positive results.

⁷⁵⁴ Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁷⁵⁵ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

SINN FÉIN

Between leftism and pragmatism

Sinn Féin's values and beliefs are rooted in the socialist and nationalist principles of James Connolly, one of the leaders of the Easter Rising. Connolly's major contribution to republican ideas was linking the concept of social justice to that of national self-determination.⁷⁵⁶ After the Easter Rising of 1916, inspired by Connolly, Sinn Féin expanded its requirements from a Home Rule movement to demanding Separation from England, thus committing itself to establishing an Irish Republic.⁷⁵⁷

Clearly indicated in the party constitution, ending British rule is spelled out as the party's first objective. Other objectives include, establishing a Democratic Socialist Republic; promoting the restoration of the Irish language and Irish cultural heritage; and bolstering cultural diversity, sustainable development, and environmental responsibility.⁷⁵⁸ Overall, despite some differences, the party sees itself as an adherent of tenets and principles of the European and the Internationalist left.⁷⁵⁹ A staunch defender of human rights and promoter of pro-immigrant policies⁷⁶⁰ Sinn Féin has traditionally been against globalization and has consistently opposed European integration. With time however, the party tempered its position to one of prudent involvement, successfully participating in European parliament elections and in referendums on European treaties.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁶ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁷⁵⁷ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

⁷⁵⁸ Sinn Féin Constitution and Rules, (2015). , SFConstitution, Sinn Féin Constitution and Rules (2015).

⁷⁵⁹ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁷⁶⁰ Walsh, D., & Eoin, O. M. (2012). *The Slow Growth of Sinn Féin: from minor player to centre stage?* *The History Press*.

⁷⁶¹ Maillot, A. (2009). Sinn Féin's Approach to the EU: Still More 'Critical' than 'Engaged'? *Irish Political Studies*, 24(4), 559-574.

Despite being very clear on its ultimate goals, Sinn Féin's electoral strategies have often been imbedded in pragmatism. Party policies have demonstrated flexibility and were often immersed at the community level, at times even diverging from the official policy documents.⁷⁶² While remaining clearly to the left of the political spectrum, Sinn Féin's pragmatic approach occasionally shifted party policies to the center on a needs basis. According to Benoit and Laver, as time went by, the party slowly moved from distinguishing itself as radical leftist liberal alternative, to gradually penetrating the territory of the other Irish parties in the Republic.⁷⁶³ To Mac Donncha, these ideological fluctuations helped the party navigate through the changes that have occurred over the last three decades, and adapt to the island's complex political landscape,

“Parties always change and evolve as circumstances change... In any conflict situation, that becomes the main focus. When the peace process began, the focus was very much on making it successful and ensuring that everybody internally, within Sinn Féin was part of that process. With electoral success and participation in the political institutions (both North and South)... the focus shifted to how most effectively to deploy the party in those institutions.”⁷⁶⁴

Ending British rule: the immutable essence of the Sinn Féin ideologies

In fact, since the 19th century, Sinn Féin has been marked by some measure of ideological ambiguity. According to Ó hAdhmaill, besides the main aim of ending British rule and establishing a 32-county republic, Sinn Féin has been a collection of people with different viewpoints, ranging from marxists to conservatives. The nationalist community that tended to support republicanism in the North, was traditionally composed of religious working-class people of lower social-economic background who, up until the 1990s were greatly

⁷⁶² Walsh, D., & Eoin, O. M. (2012). *The Slow Growth of Sinn Féin: from minor player to centre stage?* The History Press.

⁷⁶³ Benoit, K., & Laver, M. (2003). Estimating Irish Party Policy Positions Using Computer Wordscoring: The 2002 Election - A Research Note. *Irish Political Studies*, 18(1), 97-107.

⁷⁶⁴ Mac Donncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

influenced by the catholic church who unambiguously opposed the armed struggle. Ó hAdhmaill indicated that this contradiction between the community's political allegiance and the church's teachings became customary. As he described, "Republicans would in one sense go to church to bury their dead and attend all sacraments, but still support the armed struggle even when the church said it was a mortal sin." To Ó hAdhmaill this ambiguity was unconsciously mirrored in the party's own behavior, especially when it came to define the mechanisms to be used to achieve social democracy. He explained, "I suppose the situation then becomes a bit grey when you talked about the meaning of socialism... At times, Marxism was very strong as an ideology and other times it was very weak." The fall of the Berlin wall and later the peace process contributed to toning down the Marxist inclination within the party. Subsequently, Sinn Féin's participation in the government in Northern Ireland further diminished the party's Marxist rhetoric.⁷⁶⁵ Eventually, Sinn Féin broadened its support base and slowly moved into mainstream constitutional politics.⁷⁶⁶ While clearly to the left, Sinn Féin's ideology fluctuated considerably overtime and was largely influenced by the different socio-economic contexts. But although the party often redefined the terms of its beliefs, its commitment to the defense of human rights remained unchanged.

THE LEBANESE FORCES

Between perceptions and definitions: the great divide

Nowhere is ideology more intricate than in the case of the Lebanese Forces. A declassified CIA report dated in 1982 described the Lebanese Forces' ideology during the war as a sectarian philosophy whose aim is to preserve Lebanon's independence under Maronite hegemony and to make sure that Lebanon will never be dominated by Muslims.⁷⁶⁷ This claim stands in striking contrast with the party's self-declared mission. In its charter, LF

⁷⁶⁵ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁷⁶⁶ Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Féin as a "Normal" Political Party? *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(3), 541-560.

⁷⁶⁷ CIA, C. I. A., & report, D. (1982). *Lebanon: The Lebanese Forces Militia*.

presents itself as a non-sectarian party committed to peaceful coexistence and the promotion of a sovereign and prosperous Lebanon. The document also pledges to defend human rights, dignity and freedom; and to promote democracy, individual rights, and collective safety and security.⁷⁶⁸

To most interviewees, any description claiming that the armed resistance's aim was to establish Christian hegemony in Lebanon represents a distorted understanding of the group's objectives, failing to grasp the complexity of the circumstances and issues at stake. Insisting on the non-sectarian nature of the Lebanese Forces, they indicated that the party's ideology, just like that of the armed resistance, always was and continues to be based on three tenets: democracy, sovereignty, and consensus. In his 23 published books, Antoine Najm, one of the founders and most prominent political philosophers of the Lebanese Forces addressed questions about the nature, scope, and legitimacy of the various Lebanese parties' ideologies and the relationships between them. In 1986, Najm proposed a "written" National Pact -alluding to the "unwritten" 1943 National Pact- based on four principles, the first of which reads as follows:

"The Lebanese people are two distinct groups that aspire to live together with complete equality and social justice, in a democratic state, free and independent, within its existing borders, with no proclaimed religion, in a structure and a system that respect the aspirations, hopes and cultural aspirations of the two groups."⁷⁶⁹

Changing the mechanisms, safeguarding the objectives

Equality, social justice, democracy, and freedom are ubiquitous in the Lebanese Forces lexicon. To Najm, the preservation of a system that guarantees these demands can only be

⁷⁶⁸ The Lebanese Forces. (2012). *The Lebanese Forces Charter*. LF website. <https://www.lstatic.org/PDF/choraa.pdf>

⁷⁶⁹ Najm, A. (1986). *National Lebanese Pact Project*.

achieved through federation.⁷⁷⁰ Federalism, considered the trademark of the Lebanese Forces' thinking during the war, is no longer on the table as the Lebanese official line of thought but still lingers as a possible solution to Lebanon's many predicaments. While Moumni reported that the idea subsisted after the signature of the Taef agreement⁷⁷¹ many interviewees refuted this claim. According to Habchi, federalism was an idea that was brought forward with the goal of facilitating coexistence between Lebanese citizens of various religious background and guaranteeing the rights of all members of the society. The LF MP stressed however, that federalism was a tool rather than an objective. As he explained,

"The tool is determined by the context... During the war, we thought the protection of everyone's rights could be achieved through federalism because the State was inexistent. After Taef, we felt that the State and the rule of law should become the sole guarantors of individual rights."⁷⁷²

Another topic having shaped political debates since the inception of the State of Lebanon, is the issue of political confessionalism. A particularly contentious subject, confessionalism, also referred to as sectarianism -the system that proportionally allocates political power among the country's communities- has often carried a negative connotation as an insular and inward-looking system that favors partiality and favoritism. While recognizing the need to ultimately abolish it, confessionalism has remained on the LF table as the best possible option to control government institutions. To most interviewees, confessionalism safeguards the right to representation for Lebanon's different religious components and ensures that all groups' opinion is taken into consideration.⁷⁷³ According to Najm, it's of key importance not to confuse confessionalism with isolationism. To the pundit, confessionalism exists for a reason and that reason is the existence of two distinct groups

⁷⁷⁰ Najm, A. (1990). *The Federal State of Lebanon or, that State of Equality, Justice, Development, and Harmonious Coexistence (Research and Discussion Project)*.

⁷⁷¹ Moumni, N. (2014). *The Lebanese Forces. Al Kuwwat al Lubnaaniyya, Nach'at al Mukawamat al Masehiyya wa Tatawwuraha*. Dar Sa'er al Mashrek.

⁷⁷² Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

⁷⁷³ Hindi, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Hindi* [Interview].

holding two different religions, the aspirations of which need to be respected and duly represented. As he reported, “In Lebanon there are people with different confessions. These people have different aspirations and need to be represented according to their confessions. I am against confessional fanaticism but in favor of confessionalism.”⁷⁷⁴

When describing LF ideology, Habchi also highlighted the importance of making a distinction between the mechanisms used to achieve the objectives and the objectives themselves. To Habchi, one of those invariable objectives is the defense of the Constitution. That fight he contended, was considered instrumental, the constitution being what ultimately secures happiness and prosperity. Defending the Constitution he argued, ought to be the primary goal of every nation.⁷⁷⁵ To Hasbani, during the war, the Constitution was endangered because the very existence of the Christian community was imperiled by regional threats. He explained, “When we were defending the Christians’ survival it was for the purpose of maintaining a state because the Christians’ survival meant the survival of a Constitution.”⁷⁷⁶ Partnership between Christians and Muslims was reported as another fundamental component of the Lebanese Forces’ ideology. Calling it the “philosophy of coexistence,” Jabbour refers to this notion as a key element of the Lebanese Forces’ principles. He explained, “We care about Lebanon as an idea and as a message. I don’t want Christian hegemony over Muslims nor Muslims hegemony over Christians. I want partnership, equality, rule of law.” To the LF media chief, despite the party’s religious composition, the institution’s main goal and policy aim bypass sectarianism. Jabbour stressed the fact that Lebanon is the only country in the world that can boast a real partnership between Christians, Sunnis and Chiis at the leadership level.⁷⁷⁷ A partnership that LF is keen to protect. As Baraghid put it, ““We want [the Muslims] with us, we respect their choices and we want them to respect ours”.”⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁴ Najm, A. (2022). *Author's Interview with Antoine Najm* [Interview].

⁷⁷⁵ Habchi, A. (2019). *Author's interview with Antoine Habchi* [Interview].

⁷⁷⁶ Hasbani, G. (2019). *Author's interview with Ghassan Hasbani* [Interview].

⁷⁷⁷ Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview].

⁷⁷⁸ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

A marked evolution

Baraghid acknowledged that the LF ideology had witnessed an evolution over the years. He argued however that the evolution was a reflection of increased awareness and acquired wisdom rather than a shift in ideological commitments. Baraghid believes that while upholding the same principles and still aspiring to achieve the same goals -namely a sovereign, independent, democratic, and pluralistic Lebanon- today's Lebanese Forces is deeply convinced of the need to uphold peace and wage peaceful battles. He stated, "You cannot build a state if you don't understand the price of a war...The day our leader was released from jail we started working on the party bylaws, that meant that we were using other instruments to achieve the same goals."⁷⁷⁹ Interestingly, Hindi noted that the LF party ideology doesn't differ much from that of other parties. To Hindi, what differentiates political parties in Lebanon is the quality and credibility of their leadership. He indicated, "If you look at the Lebanese parties, whether it's *Amal*, the *Future* or the *Free Patriotic* movements, or even the *LF* and the *Kataeb*, you would notice pretty similar ideologies. However, joining a party should not be based on the charters but rather on actions and leadership."⁷⁸⁰ In an unexpected display of candidness, Hindi's judicious statement shed light on the relative -if not marginal- role of ideology as we look at parties' roles, actions, and achievements.

CONCLUSION

The cases under review in this study vary widely in their political orientations however, as in the case of other similar parties, nearly all of them emerged from the war-to-peace transition with no clear definitions of their ideologies. Even after exerting serious efforts to craft a coherent postwar political program, these parties' ideological positions have often

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁰ Hindi, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Elie Hindi* [Interview].

manifested some degree of ambiguity and were quite altered over the years. This situation was most obvious in the cases of the AD M-19 and FMLN where party members often held a large range of political beliefs. Also, in the course of time, political constraints pushed the parties to moderate their stances. The FMLN embraced liberal policies, Sinn Féin tempered its leftist rhetoric, the Lebanese Forces moderated its tone, and the AD M-19 sought unexpected compromises. In some cases, this transformation is admitted and in others negated but, in all instances, a gradual evolution is acknowledged. Political maturation and global events certainly influenced these changes but what is certain is that in every case, pragmatism often guided party line and resulted in policy shifts as circumstances and priorities changed.

As is often the case, the above groups' ideological accommodations were precipitated by the necessity to compromise and thus temper radical positions to ensure electoral survival. Much like the FSLN whose victory had been made possible by pragmatic alliances with anti-Somoza elite,⁷⁸¹ the AD M-19's alliances with members of traditional parties dictated many ideological accommodations. This ideological flexibility however turned off the electorate, the majority of whom was hoping for clear positions against traditional ways of doing politics and real social change. The electoral base of AD M-19 rapidly dissolved as individualistic campaigning and the absence of an integrated vision fragmented the electorate. While Sinn Féin, the Lebanese Forces and the FMLN confronted similar ideological challenges, these parties were able to streamline their ideological beliefs through either purge (as in the case of the FMLN) or tight control (in the cases of Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin), and develop programs that transformed and expanded the composition of their constituencies, succeeding in widening their electoral base over time. In all instances however, these parties' emergence changed the landscape of political life at the national level introducing more representation for disadvantaged sectors of society (in Colombia, El Salvador, and Ireland), or favorably contributing to a political climate where different sections of society coexisted in a more peaceful manner (as in the case of Lebanon). As LF member Wissam Raji shrewdly

⁷⁸¹ Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

puts it, “what sets parties apart is not so much their ideology but rather credibility and achievements.”⁷⁸²

CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

IDEOLOGY: A MERE TOOL OR A GUIDING STAR?

If ideology is a shell, that is prone to change and evolution, are there other beliefs or values that are bound to remain constant? Many scholars have demonstrated that while ideology is often used as an instrument to create legitimacy and serve the leaders’ political purposes, it also helped shape and constrain their own policies (Schewedler, 2007; Tezcür, 2010; Sanín and Wood, 2014; Chemouni and Mugiraneza, 2019). In fact, some have even argued that ideology can matter to the point that it could influence armed groups’ actions even at the cost of strategic benefits.⁷⁸³ What’s more, certain views and perceptions that are deep rooted in the past, survive, subsist, and resurface in the former armed groups’ behavior when the war is over.⁷⁸⁴ According to Tezcür, while the inclusion of former armed groups in the political system is likely to temper their extreme views in general terms, it doesn’t necessarily erase all forms of radicalism. Normative commitments are usually retained by the new political actors, and moderation could just be camouflaged behavior.⁷⁸⁵ This leads us to ask the following question: what is the factor that remains constant when everything else changes and is that factor the common denominator that helped yield the same outcome?

⁷⁸² Raji, W. (2019). *Author’s interview with Wissam Raji* [Interview].

⁷⁸³ Gutiérrez Sanín, F., & Jean Wood, E. (2014). Ideology in civil war: Instrumental adoption and beyond. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(2), 213-226.

⁷⁸⁴ Chemouni, B., & Mugiraneza, A. (2020). Ideology and interests in the Rwandan patriotic front: Singing the struggle in pre-genocide Rwanda *African Affairs*, 119(474), 115-140.

⁷⁸⁵ Tezcür, G. (2010). The Moderation Theory Revisited: The Case of the Islamic Political Actors. *Party Politics*, 16(1), 69-88.

PERSISTENCE OF THE INITIAL GRIEVANCES IN THE POST-WAR BEHAVIOR

In an effort to further the investigation, I decided to examine the grievances that created the conditions that gave rise to the insurgencies to gain a better understanding of the logic behind the beliefs and actions of these actors and the reasons why they behaved the way they did. The purpose of this exploration was to discover the underlying reasons behind these groups' initial grievances; the fears, deprivations, or difficulties that left them with no other choice but to resort to the armed struggle. Through this examination, I studied the extent to which these hardships generated needs that became moral necessities and crystallized into ethical commitments; commitments that inspired their battles, led them to peace, and transpired in their actions and decisions as they designed policies, promulgated legislation, and advocated for issues. Rather than wondering if there is a discrepancy between real intentions and political actions, I would try to link those political actions to the group's initial grievances. So instead of questioning the sincerity of these parties' ideological claims, I would investigate the reasons behind their positions. Why was Irish self-determination needed in the first place? Why did the Lebanese Christians feel they needed protection? Why did the Salvadoran and Colombian guerrillas feel that the prevailing political and economic systems were inadequate? I would then try to link the answers to those questions to these parties' actions and in particular to those that pertain to the promotion of democracy.

A close examination of the parties under review reveals that they all shared a profound commitment to certain principles -generated by their wartime fears and deprivations- that were, in certain respects, in keeping with the principles of human rights and democracy. These principles were the underlying rationale for the armed struggle and remained constant throughout their transition in the post-conflict period. They represented deep-seated sentimental foundations that inspired their battles and were impervious to the ideological fluctuations that occurred along the way.

A crushed dream

The birth of independent Colombia in 1819 led to expect that self-determination would finally bring prosperity to the burgeoning nation. But it soon became evident that entrenched structural problems would challenge the emergence of a modern democracy. Poor economic administration, technological backwardness, and financial disparities, exacerbated the already difficult environment of Colombia's immense, mountainous territory. In the early 20th century, those problems were compounded by the emergence of enterprising businessmen who, eager to control the national market, helped create a downward spiral of poverty that generated social conflicts and led to political violence. In the early 20th century, Colombia's economic structure, based upon the United States' model, favored modern capitalism, limiting government intervention to the exceptional cases when social peace urgently required it. Proactive policies on issues such as agrarian reform, urban housing, and social services were practically absent and grassroots efforts to promote these issues were at best ignored, often repressed. Corruption and clientelism prevailed. In fact, the national state's margin of maneuver was undermined by the dominance of local and regional business interests, and by political brokers who positioned themselves as the sole link between the citizens and the state. Up until the middle of the 20th century, the two main political parties maintained an illusion of political representation -gradually increasing participation in the electoral system- while maintaining clientelism, impunity, and the vicious effects of poor administration.⁷⁸⁶

⁷⁸⁶ Palacios, M. (2006). *Between Legitimacy and Violence, A History of Colombia, 1875-2002*. Duke University Press.

The rise of a rebellion

When Colombia gained its independence, the great majority of the Colombian population was employed in agriculture and worked on large properties as sharecroppers and day laborers, or were contracted for specific periods on different modalities. Often at the mercy of their employers, it was not uncommon that laborers be subject to abuse including occasionally, bonded labor. In the 1960s, despite a relative period of political stability and net economic growth, the population, especially in rural areas was growing increasingly frustrated by the disparities in the distribution of wealth and income and the poor's inability to take advantage of the growing economy. At the 1970 presidential election, unexpectedly, the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) candidate, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla nearly defeated the National Front candidate, a result that was perceived by many as a stolen election. Rojas Pinilla's near victory was a clear indicator of people's dissatisfaction with the unbalanced progress and growing inequalities. Embittered ANAPO supporters would come to the conclusion that change couldn't occur through institutional channels and decided to pursue the armed alternative. These events would eventually lead to the emergence of the M-19 guerrilla in 1973.⁷⁸⁷ Although the guerrilla name -*Movimiento 19 de Abril* [translated to April 19 Movement]- carried clear reference to the date in which the election of Rojas Pinilla was allegedly robbed by the National Front candidate, the armed group would eventually dissociate itself from ANAPO as the two movements' ideological aspirations drifted away.⁷⁸⁸ The M-19's objectives were not clearly defined but by and large, the new urban guerrilla claimed a nationalist platform, opposing U.S. influence, and demanding greater participation and more equality. Inspired by the Uruguayan Tupumaros' leadership style, the M-19 undertook high impact performances such as stealing food and distributing it in poor

⁷⁸⁷Bushnell, D. (1993). *The Making of Modern Colombia, A National in Spite of Itself*. University of California Press.

⁷⁸⁸Durán, M. G., Hormaza, O. P., & Loewenherz, V. G. (2008). *The M-19's Journey from Armed Struggle to Democratic Politics. Striving to Keep the Revolution Connected to the People* (Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics, Issue.

neighborhoods. The M-19's theft of the sword of Simon Bolivar from its museum, carried the symbolic reference to the liberator's support of slave emancipation and socially progressive policies, and to his opposition to the U.S.-controlled local elites.

Fighting for basic needs

Throughout its journey as an armed guerrilla, the M-19 consistently claimed that its struggle was meant to improve the lives of ordinary citizens and fight the dominance of the business and political elite. In a compilation of interviews granted by M-19 leaders, Darío Villamizar cast light on the former armed group's pedigree, providing insight into the founding members' thinking and the past grievances that gave rise to the insurrection.⁷⁸⁹ In these interviews, guerrilla founder Jaime Bateman often linked the armed insurrection to the aspirations of ordinary citizens. Talking to *Radio Noticias del Continente* in San José de Costa Rica in 1980, Bateman laid out the guiding principles of the M-19 movement, describing it as a collaborative democratic project essentially aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of the Colombian people. He declared:

“Once again (we) reiterate our firm position to develop a democratic movement in Colombia that aims at addressing the fundamental, essential problems of our country, which are: the excessive, the overly excessive monopolization of the economy and secondly, the militarization that at this moment greatly undermines freedom in our country. Our position is nationalist and patriotic”.⁷⁹⁰

Bateman also emphasized the interconnectedness between people's aspirations, and the guerrilla operations. Rather than imposing an ideology, the M-19 constantly highlighted the fact that their actions' inspirations originated from the people they represented. In an interview with journalist Patricia Lara, highlighting the parallelism between the guerrilla demands and those of nearly all sectors of the society, he indicated,

⁷⁸⁹ Villamizar, D. (1995). Jaime Bateman, Un Profeta de La Paz. In.

⁷⁹⁰ Bateman, J. (1980b). *Interview with Radio Noticias del Continente* Radio Noticias del Continente, San José de Costa Rica.

“I don't believe in guerrilla simply... I believe in the guerrilla plus the local military movements, plus the peasant self-defense groups, plus the popular protest movement, plus the popular urban and rural protest movements, plus the demands of the intellectuals, plus the work of artists, plus the electoral and political struggles, plus the struggle for the defense of human rights, plus the international denunciation of the violations of those rights... In this fashion, the majority of people —everyone from their place— would be joining the revolution and making its triumph possible...”.⁷⁹¹

Peace, democracy, human rights and sovereignty are words that would often come up in Bateman's and other guerrilla members' speeches and declarations. In his message to the political prisoners in September 1980, the guerrilla leader made it clear that the armed insurrection's root causes are real and worthy, and that the guerrilla's aim is to essentially achieve the wellbeing of the citizens. He declared, “We want to improve the situation of misery, hunger, malnutrition, and lack of culture that our Colombian people endure... we want a worthy homeland, an independent homeland, a sovereign homeland”.⁷⁹² Bateman frequently repeated that the organization was peaceful by principle and wished it could fulfill its goals without the burden of bearing arms. To the M-19 leader, the Colombian disenfranchised were so neglected and so voiceless that they were left with no choice but to resort to the armed struggle. As he explained, “Every day it becomes more obvious that this is violence between the poor and the rich; between democrats and anti-democrats; between torturers and observers of human rights; between the oppressed and the oppressors; between people who have nothing to lose and people who have a lot to lose”.⁷⁹³

Along the same lines, M-19 co-founder Carlos Toledo affirmed that the guerrilla's goal had always been to do politics and participate in public life as politicians not as armed militants, but was forced to act otherwise. In a 1983 interview with journalist Germán Manga, he asserted, “We are politicians. We act overtly or underground depending on circumstances,

⁷⁹¹ Lara, P. (1986). *Siembra Vientos y Recogerás tempestades*. Planeta.

⁷⁹² Bateman, J. (1980c). Mensaje a los presos políticos. In. Colombia.

⁷⁹³ Bateman, J. (1980a). *First interview with journalist* [Interview].

and the current conditions of the country do not allow us to operate in public life. We have to do politics clandestinely and will continue doing it; but we will also continue to submit peace proposals because we believe peace is possible”.⁷⁹⁴ The M-19 leadership maintained its open call for debate and dialogue, indicating its readiness to seal peace if conditions permitted. As Bateman stated, “We are ready for a democratic opening; even more, we are willing to legalize our activity”.⁷⁹⁵ Throughout the conflict, the M-19 guerrilla leaders’ public statements regularly spelled the reasons that made a recourse to arms inevitable: deep rooted inequalities, lack of basic rights, lack of freedoms, lack of sovereignty, and monopolization of the economy. In their statements, the guerrilla leaders also affirmed their long-standing readiness to integrate peaceful political life if given the opportunity. A deposition that proved sincere when the guerilla declared a unilateral ceasefire.

Varying stages, unchanged commitments

Upon disarming, the M-19 outlined its vision for a new Colombia in its “*Grandes Propósitos para una Colombia Líder*” [Great Propositions for a leading Colombia]. The document’s introduction was replete with placating language such as peace, honesty, and creativity. In the publication, the newly formed party invited all citizens to participate in the decision-making process, including artists, journalists, the ostracized, and the persecuted. The propositions were an appeal for changing a rancor-filled history, and building national unity. Among other things, it stressed the importance of dialogue, the building of a more open and democratic public order, an independent justice system that would consolidate the peace and enshrine human rights, unity, and tolerance. The booklet also suggested ideas for a new constitution that would consecrate sovereignty, undertake a number of government reforms, and promote individual and social rights. Eventually, as members of the Constituent Assembly, the AD M-19 suggested reforms that were inspired by their past grievances and

⁷⁹⁴ Toledo Plata, C. (1983). *Guerrillas Siguen Dispuestas Al Dialogo*.

⁷⁹⁵ Bateman, J. (1980b). *Interview with Radio Noticias del Continente* Radio Noticias del Continente, San José de Costa Rica.

reflected the armed group's ethical commitments. These ethical commitments translated into proposals for peace, citizen representation, and the protection of human rights.

FMLN

A history of oppression

Years of military dictatorship defending the interests of a tightly knit oligarchic bourgeoisie, created wide popular discontent and intense class polarization in El Salvador. For 48 years, all attempts to modernize the economic structure and broaden political participation were met with the brutal opposition of the dominant class at the hand of high military commanders deriving benefits from the political regime.⁷⁹⁶ El Salvador's insertion into the international capitalist market was made possible towards the end of the 19th century with the production of coffee. In less than 40 years, communal land was eradicated, replaced with private properties concentrated in the hands of a small economic elite. Coffee production becoming the main driver of the economy, all business activities were organized around this product. Naturally, the economic elite who owned the land consolidated power at the expense of the working class that was not able to benefit from the new bonanza, worse still, found itself exploited by the new economic configuration. Angered by the new arrangement, the workers organized themselves into labor associations and started organizing strikes to demand social justice and claim their rights.⁷⁹⁷ The class confrontation that emerged in the early 1970s disrupted the previous order whereby the Military Junta was still able to broker reformist proposals, while pursuing indiscriminate repressive practices.⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁹⁶ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

⁷⁹⁷ Gordon, S. (1980). Crisis Política y Organización Popular en El Salvador. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 42(2), 695-709.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid.

Divergent views, one purpose

Viewing the armed struggle as the only possible way to resolve the political, economic, and social crisis, a large share of the Salvadoran population was drawn into the revolutionary ideology that animated the spirits in the early 1970s. At that time, the various armed insurgencies that would eventually unite under the umbrella of the FMLN held a pure Marxist-Leninist ideology. According to Alvarez, this aspiration plainly rejected democracy which, in the views of the insurgency, was geared towards defending the interests of the bourgeoisie. This situation was altered when, in 1980, the FMLN and the center-left opposition (FDR) established a strategic alliance and devised a program that promoted a *Revolutionary Democratic Government*. The program reflected a consensus between guerrillas and the social-democratic and Christian-democratic groups represented in the FDR. Importantly, the program didn't invoke socialism, reflecting the guerrilla's need to form the widest possible anti-government coalition which considerably moderated its position. This major shift in ideology was validated in a pact signed in Havana in 1982, in which all five FMLN organizations pledged to renounce the dictatorship of the proletariat and accept a democratic path. Whilst reluctantly signed by FMLN prominent leader and communist party dissident Cayetano Carpio,⁷⁹⁹ the document ushered a new ideological orientation within the armed group. This new consensual vision would be further corroborated by the publication in 1989 of an RN (National Resistance)-prepared document in which the group proposed the elaboration of a pluralist political system with what they described as "some ingredients of democracy". The document included the groundbreaking statement that it was "possible to start the social revolution within the framework of the capitalist regime." The Salvadoran communists had consented that the end goal of armed struggle would be to achieve a democratic and anti-imperialist revolution, in hope that the process would eventually lead to socialism. In September 1983, the ERP suggested to create a government

⁷⁹⁹ Carpio was the main instigator of the armed insurgency

with broad participation which would include representatives of all the democratic forces. This postulation would become the FMLN's official proposal ahead of the 1984 elections.⁸⁰⁰

Aspiring for a better world

According to Peña, despite the apparent contradictions, the ideological underpinnings of all the groups that formed part of the FMLN sought the same outcome and served the same purpose. Pointing to the apparent contradictions between different organizations she explained, "We were Marxist-Leninists and Christians from the Liberation Theology. Are these compatible? Yes, they are. They both aspire for a better world." To Peña, the FMLN was a political *and* a military force that emerged as a result of profound injustices that had built up over the years. The organizations that had merged into the FMLN had similar grievances, similar principles and most importantly, a similar idea of the world that they wanted to build. To the former vice-president of the legislative assembly, what united guerrilla members was their opposition to the authoritarian state and that commonality mattered far more than any ideological platform. Despite initially envisaging different solutions to El Salvador's many problems, by the time the Chapultepec agreement was signed, all FMLN members agreed on what was needed, '*Democracy, prosperity, and social justice.*' To Peña, these goals coalesced in the peace agreement. As she put it, "Our values are what kept us going. The peace agreement platform became a country platform."⁸⁰¹

When peace negotiations became a viable option, the FMLN started contemplating the organization of free and fair elections, the promotion of an independent judiciary, and demilitarization as its main objectives.⁸⁰² In the context of the negotiations, the FMLN made public its "Proclamation to the Nation, the Democratic Revolution" (*Proclama del FMLN a la Nación. La Revolución Democrática*) in which it presented the democratic aspect of the

⁸⁰⁰ Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

⁸⁰¹ Peña, L. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁰² Martín Álvarez, A. (2011). De guerrilla a partido político: El Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN). *Historia y Política*, 25, 207-233.

revolution. According to the document, this democratic revolution would entail four big changes: the end of militarism, a new social and economic order, national democratization, and the recovery of sovereignty. The document called for concrete measures to promote freedom of expression, an impartial and independent judicial system, a new electoral system, a strong and diverse legislative assembly, respect for human rights, freedom of assembly, and a new Political Constitution reflecting the historic pact sealed by all the forces in the country.⁸⁰³ According to Samayoa, the Chapultepec agreement best represented the ideological consensus that the FMLN had reached as it entered the political arena, “It wasn’t the socialism that some people wanted but a middle solution that everyone agreed on.”⁸⁰⁴ But while moving the country towards further democratization in a way that was generally agreed on, the Chapultepec accords did not eliminate the ideological disagreements between the FMLN components. These disagreements would resurface on several occasions and threaten the very existence of the party. But despite the many internal crises, and for a long time, the political platform of the party would still resonate with many of those who once supported the insurgency. The party could even count on the electoral support of many party dissidents who, while disaffected, still related to the party’s policy priorities.

Redressing historical injustices

Upon its transformation into a political party, the FMLN laid out its thirteen guiding principles in the party statutes. These principles were deeply rooted in the historic injustices that impacted the well-being of the population. They included: (1) the revolutionary humanism of the FMLN in which the party explicitly asserted its adherence to the universal declaration of human rights ; (2) the sanctity of the family and the need to defend of its economic, social, cultural, political and spiritual rights; (3) the vocation to serve the interests and wellbeing of the social majorities, this vocation being at the core of FMLN’s transformational mission; (4) the promotion of a democratic-revolutionary ideology for

⁸⁰³ Vilas, C. (1993). *Democracia Emergente en Centroamérica*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

⁸⁰⁴ Samayoa, S. (2022). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

change, stating the party's unambiguous commitment to the values of democracy; (5) the primacy of civil society as a defender of citizens' rights and an essential component for substituting military power with civil power; (6) national independence and self-determination as essential components of a true democracy; (7) commitment to national unity and concertation, resorting to consultation methods to resolve social and political differences; (8) commitment to promoting the rights of youth and children, including right to a happy future in social peace as well as right to life, education, and health; (9) commitment to the principle of equity and equality between genders as a fundamental principle in the construction of a real democracy and the socialist society that the FMLN aspired to, through creating and applying specific policies, and incorporating gender-sensitive approaches and perspectives in the analysis and interpretation of reality; (10) commitment to rescuing and developing the environment through harmonizing the relationship between human activity and the environment; (11) rescuing and strengthening of the historical and cultural values of the nation, including national identity, Central American unionism, the fight for justice, freedom, sovereignty, democracy, peace, social humanism, and the moral values of Christianity that inspire the majority of the population; (12) international solidarity and Central Americanism including solidarity with the nations of the South in their fight for a new international, economic, social and political order, as well as commitment to integration efforts with central American nations to foster regional development and stability; (13) the promotion of a party that is pluralistic and democratic, with a broad popular base, and based on the defense of the interests of the majority.⁸⁰⁵

Deeply aligned with the universal values of human rights, these guiding principles typified the "better world" that Peña had made reference to. As a ruling party, the FMLN's policies aimed to address decades of class polarization and social injustices, often reflecting its members' own experiences. When asked about the party's ideology, Juan Javier Martínez chuckled and related his own experience, "When I was a student, I went to school barefoot. I was made fun of and bullied. As a public servant, I needed to make sure all school kids had shoes." Martínez' reaction clearly highlights the fact that, rather than reflecting a coherent

⁸⁰⁵ Estatuto del Partido Político Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional, FMLN, (2017).

view of the world he wanted to create, his ideology was deeply rooted in his own personal experience. What really counted to him was keeping the focus on the insurrection's main objectives, those that aimed to address the historic injustices that made people with diverse ideologies coalesce into one powerful movement.

Sinn Féin

A long history of discrimination

The Irish troubles were the culmination of centuries of frustrations dating back to the early twelfth century when Anglo-Norman invasions sought to rule the island. With time, persecution of the native people evolved into systematic discrimination against Irish Catholics, a marginalization that would persist in Northern Ireland until the last decade of the twentieth century. As the British settlers assumed control of the island, they set up a system of governance that unabashedly discriminated against the Irish native people. Irish people's land was confiscated by English and British settlers, while Catholics – the vast majority of the population – were almost completely excluded from political life.⁸⁰⁶ The British established discriminatory laws and regulations that restricted Irish people's rights and freedoms. Most famed among those were the Penal Laws restricting Catholics' social, political, and economic rights. In place between the 17th and early 19th centuries, the Penal laws categorized citizenship rights according to religion. Pursuant to these laws, Catholics were barred from voting, holding public office, owning a land, or teaching; and were fined for absence from the Protestant service prayers. Measures enabling Protestants to seize Catholic possessions or properties - such as estates, farms, horses or wagons - for no, or a nominal fee, were also established.⁸⁰⁷ The Statute of Kilkenny prevented British settlers from assimilating the Irish culture by preventing intermarriage or alliances with the Irish.⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰⁶ Ó hAdmaill, F. (2020). The Easter Rising (1916) in Ireland and its Historical Context: The Campaign for an Irish Democracy.

⁸⁰⁷ Cusack, M. A. *Penal Laws in Ireland*

⁸⁰⁸ Weston Joyce, P. *The Statute of Kilkenny (1318-1377)*

Some of these measures were revoked towards the end of the 18th century and replaced by regulations that gave more civil liberties, but the new regulations were so restrictive that the vast majority of Catholics couldn't appreciate their benefits. For example, Catholics were allowed to vote, provided they owned or rented a property worth two pounds or more but were not allowed to sit in Parliament. The British made sure any easing of restrictions was offset by other restrictions that maintained or lowered the percentage of population that is eligible to vote in Parliamentary elections. By 1916, that proportion was estimated at 15% of the population of Ireland. In addition to social, political and economic discrimination, Catholics also suffered verbal harassment. One such example was the 'inhumane language' that they had to endure in the aftermath of the Great Hunger that hit Ireland in 1845. Blaming part of the tragedy on their Catholic laborers, Protestant landlords would accuse them of laziness and lack of adequate planning.⁸⁰⁹ Gradually, many Catholics would secretly organize and rise in rebellion with the goal of ending British rule in Ireland.

A sustained fight for historic claims

In 1979, Sinn Féin released a publication detailing the social, economic and political dimensions of the party policy. The document detailed Sinn Féin's vision of a new Ireland, making it clear that British withdrawal is not an end in itself but rather a mean to better living conditions for the inhabitants of a United Ireland. The publication described SF's basic principles, referring to the nine principles proclaimed by Patrick Pearse, one of the main leaders of the Easter Rising in 1916, including concepts such as the right to personal freedom and the pursuit of the happiness. The document expanded on those principles and stated SF's vision of a society based on a democratic system. The new principles included among other things: justice for all; a functioning democracy; an end to economic exploitation; free access to education, medical care and welfare; right to ownership and security of housing; security against arbitrary arrest or detention; equal rights for all irrespective of sex, age or religious convictions; and the promotion of Irish language and Irish culture.⁸¹⁰

⁸⁰⁹ Ó hAdmaill, F. (2020). The Easter Rising (1916) in Ireland and its Historical Context: The Campaign for an Irish Democracy.

⁸¹⁰ Sinn Féin. (1979). Éire Nua: The Social, Economic, and Political Dimensions. In. CAIN Web Service.

During the peace process, following in the ANC's footsteps, Gerry Adams suggested the creation of an Irish Freedom Charter formulating the party's vision of political, economic, social, cultural and human rights. The idea was taken up again in 2004, when Sinn Féin presented its own Rights for All charter, hoping it would stimulate debate and encourage discussions with the goal of developing a Charter for Rights endorsed by all sections of the Irish society. The Charter presented Sinn Féin's modern vision of an inclusive society suggesting proposals dealing with: "Equal rights for all; Democracy, making it representative, accountable and responsive to people's needs; Actively opposing discrimination; Children's rights; People with disabilities reaching their potential; Public services, housing, health care and education; The right to work, employment and trade union rights; The protection of natural resources and the environment; Justice, the judiciary, policing and public safety; as well as Ireland's role, rights and responsibilities internationally."⁸¹¹

A political platform prioritizing rights

The Charter for Rights called for a truly responsive democracy with equal participation in decision-making processes and access to power, public policies that take into consideration equality, poverty and human rights, and are based on international best practices. It also asked for government accountability, transparency and freedom of information. It spelled out the importance of religious and civil liberty and protection from discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, color, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, social or economic status, marital or family status, residence, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, trade union membership, or status as a victim. The charter defended the right to be nomadic or sedentary and the right to change from one mode of living to another. Also, the right to be protected from all forms of physical, emotional or mental abuse, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, injury or abuse; the right to freedom and security; to bodily and psychological integrity; to freedom of expression,

⁸¹¹ Sinn Féin. (2004). *Rights For All*. <https://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/16428>

conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion; and to freedom of assembly and movement. The document also called for a fair, effective, impartial and accountable judicial system based on the Bill of Rights and the rights outlined in that same charter; the right to access to quality legal representation; and the right to rehabilitation and integration into society. It also asked that policing on the island conforms to the highest standards of human rights, accountability, impartiality, transparency and effectiveness. Children and people with disabilities had each their own sections in the document. Were also included children's right to be protected from all forms of physical, emotional or mental violence, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, neglect, bullying, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual exploitation or abuse; the right to be heard and consulted; and the right for free education. People with disabilities would have their whole person recognized, their capabilities valued and developed to full potential, and their dignity respected. They would also have the right to make choices about their lives; be protected against all sorts of exploitation; and the right to a poverty-free life with equal access and equal participation in education, employment, and training. Social and economic rights are also spelled out, including protection against systematic and institutional discrimination against any section of the population living on the island of Ireland, and the government's duties and responsibilities to take proactive and affirmative actions to ensure that individuals enjoy equal opportunities. Free access to healthcare and education; the right to work in safe conditions; the right to form and join trade unions; the right to housing would also be guaranteed. The government would have the obligation to provide universal public services and make them easily accessible. Finally, the charter calls for a just peace, cordial community relations based on mutual respect, and affirms Ireland's commitment to a work towards greater global political and economic equality.⁸¹² More recently, in its 2022 assembly election manifesto, Sinn Féin explicitly called for social inclusion, and gender equality. It also requested legislation to combat hate crime and bring 'justice and redress for victims and survivors of intuitional abuse'. Compliance with the Bill of Rights is also listed amongst the parties' top priorities.⁸¹³

⁸¹² Ibid.

⁸¹³ Sinn Féin. (2022). *Assembly Election 2022, Sinn Féin Manifesto* https://vote.sinnfein.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/A4_MANIFESTOenglish.pdf

A vivid memory of deprivation

The decades of ‘troubles’ that concluded with the signature of the Good Friday Agreement would leave long-lasting impressions in the Catholic community’s collective memory. As Ó hAdhmaill reported, even if the socio-economic conditions of the Irish Catholics dramatically improved in Northern Ireland over the past few decades, the memory of past abuses is still very much alive as ‘the rich are just one generation away from poverty’.⁸¹⁴ These lingering frustrations, anchored in centuries of inequity and segregation keep resurfacing as the party defines priorities and designs policies. The hardships generated anger and resentment that produced moral commitments that persisted throughout the troubles and remained in effect after peace was signed. While Sinn Féin’s ideology fluctuated over the years, the party’s moral commitments remained unchanged. Manifestly consistent with the precepts of democracy as I define them in this thesis, these moral commitments invariably guided the party in its attempts to address all forms of inequalities. To Sinn Féin, the values that germinated from the group’s historical memory are the motivation behind their policies and their calls for greater social, political, and economic rights.

LEBANESE FORCES

A deeply-rooted fight for freedom

The Lebanese Forces are overwhelmingly Christian/Maronite in their composition. The Maronite community’s origins can be traced to St Maron, a hermit who lived in fourth century Syria and whose piousness attracted many followers.⁸¹⁵ Towards the end of the eighth century, harassed by Arab incursions, the Maronites deserted the plains of Antioch

⁸¹⁴ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁸¹⁵ Ristelhueber, R. (1915). Les Maronites. *Revue des Deux Mondes (1829-1971); Sixième Période*, 25(2), 187-215.

where they had settled since their founding and found refuge in the mountain region in the north of what is present day Lebanon. Vulnerable to frequent attacks from brigands, this small community of peasants mitigated the threat of violence by building churches like small fortresses aimed at providing refuge for fleeing villagers.⁸¹⁶

Confined in the Lebanese mountains, the Maronites formed a nucleus of what could be considered a relatively independent nation. Sheltered by their steep, fortified mountains, Maronites were able to resist periodic assaults and Arab conquests relatively successfully. Despite being pressured to submit to their conquerors on few occasions, the resilient mountainous community was nevertheless able to retain a good level of autonomy. For centuries, under the protection of its clergy and large landholders, the Maronite community organized itself in an autonomous feudal system in quasi-isolation from the rest of the region. The threat posed by constant attacks, pushed big landowners to devise defense strategies and organize their peasants in militias strong enough to defend their land against the recurrent Muslim conquests. Devoted to their faith, traditions, and relative freedom, Maronites led an inward-looking life, almost impervious to external influences. The Maronites' preeminence in the mountain was challenged in the early 17th century when the ambitious Druze leader Fakhreddine, imposed his leadership on the mountain. Fakhreddine's affinity for Christians however enkindled a congenial collaboration as he surrounded himself with Christian advisors, treating them as equal partners in governance practices. This collaboration ushered an era of political unity between Druze and Maronites. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the Maronites consolidated their influence in the mountains of Lebanon and further spread their presence from the North to the Keserouan and Metn districts. Having become the official champions of Catholicism in Syria, the Maronites also strengthened their ties to Rome who officially recognized the Maronite church in 1736. Lebanon became a magnet for Catholics and particularly French missionaries who flocked to Lebanon to establish schools and diffuse the French language.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹⁶ Aulas, M.-C. (1985). *The Socio-Ideological Development of the Maronite Community. The Emergence of the Phalanges and the Lebanese Forces*

⁸¹⁷ Ristelhueber, R. (1915). Les Maronites. *Revue des Deux Mondes (1829-1971); Sixième Période*, 25(2), 187-215.

The brittle foundations of a long-awaited nation

By the time World War I ended, France had become the official protector of the Lebanese Christians. In the 1920s, as the main European victors of World War I, Great Britain and France divided most of the Arab lands under the rule of the Ottoman Empire with present-day Lebanon falling under the French sphere of influence. Anxious to preserve their centuries old autonomy, Maronite Christians lobbied the French for the establishment of a viable state that would ensure their survival as a sovereign nation. Acquiescing to their demand, the French created present-day Lebanon which included the area that traditionally fell under the Maronites' control and other Muslim-dominated port cities and agricultural regions that would make the state economically viable. At the time of its creation, Lebanon was built upon a political compromise between Maronite Christians (slightly majoritarian) and Sunni Muslims most of whom longed for a wider Syrian or Arab nation and were rather reluctant to the idea of an independent Lebanon. This unwritten National Pact defined Lebanon as a state that identified as Arab but that would never become part of Syria or any other Arab state. Upon independence in 1945, Muslim grievances came to the surface as they felt that the settlement that the National Pact was built upon had failed to address their concerns. The compromise that underpinned the National Pact had reserved government positions for members of specific sects. While the powerful position of president was offered to the Maronite Christians, Sunni and Chii Muslims received the much weaker positions of Prime Minister and speaker of parliament. As Lebanon was getting ready to embark on an independent journey, the Lebanese Muslims were growing more frustrated with the arrangement that established their nascent nation.⁸¹⁸

Resting on a fragile arrangement, Lebanon's frail composure was shaken again in 1956 as the spirit of Arab nationalism captivated the Arab world with Jamal Abdel Nasser's altercation with Western forces and his call for Arab unity. Growing tensions between

⁸¹⁸ Malley, M. (2018). The Lebanese Civil War and the Taif Accord: Conflict and Compromise Engendered by Institutionalized Sectarianism. *The History Teacher*, 52(1), 121-159.

Muslims and Christians were revived when the Lebanese government reaffirmed its strong ties to the West and accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine in March 1957. Foreign Minister Charles Malik -who would subsequently turn to be the intellectual mentor of the Lebanese Forces- viewed pan-Arabism as a great threat to Lebanese sovereignty. Malik became the driving force behind Lebanon's opposition to the idea of Arab nationalism and the country's ensuing alignment with the United States.⁸¹⁹ The Christians' inclination to turn to the West was in keeping with their historical alignments, and reflected their deep-rooted obsession with preserving their vulnerable autonomy, repeatedly threatened over many centuries by Muslim incursions.

Fear of suppression resurfacing yet again

It is no surprise that, when the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) armed and political presence in Lebanon started to gain momentum with growing Sunni Muslim sympathies, the Christian bloc found itself in a state of extreme wariness. Against a background of growing social and political disagreements, Palestinians' frequent militarized operations in Lebanon sparked tensions that would lead Christian militias to confront the Palestinian armed factions and their Lebanese allies forthrightly. Much ink has been spilled on the Lebanese civil war and it is not my aim to evaluate neither the rationale behind, nor the impact of a war that has generated many antipodal feelings, both arguably valid in a number of ways. Rather, I would like to highlight the position of the Christian militias that would later unite under the banner of the Lebanese Forces, as they confronted what they perceived as yet another threat to their national sovereignty.

For centuries, the Maronite community held the line, fighting to protect its autonomy in the midst of what was perceived as hostile environments. This looming attack was no different. Once again sovereignty was at stake, only this time, the mountainous community that had prized its autonomy and was able to preserve it over many centuries had created a nation with its own government and wasn't ready to let go. According to Baraghid, when the

⁸¹⁹ Sorby, K. (2000). Lebanon: the Crisis of 1958. *Asian and African Studies*, 9(1), 76-109.

Lebanese Forces chose the military path, it was to defend the 'Lebanese identity'. As he put it, "It was a matter of survival."⁸²⁰ To the Lebanese Forces, sovereignty is the foundational principle their existence. The head of the LF media department explained that to this day, the party considers that the very existence of the Lebanese nation is endangered. According to Jabbour, the LF party's core mission is precisely to mitigate that danger.⁸²¹ Staunch supporters of a strong state, able to defend its citizens against imminent perils, the Lebanese Forces fiercely defend the idea that the monopoly of arms should be vested in the Lebanese Armed Forces so no other groups are compelled -or even tempted- to take over the defense of the country on behalf of government authorities. Based upon fears of suppression and subjugation, the Maronite community's history take root in the LF's innermost apprehensions, generating anxiety about loss of rights, freedom, and sovereignty. Those fears would remain constant throughout LF's history and would often transpire in LF policies, speeches and advocacies. Ubiquitous in LF anthem, songs, and slogans, the concepts of rights, freedom, and sovereignty drive the party's movements and projects.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the LF party: a strong linkage

According to Snider, when the Lebanese Forces emerged as an armed group, they came forward as a progressive group with idealistic views of civil service, which they believed should be carried out exclusively in the interest of citizenry. While the armed resistance didn't develop a doctrine of its own, in 1977 the group's political wing, the National Front, outlined its national strategy in a National Charter. The document spelled out a set of guidelines reflecting the group's core beliefs and basic requirements. Among other things, the charter insisted upon LF's attachment to Lebanon's distinctive characteristics (i.e., its republican, democratic, parliamentary, pluralist, free and open society), and the Christian community's desire to promote equality at all levels for all Lebanese communities. The Lebanese Front's position on democracy, pluralism, and freedom established the group's commitment, since its creation, to the ethos of democracy and democratic governance.

⁸²⁰ Baraghid, E. (2019). *Author's interview with Baraghid* [Interview].

⁸²¹ Jabbour, C. (2019). *Author's interview with Charles Jabbour* [Interview].

Throughout the war and despite vicissitudes that followed the peace settlement, the language of the charter and the views of the founding fathers were to remain at the core of the Lebanese Forces' credo and to this day, they still reflect the party's views of how the Lebanese nation should be like. While announcing parliament candidate nominations in February 2022, the head of the Lebanese Forces Party, Samir Geagea declared that the LF is expected to manifest traits of sacrifice, devotion, and commitment to freedom. Geagea was referring to Charles Malik's teaching, one the pioneers of the *Lebanese Front*, the political wing of the Lebanese Forces armed resistance.⁸²² Malik - not a Maronite himself - believed that Maronites were bound to give back what the land had bestowed upon them over the centuries. They were expected to safeguard and preserve personal freedom above everything else. In Malik's own words: "Maronites may indulge in anything or negotiate anything except existential personal freedoms, which alone can provide both the plurality of their heritage and their peaceful and ingenious interaction."⁸²³ A politician, diplomat, and philosopher, Malik was a major ideological force in the *Lebanese Front*. Malik's philosophy was to become an inherent element of the LF wartime and post-war political orientation, and remains an integral part of the LF party's political education curriculum.⁸²⁴ A world-renowned figure, Charles Malik was none other than one of the main architects of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). A prominent participant in the drafting of the UDHR in 1948, he is remembered as one of the most authoritative contributors to the brainstorming sessions. According to Mitoma, Malik had a "Decisive influence whether in shaping the specific language of any number of articles or in shepherding the Declaration through the polarized Cold War bureaucracy of the United Nations." It is noteworthy that Malik joined the U.N. commission not as a political representative of the Lebanese government but as a scholar. The trained philosopher is credited for playing a crucial role in the drafting of Article 1 of the UDHR: "All men are born free and equal in dignity and rights; they are endowed with reason and

⁸²² Al Minbar. (2022). *What did Geagea mean about Charles Malik's Maronite thinking?* ماذا قصد جعجع عن مارونية شارل مالك.

⁸²³ Malik, C. (1974-1980). Charles Malik's Letters to the Maronites. In.

⁸²⁴ LF Political Training Unit. Summary of the book Two Letters to the Maronites by Charles Malik. In.

conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” Malik is also remembered for his foundational role in the two articles that guarantee the right to “change religion or belief,” and prohibit coercion in matters of faith and belief in the UDHR and ICCPR respectively.⁸²⁵

Malik’s connection to the Lebanese Forces cannot be overlooked as we examine the former armed group’s guiding principles. The pundit believed that Maronites, which represented the majority of LF members, were meant to epitomize the fight for personal freedoms and the promotion of human rights in Lebanon. He often reminded Maronites of their historic role and mission in the Middle East, which is to carry that torch and uphold the values of openness, creativity and freedom.⁸²⁶ Explicitly referring to Malik’s ideology, the LF *Political Educational Curriculum*, states the party’s deep commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and all international laws and agreements that relate to private and public human rights. These obligations, considered central to the LF core values, are also referenced in the bylaws and a number of academic papers that were issued by the party. For example, in its *Who Are We and What do We Want* manual, the Lebanese Forces binds itself to preserve, strengthen and reinforce freedom and human dignity, and support any individual whose freedom and dignity are being endangered or violated. The document also unambiguously declares its non-sectarianism and openness to any Lebanese individual who aspires to the same ideals as those professed by the party.⁸²⁷ These affirmations, along with Geagea’s recent statement, testify to the influence of Malik’s views on the party. An outlook that is deeply anchored in the universal principles of human rights.

⁸²⁵ Mitoma, G. (2010). Charles H. Malik and Human Rights: Notes on a biography. *Biography*, 33(1), 222-241.

⁸²⁶ LF Political Training Unit. Summary of the book *Two Letters to the Maronites* by Charles Malik. In.

⁸²⁷ Political Education Curriculum. *The Lebanese Forces: Who are we and what do we want?* In: *The Lebanese Forces*.

CONCLUSION

A thorough review of these groups' wartime values shows that, despite adapting their ideologies to fit the needs of the post-war context, as political parties, these groups remained devoted to the moral commitments that triggered, accompanied, or were shaped by their armed struggles. The experiences of armed mobilization and the engagement in peace talks sometimes created contexts to which these parties had to adapt, moderating or altering their ideologies to meet the requirements of the moment. Nevertheless, as these parties embarked on their political journeys, their wartime value system remained at the center of their political fights, and was clearly reflected in their legislative and advocacy projects. In the post-war context, and despite their wide differences, the four parties studied shared many traits and fought for similar objectives, chiefly, basic social and human rights, equal rights, peace, sovereignty, independent judiciary, personal freedoms, and human dignity.

Other similar cases might provide a useful insight into the nature of that common denominator. The SPLM serves as one of many examples of political parties that were not able to sustain the advances that resulted from the peace settlement. The party's weak commitment to democratic practices led to little achievements as it succumbed to renewed violence and ethnic clashes.⁸²⁸ Yet, much like most of the cases under review, the party emerged after the signature of a peace agreement that, while not explicitly solving the grievances between warring parties, was able to halt the fighting and prepare the ground for a true transformation.⁸²⁹ But according to Young, the transition from a military to a political focus hardly ever happened.⁸³⁰ In Young's view, SPLM's fixation on self-determination hampered its post postwar transformation into a credible democratic political player. This argument left us wondering why, against the same background, Sinn Féin's obsession with a United Ireland unfolded into a distinct postwar behavior and didn't handicap its political

⁸²⁸ Castillejo, C. (2016). *The Role of Ex-Rebel Parties in Building Peace*.

<https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196432/58c5d33363f2f7060599cd2e44ab1658.pdf>

⁸²⁹ De Alessi, B. (2012). *The War to Peace Transition of the SPLM/A into the SPLM during the implementation of the Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement* SOAS, University of London].

⁸³⁰ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

behavior after the guns fell silent. While not abandoning the goal of a United Ireland, Sinn Féin was able to integrate the Irish political realm with no return to arms and with a clear commitment to democratic values. Sinn Féin’s postwar experience reflected the party’s historic values, values that were perhaps lacking in the Sudanese party.

| CORE VALUES | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| | PRE-WAR | WARTIME | POST-WAR |
| | TYPE OF GRIEVANCE | CAUSE/COMMITMENTS | ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR |
| AD M-19 | Lack of rights and freedom | Secure equality of rights | Participated in the drafting of a constitution that consecrated human rights |
| FMLN | -Lack of rights and freedom -Social inequality and unfair land distribution | Secure equality of rights | Designed policies and drafted legislation that promoted justice and human rights |
| SINN FÉIN | -Sectarian discrimination -Lack of rights and freedom | Secure equality of rights | Designed policies and drafted legislation that promoted equality and human rights |
| LEBANESE FORCES | Fear of subjugation | Preserve freedom and individual rights | Designed policies and drafted legislation that promoted individual freedoms and human rights |

Figure 9: Political parties core values

CHAPTER 6: POLITICAL LEGACIES AND CONTEMPORARY DYNAMICS

The political life spans of the four parties studied vary considerably spanning from 4 years in the case of the AD M-19 to 118 as regards Sinn Féin; the Lebanese Forces and the FMLN having just celebrated three decades of non-armed political participation. But while these parties' duration in time greatly differs, the longevity of their political heritage is largely comparable through the important changes that they helped bring about. After enjoying a blaze of glory, the AD M-19 and the FMLN suffered massive setbacks but left momentous national footprints. Having evolved in an opposite manner -growing increasingly important over the years- The Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin's legacies are still in the making. This chapter will present the political heritage and contemporary developments of these movements while introducing a new comparative perspective between the electoral defeats of AD M-19 and the FMLN, and the opposite experiences of Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces.

RISE AND FALL OF TWO IDIOSYNCRATIC MODELS: MISSTEPS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE COLOMBIAN AND SALVADORAN CASES

INTRODUCTION

While the promising prospects of the AD M-19's initial success vanished in a relatively short period of time, the FMLN's gradual electoral rise was crowned with success with the victorious election of its presidential candidate in 2009. Yet, in both cases, missteps eroded confidence and led to an eventual setback. Many justifications are offered to explain the defeats. In the case of the AD M-19, former party members ascribe responsibility to misinterpretations of the initial victories, party heterogeneity, lack of experience, and absence of party discipline. In El Salvador, many argue that, as a ruling party, the FMLN failed to bring about the long-awaited changes that it was entrusted with, falling short of

addressing the root causes of the country's real problems. Both FMLN and AD M-19 leaders were also accused of betraying their campaign promises and compromising their values to achieve personal goals.

THE AD M-19'S HARD-LEARNED LESSONS

The AD M-19's 1994 electoral defeat profoundly shook the political scene and led to much speculation as to the causes of the setback. To former party members, a number of reasons explain the reverse of fortune. Among those cited were the failure to build a solid institution; wrong party messaging; poor electoral choices; erroneous interpretation of initial victories; a troubled environment; and party heterogeneity.

Failure to build a solid institution

Growing nebulous and exhilarated by the initial success, AD M-19 party leaders didn't realize the importance of getting organized, mistakenly believing that the favorable electoral results of 1990 represented a permanent trend. Little time was invested in devising a vision and formulating a program, and even less energy was devoted to building a cohesive organization with an integrated approach. According to Pabon, after peace was sealed, guerrilla members, bewildered by their initial victory, lost sight of the ideological commitments that had driven the armed struggle.⁸³¹ Moreover, with the assassination of Carlos Pizarro, the former guerrilla had also lost an inspirational leader who commanded authority and had the potential to lead a successful war-to-peace transition.

Wrong party messaging

In hindsight, many interviewees also laid blame on the party's inability to craft the right campaigning messages. According to Franco, by overstating the peace agreement, the party was fixated on the wrong issue and ignored much more pressing matters that carried greater

⁸³¹ Pabon, R. (2018). *Author's interview with Rosemberg Pabon* [Interview].

significance at that point in time. The peace rhetoric that former guerilla members obsessed about diverted attention from the real problems that the nation was facing and that voters were really concerned with.⁸³² But talking about peace in Colombia also lacked accuracy. While the government had succeeded in sealing several agreements with a number of small guerrillas, peace was far from settled since many armed groups remained active after 1990.

Poor electoral choices

Despite a slight decline in approval ratings, prior to the 1994 elections, the party's popularity was deemed respectable. But the party's decision to participate in the wasp operation squandered its electoral potential and benefited the party's political opponents. According to Navarro who presided the party at that juncture, the election results -no senate seat, and only one candidate elected to the chamber of representatives- largely underrepresented the party's popularity at that point in time, estimated at 20 percent of voting intention.⁸³³ Despite being aware of the dangers of the wasp operation, Navarro had refused to impose his views on party candidates. Undoubtedly, Navarro's conciliatory approach and inability to adjudicate on issues that divided the party, vastly contributed to the party's poor electoral performance.

Erroneous interpretation of initial victories

Without any doubt, given Colombia's political history, the circumstances leading to the 1990 elections were rather exceptional. The hype of the Constituent Assembly and the political context of the elections, created by an extraordinary situation, had distorted reality and confused the issues to the advantage of the AD M-19. An exceptionally low turnout had also worked in the new party's favor. The 1990 elections had witnessed an abstention rate that exceeded 73 percent, the highest in 30 years, with only 26 percent of registered electors exercising their right to vote.⁸³⁴

⁸³² Franco, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Carlos Franco* [Interview].

⁸³³ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁸³⁴ Echeverry Campuzano, A. M., & Ramírez Bacca, R. (2014). Proceso constituyente and asamblea nacional 1991. Representaciones sobre la paz en la prensa. Escrita a partir de voz. La verdad del pueblo. *Folios Revista De La Facultad De Comunicaciones*, 2014, 30.

Troubled environment and party heterogeneity

Finally, yet importantly, during the AD M-19's first years in politics, an increase in combat levels created a troubled environment. Between 1989 and 1993, combat fatalities for armed forces and guerrillas had risen from 669 to 1,573,⁸³⁵ exposing the party to the wrath of armed adversaries who resented the former guerrilla's new role in legality. Fearing reprisals and seeking protection, the movement rallied political figures from all across the political spectrum including some that originated from traditional parties, a mixture that ultimately undermined the image of the organization.⁸³⁶

But despite the electoral collapse, the AD M-19's experience transformed the social and political configuration of Colombia marking the beginning of a new era where the political left would play an increasingly important role on the political battlefield. Twenty-eight years after the 1994 electoral defeat, former M-19 guerrilla fighter Gustavo Petro was elected president of Colombia, becoming the country's first leftist head of state. Petro's rise to the presidency was nothing less than historic.

FMLN: THE CRESTS AND TROUGHS OF A SUCCESS STORY

The FMLN's access to power 17 years after its transformation into a political party, was hailed as a shining example of a successful war-to-peace conversion. But despite the party's impressive trajectory, the FMLN suffered a severe electoral defeat in the 2019 presidential elections. Embroiled in a number of controversies and accused of omissions and wrongdoings, the FMLN leadership gradually lost credibility leading the party to its massive downfall.

⁸³⁵ Richani, N. (2002). The Military and the Comfortable Impasse. In i. G. P. SUNY series (Ed.), *Systems of Violence: The Political Economy of War and Peace in Colombia (Second Edition)*.

⁸³⁶ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

FMLN's early days in civil life were rough. Nowhere was this more evident than in 1993, when the UN Truth Commission determined that party leaders were responsible for grave human rights violations and recommended they be banned from exercising public functions for a period of ten years minimum.⁸³⁷ In addition, the accidental explosion of an arms cache in Nicaragua in 1993 exposed FMLN's noncompliance with the implementation process, and almost costed the party its participation in the 1994 elections.⁸³⁸ A few years later, evidence emerged that former guerrilla members with links to the party, were involved in the kidnappings of two wealthy Salvadorans further undermining the party's credibility.⁸³⁹ But as the FMLN gradually moved away from trouble, it successfully incorporated the political system, making its way to highest office in the nation.

As a ruling party, despite the numerous achievements, FMLN policies attracted great criticism. The party's inability to address the public security crisis, gang violence and delinquency didn't go unnoticed. According to a United Nations Human Rights (UNHR) report, in 2015 homicide rate in El Salvador was the highest in the world, and gender-based violence and femicide rates had reached *epidemic proportions*. According to the same report, and despite important efforts to provide justice to victims of past human rights violations, serious legal obstacles to the investigation and prosecution of those violations remained. The involvement of the national army in law enforcement operations was also a matter of concern.⁸⁴⁰ The FMLN's judicial handling of the amnesty law that human rights groups constantly tried to revoke, cast doubts on the real impact of the many improvements that the party had brought to the judiciary.⁸⁴¹ The party's social and economic policies were often

⁸³⁷ Sprenkels, R. (2011). Roberto d'Aubuisson vs Schafik Handal: Militancy, Memory Work and Human Rights. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 91, 15-30.

⁸³⁸ Call, C. (2002). Assessing El Salvador's Transition from Civil War to Peace. In S. J. Stedman, D. Rothchild, & E. Cousens (Eds.), *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements* Lynne Rienner Press.

⁸³⁹ Sprenkels, R. (2011). Roberto d'Aubuisson vs Schafik Handal: Militancy, Memory Work and Human Rights. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 91, 15-30.

⁸⁴⁰ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR). (2018). *Human Rights Committee review report of El Salvador*.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22824&LangID=E>

⁸⁴¹ Kurtenbach, S. (2018). *Judicial Reform - A Neglected Dimension of SSR in El Salvador*

seen as deceptive and concealing a persisting and pervasive poverty.⁸⁴² The much touted educational programs were also criticized as misleading, offering poverty alleviation measures but failing to improve the quality of education.⁸⁴³ Undoubtedly, a number of elements worked to the FMLN's disadvantage. The party's lack of a legislative majority, El Salvador's shortage of natural resources, and hostility from a right-wing judiciary also constrained the FMLN government and hindered progress.⁸⁴⁴ Lastly, accusations of greed and corruption gradually damaged the party image and drew voters away.⁸⁴⁵ According to Kurtenbach, a system of "elite accommodation" had developed between the FMLN and right-wing ARENA, both parties finding a common interest in preserving institutional policies and behaviors.⁸⁴⁶

By the time Sánchez Cerén took office, the excitement and expectations that had propelled FMLN's first period in government had faded away and the new president was met more skepticism. Voters' dissatisfaction was reflected in the 2018 legislative and municipal elections when huge losses for the FMLN benefited right-wing ARENA. In 2019, the electors that once voted for the 'four letters' for lack of a better option, were presented with another alternative. A young attractive leftist candidate that once ran as an FMLN candidate but had drifted away from the party, offered an alternate solution and was elected to the presidency in February 2019.⁸⁴⁷ The election of Nayib Bukele crystallized people's discontent, sounding the death knell of the FMLN whose candidate had won a mere 14% amidst high abstention. But the innumerable programs and policies that the FMLN put in place to advance human rights and promote social equity introduced long-lasting changes that drastically transformed a country where violence, violation of human rights and impunity prevailed.

⁸⁴² Cañas, R. (2018). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁴³ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview]., Samayoa, S. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁴⁴ Young, K. A. (2019). *El Salvador's FMLN and the Constraints on Leftist Government*

⁸⁴⁵ Martínez, A. G. (2018b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁴⁶ Kurtenbach, S. (2018). *Judicial Reform - A Neglected Dimension of SSR in El Salvador*

⁸⁴⁷ Young, K. A. (2019). *El Salvador's FMLN and the Constraints on Leftist Government*

SINN FÉIN AND THE LEBANESE FORCES: A REWARDED TRANSFORMATION

SINN FÉIN: FROM BANISHMENT TO TRIUMPH

Over the past few decades, Sinn Féin's popularity witnessed a steady growth both North and South of Ireland. In the North, despite sharing the nationalist votes with the SDLP, Sinn Féin enjoys an undisputable popularity in many areas including Belfast, Tyrone, Derry, Fermanagh, and Armagh.⁸⁴⁸ Despite a more competitive environment, Sinn Féin was also recently able to shake the Irish Republic's political establishment, winning more first preference votes than any of the parties that had dominated Irish politics since 1932.⁸⁴⁹

Deep-rooted, Sinn Féin's popularity in the North is largely a result of the population's appreciation for the innumerable sacrifices made over centuries to defend the republican cause. According to Ó hAdhmaill, Sinn Féin's standing in the North is almost taken for granted. As he described it, "In West Belfast, if you put a monkey for elections and said that this person represented Sinn Féin, more than likely, people will vote for that monkey." The party's leftist policies, embraced by the working class -who enthusiastically welcomed Sinn Féin's more radical positions- further contributed the party's popularity. As Ó hAdhmaill wryly remarked, "When the vote for Sinn Féin goes down it is not because they are viewed as being too extreme or too radical but it is because they're seen as being not radical enough."⁸⁵⁰

While consistent in the North, the party's popularity in the South was less predictable. Competing against parties that were also involved in the national liberation struggle, Sinn Féin's nationalist zeal in the Republic was less impressive.⁸⁵¹ A Broadcasting Act in effect

⁸⁴⁸ MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁸⁴⁹ BBC. (2020). Irish General Election: Sinn Féin celebrate historic result
In.

⁸⁵⁰ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁸⁵¹ Ibid.

until 1994, as well as a general media bias against Sinn Féin, impacted voters' perceptions of the party for at least two generations. With the lifting of the ban, the party was finally able to present a new image associated with peace, human rights, and social justice.⁸⁵² Sinn Féin's 'economic justice for all' trademark, and its endorsement of the cause of the underprivileged also gained it the support of an important section of the population.⁸⁵³ The party's increase in popularity was also the result of an overwhelming support of a large section of the Irish youth who, unlike previous generations, didn't have a living memory of the troubles and was willing to accept the new image that the party aimed to project.⁸⁵⁴ Lastly, the end of the armed conflict had also reconciled many hesitant supporters with a party they liked but were reluctant to join because of its links to the IRA.⁸⁵⁵ With a revamped image, party leaders were now able to appeal to young men and women disconnected from the conflict and willing to see in them the peace-seeking statesmen/women, rather than the fighters tainted by the war years.⁸⁵⁶ This image transformation was reflected in Sinn Féin's steady increase in the election results, and the constant growth of the number of people declaring their intention to vote for the party.⁸⁵⁷

In recent years, Sinn Féin was also able to extend its electorate to a more economically and geographically diverse voter base to include middle-class and rural areas supporters.⁸⁵⁸ In addition, as the class structure evolved to include more middle and upper middle-class voters, low electoral turnout -a real obstacle to Sinn Féin's electoral performance in the past- was gradually reversed with more constituents willing to exercise their right to vote. The new voters also included traditional Sinn Féin supporters such as manual and lower paid workers, a section that was previously viewed as less likely to vote, but that was turned into

⁸⁵² MacDonncha, M. (2019). *Author's interview with Micheál Mac Donncha* [Interview].

⁸⁵³ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁸⁵⁴ Agnew, R. (2020). Can Sinn Féin's young voters finally pull Ireland to the left? . *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/31/sinn-fein-ireland-left-election-ira>

⁸⁵⁵ Walsh, S. (2017). *Author's interview with Seanna Walsh* [Interview].

⁸⁵⁶ Resilience.org. (2020). *The Rise of Sinn Fein: Ireland's Bernie moment*.

⁸⁵⁷ Maillot, A. s. (2005). *The new Sinn Féin : Irish republicanism in the twenty-first century*. Routledge.

⁸⁵⁸ Gibney, J. (2019). *Author's interview with Jim Gibney* [Interview].

a more politically engaged constituency.⁸⁵⁹ Sinn Féin's historic win in the February 2020 Irish general election marked a turning point in the party's history coming as a surprise to many and astonishing even the party itself. In a giant leap into mainstream politics the party's electoral success was perceived as a harbinger of change in the Republic's political landscape.⁸⁶⁰ Sinn Féin is credited for championing human rights and social equity, fighting discrimination, and giving a voice to the underprivileged.

THE LEBANESE FORCES: THE GREAT COMEBACK

After a 15-year ban on its political activities, the Lebanese Forces resurfaced with strength, equipped with a solid institution, and a remarkable capacity to appeal to voters and challenge its political foes. Fully embracing the fundamental principles of democracy, the party worked on radically transforming its image, and asserted itself as a major player on the national political arena.

In a country where many political parties carry an armed history, the transformation was meant to be less outstanding than in the other three cases. But the Lebanese Forces' exceptionally difficult transition from arms to politics proved to be way more challenging than in the other instances. Upon its transformation into political party, the LF was dissolved and banned from any political activities, with its leader arrested and imprisoned for 11 years. After more than a decade of ostracism, the Lebanese Forces reemerged and gradually reconstructed itself becoming the fastest-growing party in Lebanon. Today, the party prides itself with unequivocal commitment to peaceful democracy, and a well-structured and highly cohesive organization.

The Lebanese Forces' earnest political engagement gradually translated into more seats in parliament and a well-recognized regional and international posture. Fully committed to

⁸⁵⁹ Ó hAdhmaill, F. (2019). *Author's interview with Féilim Ó hAdhmaill* [Interview].

⁸⁶⁰ The Guardian. (2020). Sinn Féin declares victory in Irish General Election. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/10/sinn-fein-declares-victory-irish-general-election>

peace, the party devised a program that prioritized sovereignty, economic prosperity and the fight against corruption. In the 2018 and 2022 parliamentary elections, the electorate responded favorably to these engagements. Experiencing the largest change in number of seats in 2018, the Lebanese Forces nearly doubled its presence in parliament. Broadening its geographic reach, LF's bloc presence extended to four more districts than in previous elections, expanding east into Baalbek-Hermel and securing seats in multiple Mount Lebanon districts.⁸⁶¹

In the 2022 elections, the Lebanese Forces' share in parliament further expanded, adding six additional seats. The party's message, mainly calling for the disarmament of Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah party resonated with many voters, earning it 19 seats, up from 15 in the 2018 vote, and making it the largest single party in parliament.⁸⁶²

Despite a sharp improvement in its political standing, the Lebanese Forces faces fierce political opposition, primarily from the armed Hezbollah party and the Free Patriotic Movement. And while it is not unusual for Lebanese parties to have been involved in violence during the war, the Lebanese Forces' violent past and its ingrained sectarian image heavily haunt the party's postwar political life. In October 2021, after deadly clashes erupted near a protest in the Beirut area, the Lebanese Forces were accused of shooting Hezbollah supporters and killing seven people. Despite strongly denying the accusations, the armed resistance's past involvement in the bloody sectarian war made the allegations look plausible, even if they didn't fully convince LF supporters who showed up in big numbers at election time. Centered around a message of sovereignty, the Lebanese Forces imposed itself as the guarantor of a state free from corruption, clientelism, and private interests. Also asserting its presence in the global arena, the Lebanese Forces became a major player, gaining recognition at the regional and international levels. Engaging with civil society, LF

⁸⁶¹ Atallah, S., & Zoughaib, S. (2019). *A Snapshot of Parliamentary Election Results*.

https://www.lcps-lebanon.org/publications/1556883474-parliamentary_election_1_web.pdf

⁸⁶² Gavlak, D. (2022). Lebanon's New Parliament Faces Problem of Hezbollah's Weapons. *voanews.com*. <https://www.voanews.com/a/lebanon-s-new-parliament-faces-problem-of-hezbollah-s-weapons-/6586948.html>

members of parliaments helped shape the national agenda in favor of human, women, and children's rights. LF also sought to promote transparency, and adopted a language of reconciliation and national unity.

LEGACY OF AN ECCENTRIC CASE: AN EXTINCT PARTY STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE

AD M-19: A FALLEN PARTY OR A TRAILBLAZER?

To this date, the evolution of the AD M-19 is subject to theoretical debate. While many consider the party extinct, others would argue otherwise, claiming that the party's legacy remains alive. Amongst former supporters, the AD M-19 is widely perceived as having mutated into different expressions and produced prominent leaders that played and continue to play instrumental roles on the national political scene.

According to Navarro, the party never disappeared but underwent change of names several times, and still lives on through the *Alianza Verde* (a center-left political party). As it happens, the *Alianza Verde* has the same legal status as the AD M-19's. In fact, when the party disintegrated following the 1994 elections, the AD M-19 didn't relinquish its legal identity, and that same legal identity was harnessed by the party successors. Navarro reported that the movement that was initially created under the banner of the *Alianza Democrática* survived with the same 1990 legal status under three different names: *Opción Centro* [Center Option], *Partido Verde* [Green Party] and *Alianza Verde* [Green Alliance]. To Navarro, this wasn't necessarily planned but was rather the result of an unorderly dispersal. He explained, "We never decided to terminate the party, the disintegration of the party was the result of individual decisions. Some people left, others, more stubborn, or more consistent, remained and that's how the legal status survived..."⁸⁶³ After the party disbanded, many former members joined other leftist parties such as *El Polo Democrático Alternativo* [the alternative

⁸⁶³ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

democratic pole] or -after that party faced its own crisis- the *Partido Verde* [green party] or other movements or coalitions.⁸⁶⁴ According to Navarro, today's Green Alliance, considered the AD M-19's latest transmutation, has almost as many congressmen as the AD M-19 had at its height. As he proudly reported, "In 1991 the *Alianza Democrática* could boast 22 representatives in congress, today the *Alianza Verde* is represented by 20."⁸⁶⁵

After the electoral debacle of 1994, many party members chose to remain politically engaged and gradually rose to national prominence. The AD M-19's political heirs include a president, mayors and senators. The most recognizable names are Colombia's current President Gustavo Petro and longtime Senator Antonio Navarro. In 2018 already, Petro had emerged as a favorite in the presidential elections, coming second in the first round. According to Novoa, Petro's election to the presidency of the Colombian republic essentially testifies to the party's enduring legacy, Petro's ideology being the same as that of the AD M-19.⁸⁶⁶

According to Villamizar, the party also lives on through public figures that were not necessarily affiliated to the party but emerged as a result of the "process" that the AD M-19 helped shape. He mentioned former mayor and governor Raul Delgado, former president of the *Partido Verde* and son of Jorge Iván Ospina (M-19 co-founder); and María José Pizarro, member of parliament and daughter of Carlos Pizarro (former M-19 leader). To Villamizar these important figures are a living example of the party's legacy. As he put it, "I don't feel that in 2018 the AD M-19 is over, what we can say is that there was a political process that could not be maintained but that today, has many expressions alive."⁸⁶⁷

While it is reasonable to believe that a party that ceases to exist in its original form is a failed venture, the experience of the *Alianza Democrática* is worth considering in a different light. Many former members argue that the AD M-19 was not a political party but rather a 'movement of thought'. To them, the party served as an agent for change, a trailblazer for a

⁸⁶⁴ Villaraga, A. (2017). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁶⁵ Navarro, A. (2018). *Author's interview with Antonio Navarro* [Interview].

⁸⁶⁶ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁸⁶⁷ Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

renewed Colombia. The party's mission wasn't to sustain itself as a political institution but rather to bring about important changes that would have long-lasting effects on the nation.⁸⁶⁸ According to Posso, the AD M-19 was never a party, but rather an opinion movement that formed around some political figures with a political message.⁸⁶⁹ In 1990, the legal difference between a political party and a movement wasn't so clear. Novoa explained that the AD M-19's legal identity allowed it to be identified as either or. He noted, "In Colombia, there was no clear difference between a party and a political movement, both were organized groups that had to register with the National Electoral Council (CNE) and had similar status, it was assumed however, that the political party would be a more structured entity with greater stability than a political movement".⁸⁷⁰ In 1994, the Constitutional Court specified some elements of this difference. It postulated that a political movement is a more flexible structure that does not have the vocation of permanence that characterizes political parties.⁸⁷¹ The AD M-19's classification is still subject to heated debates but perhaps the party was never meant to conform to any categorization other than that of a catalyzer of a more representative and inclusive society.

⁸⁶⁸ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview]. , Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview]. , Pabon, R. (2018). *Author's interview with Rosemberg Pabon* [Interview]. , Villamizar, D. (2017b). *Interview with the author* [Interview].

⁸⁶⁹ González Posso, C. (2018). *Author's interview with Camilo Gonzales Posso* [Interview].

⁸⁷⁰ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁸⁷¹ Corte Constitucional. (1994). *Sentencia No. C-089/94*

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND LESSONS FROM OTHER CASES

Dubbed “organizational weapons” by Close and Prevost,⁸⁷² post-insurgent political parties are meant to be the means by which violent battles turn into peaceful ones. Far from pretending to depict an immaculate picture of the parties under review, this study principally aimed at shedding light on a feature that is often overlooked in the post-insurgent parties’ literature: their contribution to the improvement of democratic practices in the countries where they emerge. Irrespective of their ability to survive as relevant political contenders, the political parties examined in this research can log a considerable list of democratic achievements. In the cases of the AD M-19 and the FMLN, the most important contributions to democracy occurred at the moment of their transition from war to peace. The Salvadoran constitutional reforms that formed part of the Chapultepec agreement, and the Constituent Assembly that followed the M-19 demobilization, laid the foundations for the groundbreaking democratic transformations that followed. While the Good Friday agreement paved the way for a more participative democracy, in Northern Ireland, the transformations that resulted from the peace accord were less far-reaching. In the post-war period however, Sinn Féin has been a strong advocate of democratic practices, both North and South of the island. In Lebanon, while the Taef Accord created a more equitable confessional system, the consequences of these changes had a marginal impact on the improvement of democratic practices at the national level. Nonetheless, as a political party, the Lebanese Forces unequivocally defended human rights and democratic principles.

While the FMLN’s highly controversial performance as a ruling party is very much open to debate, the party’s contributions to a more just society cannot be questioned. Many of the legislations that the FMLN put forward and the programs that the party put in place

⁸⁷² Deonandan, K., Close, D., & Prevost, G. (2007). *From revolutionary movements to political parties : cases from Latin America and Africa* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

consolidated the gains that were achieved by the peace agreement. During its decade in power, the party is credited for having expanded public healthcare, promoted human rights and judicial independence, and improved gender representation. Unlike the FMLN, the AD M-19's political journey was cut short and left much to be desired. Nonetheless, the AD M-19's role in the Constituent Assembly paved the way for improved social and political rights, and fostered a new political culture that resulted in more participation than ever before in the history of Colombia. The extinct party also generated prominent political heirs including a recently elected president that testify to the movement's political legacy. Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces both emerged as political parties the contributions of which improved the overall democratic conditions in their respective countries. Beyond question, their peaceful participation in political life, the legislations they put forward, and their advocacies have pushed the boundaries of political inclusion, advanced freedoms, and protected basic human rights. Having risen to become the most popular party on the Island of Ireland, Sinn Féin can boast many successes on the democratic front. The party propelled women's role on the Island and became a mouthpiece for the often-neglected marginalized communities in the rural areas. Emerging from the ashes after 11 years of banishment, the Lebanese Forces worked its way back into the political arena, putting forward and pressing for a number of human rights and anti-corruption bills. The Lebanese Forces also became one of the leading forces for opposing the arms bearing of the remaining non-state armed group on the Lebanese territory.

My thesis revealed that the differences among these groups -the dissimilar journeys and the external and internal factors that might have influenced the parties' evolution as political parties- are of little relevance in explaining these parties' contribution to democracy on a national level. More specifically, I found that the exogenous factors -namely, nature of the peace agreement, the process of disarmament, the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, the electoral system, the political environment, international support, and previous political experience- had little influence on my thesis' outcome. Similarly, I have observed that these parties' contribution to democracy is not contingent upon the internal functioning of these parties, particularly, these parties' internal democracy, internal cohesion, communication methods, finances, leadership, or ideology.

The hypothesis formulated at the beginning of this study, which states that *there is a positive correlation between rebel-to-party transformation with a sincere commitment to engage in democratic practices and an improved democracy*, was thus confirmed by my findings. More specifically, this qualitative approach has revealed that the armed groups' renunciation of violence with a clear intention to commit to peaceful politics, positively impacted the quality of democracy at the country level irrespective of these parties' success as political institutions. Another interesting finding of this research was the identification of an additional feature that might have been a key factor that helped these parties emerge as agents for positive change irrespective of their locations, past history, institutional differences, and degrees of success. I found that these four cases shared wartime values and principles that were carried over as they turned the page of armed hostilities. These beliefs were rooted in historical memory and were the actual motivation for setting in motion the armed insurrection; they also remained constant throughout the parties' transition from war to peace and during the post-conflict period. These core values represented solid, intellectual foundations that withstood the ideological fluctuations that characterized their war-to-peace journeys.

The Lebanese and Irish cases certainly appear to be examples of parties that share many similarities. Both parties are sectarian in nature with a solid base of loyal followers, both had enduring leaderships, and both can be described as organizations marked by strong discipline and a great deal of cohesion. In addition, both parties enjoyed international backing from a supportive diaspora, and witnessed a growing popularity over the past few years. The war-to-peace arrangements in Lebanon and Northern Ireland also offer striking commonalities. In both of these settings, the peace agreements halted the fighting but failed to bring optimal solutions to the table. Eager to obtain the endorsement all sides, the negotiating parties had focused on the issues that could get the backing of most stakeholders, brushing off many critical issues, and leaving many underlying matters unresolved. The model of consociational governance in both nations proved its limits and while avoiding a

return to war, led to powerless governments that lacked legitimacy.⁸⁷³ The dysfunctionality of both countries' power-sharing governments led to recurring political deadlocks and inhibited the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin's ability to pursue the interests of their constituencies in a meaningful way. Because of their similar systems of governance, neither Lebanon nor Northern Ireland presented fertile grounds for political parties to push the boundaries of democratic practices in a transformative manner. Nonetheless, both Sinn Féin and the Lebanese Forces were able to reach many positive outcomes.

A main difference between the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin lies in the fact that Sinn Féin's history is longer, spanning over more than a century. Not to be neglected either is the fact that Sinn Féin's messaging of a united Ireland still resonates strongly today within an important section of the nationalist community. The Lebanese Forces' call for liberation on the other hand, died down after Syria withdrew its forces from the Lebanese territory. Nonetheless, the party's vehement opposition to the Iran-backed Hezbollah revived the sovereignty rhetoric resonating well with an important section of the electorate. It should also be noted that despite its many shortcomings, Sinn Féin's internal democracy has been more convincing than that of the Lebanese Forces. Unlike its Lebanese counterpart, Sinn Féin has been more observant of its internal regulations, holding regular internal elections, and carrying out a change of leadership, albeit under close scrutiny from the party's long-standing leader.

In Colombia and El Salvador, the history of the conflict, the nature of the struggle, (more centered around guerrilla warfare), and the armed groups' rhetoric (oriented towards the pursuit of improved social, human, and economic rights) are common features to the AD M-19 and the FMLN. As political parties, both cases witnessed a great deal of internal dissent and several changes in leadership. But the differences between the two Latin American cases are also striking. While the FMLN slowly fought its way to power reaching the country's

⁸⁷³ Reid, M. (2021). Lessons from Beirut to Belfast: How Dysfunctional Democracy Undermines Consociational Settlements in Deeply Divided Societies. <http://cstp.v.wps.st-andrews.ac.uk/files/2021/06/Lessons-from-Beirut-and-Belfast.pdf>

highest office for two consecutive terms, the AD M-19 failed to sustain itself as a viable political option. Despite an outstanding performance upon demobilization, the party dispersed and gradually faded away after a bitter electoral defeat.

The example of the AD M-19 however, best illustrates the role played by the guerrilla's core values in driving future achievements. By all means, the *Alianza Democrática* is not a shining example of a successful party experience. The party lacked cohesion, was totally disorganized, failed at defining a consistent ideology, and hardly lasted for three years. Nonetheless, the AD M-19's key role in a process that is considered a turning point in the history of Colombia is unquestionable. In 1991, with the active contribution of this movement, a new constitution that brought significant social and political changes was enacted. The national document facilitated the creation of new political parties; fostered participation; promoted the defense of human rights; and permanently changed the Colombian political culture. The former guerrilla also generated political heirs that challenged the traditional political landscape and remain essential figures in Colombian politics. The June 2022 election of former M-19 militant Gustavo Petro, marked a tidal shift for Colombia, bringing the first black vice-president in the country's history and promising sweeping social, fiscal, and environmental changes. It's almost irrelevant to talk about the AD M-19's democratic contributions as a political party, since the group's biggest contributions either took place before even it could constitute itself as a functional political organization, or came in the form of a political legacy. The deliberations that culminated in the drafting of the *Borrador de una Constitución* [Draft of a Constitution] -the document that would serve as the basis for the 1991 Constitution- were initiated in February 1991, less than a year following the signature of the Political Agreement that led to the guerrilla's demobilization. This major accomplishment, having unfolded in the midst of the war-to-peace transition, testifies to the armed group's deep-rooted understanding of democratic values and its longstanding commitment to democratic principles. The draft Constitution's content laid the foundations for an "authentic, democratic coexistence"⁸⁷⁴, and suggested

⁸⁷⁴ AD M-19. (1991). *Seminarios Regionales De Convocatoria al Congreso Nacional, Borrador de una Nueva Constitución para Colombia, Documento de Discusión, Febrero-Marzo de 1991.*

articles that were rooted in principles of tolerance, pluralism, and international human rights standards. This spectacular performance left me wondering about the role played by the armed groups' deep-rooted beliefs and principles in determining their future behavior as political parties. Examining the wartime core values of the other three cases, I found out that they all shared a set of values that were compatible with the concepts of democratic governance and the principles of human rights. These beliefs that were the underlying rationale for the armed struggle, remained constant throughout their transition into peaceful civil life, and were clearly reflected in their post-conflict legislative and advocacy projects as political institutions. It should be noted that these core values are quite distinct from party ideology, a party aspect that usually manifested ambiguity, and experienced much greater fluctuations.

SOME POTENTIAL LESSONS FROM OTHER SIMILAR CASES

In light of the four parties' achievements, one would wonder if this trend is specific to the cases chosen for my research, or if it reflects more broadly the experience of other parties with a comparable background. As post-conflict and post-insurgent parties' literature has shown, not all post-insurgent parties yield that same result. Examples such as the Renamo in Mozambique, the SPLM in South Sudan, or the CNDD-FDD in Burundi testify to the fact that a simple conversion from armed group to political player doesn't always produce political parties with a clear commitment to promoting democratic practices. Although the generalizability of these results requires more evidence to judge, a quick look at other similar experiences tends to suggest that, in a general way, armed groups that had democracy-compatible values from the outset of their military struggle were better positioned to positively contribute to the policy environment in their countries when the guns fell silent. On the other hand, this transition proved to be more difficult for parties that succeeded insurgent groups lacking that type of core values.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES

In the obvious case of South Africa, the African National Congress' (ANC) intense battle to improve political representation in a country that was well known for its injustices and divisions, gave rise to a post-insurgent party that can be credited for a large number of achievements. In a similar vein, the Uruguayan Frente Amplio, a coalition that included former insurgents and represented the underprivileged, produced a president who was deeply committed to promoting policies that prioritized human rights and social equity. Similarly, the United Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN) actively contributed to the creation of a new constitution that enshrined the protection of human rights and democracy. The post-insurgent National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) party in Angola adopted a conciliatory approach and campaigned for improved democratic practices, better governance and less impunity. Finally, and to only name a few, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (TPLF/EPRDF) rule in Ethiopia yielded rapid development progress, substantial economic success, and a marked reduction in poverty. I will quickly examine these cases while devoting greater attention to the case of the TPLF/EPRDF in Ethiopia.

ANC

The South African ANC is credited for creating a new South African constitution geared towards harmonizing the relationship between former foes, and promoting democratic values, social justice and the principles of human rights.⁸⁷⁵ The *White Paper for Social Welfare*, designed and adopted by the first ANC elected government, provided principles and proposed policies and programs for the development of health, nutrition, education, housing, employment, recreation, rural and urban development, and land reform.⁸⁷⁶ According to South African ambassador to Saudi Arabia, H.E. Rubushe, despite taking some of the reforms to an unhealthy extreme, the party's role in the country's democratic consolidation is unquestionable. Rubushe credited this success to the experience gained from the mistakes of other African countries who had undergone similar processes but also and importantly, to

⁸⁷⁵ *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. (1996). Retrieved from <https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996-preamble>

⁸⁷⁶ *White Paper for Social Welfare*. (1997). Republic of South Africa Retrieved from https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/whitepaperonsocialwelfare0.pdf

the ancestral art of deliberation. ANC's participatory approach and broad-based consultation tradition generated debates that resulted in more inclusiveness and representation. Although widely criticized for its remaining socioeconomic disparities between classes and races⁸⁷⁷ it is undisputable that the ANC has intended and largely succeeded to change the lives of South Africans for the better.

The Frente Amplio

Although not resulting from a peace agreement, the Tupumaros' reinsertion into civil life is a notable example of how a former armed group yielded political leaders that contributed to an improved democracy. After integrating former Tupumaros combatants into its coalition, the Uruguayan *Frente Amplio* emerged as a ruling party from 2005 to 2020 and shone through a president formerly known as a guerrilla leader. Winning with landslide victory, José Mujica, the *Frente Amplio's* presidential candidate marked a turning point in the country's history. Under Mujica, the government prioritized policies that drew special attention to the needs of socially disadvantaged groups.⁸⁷⁸ During the *Frente Amplio's* presidencies (with both Mujica and his predecessor), several institutional changes testified to the ruling party's serious commitment to promoting social equality; foremost among them, the creation of the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) and the health reform.⁸⁷⁹ While in power, the *Frente Amplio* instituted a third level of government (the municipal level) with the aim of delegating more power to citizens.⁸⁸⁰ The establishment of the social cooperatives legislations under Vásquez, and the creation of the Fund for Development (FONDES) under Mujica promoted the creation and development of social and solidarity

⁸⁷⁷ Southall, R. (2014). Democracy at Risk? Politics and Governance under the ANC. *The Annals of the American Academy, AAPSS*, 652, 48-70.

⁸⁷⁸ Luna, J. P. (2007). Frente Amplio and the Crafting of a Social Democratic Alternative in Uruguay. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 49(4), 1-30.

⁸⁷⁹ Garcé, A. (2013). *El Frente Amplio como Partido de Gobierno* (Universidad de Buenos Aires, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales, Issue).

⁸⁸⁰ Goldfrank, B. (2015). *Democracia Participativa e Izquierdas Logros, Contradicciones y Desafíos* (Democracia Participativa e Izquierdas, Issue).

economy enterprises.⁸⁸¹ It is noteworthy that the Tupumaro guerrilla's foundational documents gave prominence to the rule of law as a fundamental means to build an effective nation. The obvious contradiction between recognition of the importance of the rule of law and the resort to arms was later analyzed by Weinstein who observed that resorting to illegal activities stemmed from the fact that there were no other avenues left for the underprivileged to fight for an egalitarian society in Uruguay.⁸⁸²

UCPN

The United Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN)'s experience as a political party also yielded substantial results on the democratic front. The party's earlier variant, the CPN-M relentlessly campaigned for, and had a leading role in the overthrowing of the monarchical rule and the creation of the federal republic. It is also credited for advancing ethnic demands and the establishment of an inclusive democracy.⁸⁸³ The UCPN demonstrated its full commitment to the rules of democracy when, faced with an electoral setback, it gracefully accepted the results and worked jointly with the winning party accepting the mandate of the people.⁸⁸⁴ The party also had a major role in creating a political space for marginalized people and the formulation of the 2015 constitution, a document enshrining the protection of people's rights and democratic principles.⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸¹ Guerra, P., & Reyes, S. (2019). *La Construction Legislativa Uruguayana en Economía Social y Solidaria en el Marco de la Gobiernos Progresistas del Frente Amplio* (Cooperativismo & Desarrollo, Issue. <https://doi.org/10.16925/2382-4220.2019.01.05>

⁸⁸² Weinstein, M. (2007). *The Left's Long Road to Power in Uruguay*
Palgrave Macmillan.

⁸⁸³ Gellner, D. (2010). *Nepal: Trajectories of Democracy and Restructuring of the State*
(Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics, Issue.

⁸⁸⁴ IDEA. (2015). *Nepal's Constitution Building Process: 2006-2015 Progress, Challenges, and Contributions of International Community*.
<https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/nepals-constitution-building-process-2006-2015.pdf>

⁸⁸⁵ Castillejo, C. (2016). *The Role of Ex-Rebel Parties in Building Peace*.
<https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196432/58c5d33363f2f7060599cd2e44ab1658.pdf>

UNITA

After signing an agreement that ended 27 years of civil war in Angola, UNITA successfully transitioned from violent struggle to peaceful politics. As a political party, UNITA dramatically improved its electoral performance over the years, becoming Angola's principal opposition party and slowly embracing the rules of democracy. Implementing social services and educational projects at the local level, UNITA demonstrated its ability to effectively respond to social needs while gathering support through democratic means.⁸⁸⁶ The party proclaimed its commitment to ending discrimination, poverty, and inequalities in Angola.⁸⁸⁷ It also adopted a conciliatory tone and called for the strengthening of democratic practices while fighting corruption and impunity.⁸⁸⁸

TPLF/ EPRDF

Tracing its roots back to Marxist-oriented university students, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) emerged in the late 1970s as Tigrayan nationalists sought independence from Ethiopia. Representing an ethnic-based peasantry, the TPLF's leadership was staffed with young radical intellectuals who, with the help of the Eritrean People Liberation Front (EPLF) acquired considerable military experience and rose to become national leaders.⁸⁸⁹ After forming the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a united front with the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) and other groups with comparable goals,⁸⁹⁰ the former armed group acquired state power in 1991 and dominated Ethiopian politics until November 2019. As a ruling party, the EPRDF is credited with a number of accomplishments. These include major improvements in the areas of health and education and achieving measurable economic advances.⁸⁹¹ Fueled by an ambitious developmental state strategy modeled after the

⁸⁸⁶ Pearce, J. (2020). From Rebellion to Opposition: UNITA's Social Engagement in Post-War Angola. *Government and Opposition*, 55, 474-489.

⁸⁸⁷ Samakuva, I. (2013). Change in Angola: The Role of UNITA. In. Chatham House.

⁸⁸⁸ ANGOP. (2021). UNITA Advocates Effective Reconciliation.

⁸⁸⁹ Young, J. (1996). The Tigray and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Fronts: A History of Tensions and Pragmatism. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34(1), 105-120.

⁸⁹⁰ Milkias, P. (2008). Ethiopia, the TPLF, and the Roots of the 2001 Political Tremor. *Northeast African Studies*, 10(2), 13-66.

⁸⁹¹ Tadesse, M., & Young, J. (2003). TPLF: Reform or Decline? *Review of African Political Economy*, 97, 389-403.

successful cases of South Korea and Taiwan, Ethiopia succeeded in becoming one of the fastest-growing economies in recent years. According to the World Bank, between 2007 and 2022, Ethiopia's economy grew at an average rate of 9.5 percent per year, and despite a rise in inequality, between 2011 and 2016, the percentage of people living under the poverty line decreased from 30 to 24 percent. Human development indicators also improved over time.⁸⁹² Additionally, under the EPRDF, substantial improvements in health and education, 327 relative stability, and positive measures towards an improved democracy and more transparency were registered.⁸⁹³

According to John Young, the institutions and practices that were introduced by the EPRDF addressed democratic issues in significant ways. The EPRDF's commitment to national self-determination and the introduction of ethnic federalism represented a governance model that best ensured representation while preserving local traditions and values. Furthermore, the *gim gema* practice of self-evaluation aimed at promoting effective management and good governance.⁸⁹⁴ Ethnic federalism, gave full recognition to ethnic autonomy, while maintaining the unity of the state. This federal system encouraged an ethnic-based territorial federation and provided a secession option for states that wished to do so. This system also encouraged political parties to form and operate along ethnic lines.⁸⁹⁵ With the goal of improving performance, the TPLF designed its own procedure for self-evaluation. The *gim gema* practice, a system by which group members evaluate every possible aspect of the TPLF's program -including the quality of its management, and the individual behavior of all its members, in the open and in as much details as needed- aimed at promoting a culture of merit and transparency. This populist democratic practice became the foundation of the TPLF's style of governance and was replicated in many aspects of governance after the 1991

⁸⁹² Website, W. B. (2022). *The World Bank in Ethiopia, Overview*.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview#1>

⁸⁹³ Tadesse, M., & Young, J. (2003). TPLF: Reform or Decline? *Review of African Political Economy*, 97, 389-403.

⁸⁹⁴ Young, J. (2022). *Author's interview with John Young* [Interview].

⁸⁹⁵ Alem, H. (2003). *Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: Background, Conditions and Future Prospects* International Conference on African Development Archives,
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/africancenter_icad_archive/57

victory. Young reported that the *gim gema* evaluation procedure would even be applied in schools where, starting in grade one, students would evaluate their teachers, the programs, and the school as a whole. To the EPRDF, maintaining this practice ensured that movement wouldn't capitulate to the temptations of power.⁸⁹⁶

Like many similar groups, overtime, the TPLF was compelled to make a number of compromises. Between 1989 and 1991, in the aftermath of the Cold War, the TPLF abandoned its Marxist ideological stand and embraced *Revolutionary Democracy*, an ideology that was soon to be replaced by the *Developmental State* ideology, following a split within the TPLF in 2001. While officially rejecting the political views of Western powers, the TPLF reluctantly embraced some of its economic positions.⁸⁹⁷ With time, the TPLF's ideological zeal was watered down as local and regional circumstances swayed its positions in different directions. The *Developmental State* represented an acceptable compromise that preserved some of the TPLF's political principles and conformed with the group's belief that the State should retain a central role in the economy.⁸⁹⁸

Whether playing a direct role in government or in opposition, these post-insurgent parties have demonstrated their commitment to democratic norms and practices, and used political office, legislative powers or advocacy methods to help strengthen democracy, sometimes challenging establishment views on policy-making. ANC's broad-based consultation tradition and the TPLF/EPRDF's style of governance seem to suggest these groups' wartime traditions and aspirations shaped their postwar programmatic messages and political practices. Further studies will be required to determine the extent to which these parties' post-war performance is linked to their past grievances and the ethical commitments and practices that ensued.

⁸⁹⁶ Tadesse, M., & Young, J. (2003). TPLF: Reform or Decline? *Review of African Political Economy*, 97, 389-403.

⁸⁹⁷ Gebregziabher, T. N. (2019). Ideology and power in TPLF's Ethiopia: A historic reversal in the making? *African Affairs*, 118(472), 463-484.

⁸⁹⁸ Young, J. (2022). *Author's interview with John Young* [Interview].

LESS SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES

While these examples mirror the positive experiences of the cases that this study has covered, other post-insurgent parties didn't necessarily lead their post-war existence in the same spirit. Undoubtedly, the motivations behind their actions and behavior depended on a broad range of factors that are beyond the scope of this overview. Nonetheless, a brief glance at those experiences highlights some of the issues that might have influenced their behavior in the postwar period and could explain their failure to contribute to democratic consolidation. The rise to power of the MPLA in Angola, the CNDD-FDD in Burundi, and the SPLM in South Sudan for example marked a major setback for democracy after they turned into autocratic and oppressive ruling parties. Also, despite coming forward as a plausible political alternative, the Mozambican Renamo, failed to effectively transform and achieve the democratic advances that were hoped for. I will briefly scan some of these experiences and take a deeper look into Sudan's SPLM/A and Renamo in Mozambique.

MPLA

In Angola, the rise to power of the MPLA in the postcolonial era was marked by the group's abandonment of its revolutionary ideals and the ruling party's descent into kleptocratic governance. After the Marxist founders left the movement in the early 1960s, the group pursued right wing nationalist policies while claiming a socialist platform.⁸⁹⁹ According to Malaquias, as a political party, the MPLA lacked the coherent principles that would have helped it consolidate its power and ensure and sustain popular support. Brought to power by outside forces, the MPLA assumed responsibility while "fundamentally weak inside".⁹⁰⁰ The party's lack of solid moral commitments, its vague ideology, and erratic policies, failed its supporters and led to corrupt practices that resulted in economic collapse.

⁸⁹⁹ Vidal, N. d. F. (2021). The International and domestic fabrics of an ideological illusion: the Socialist MPLA. *Tempo e Argumento, Florianópolis, 13*(34).

⁹⁰⁰ Malaquias, A. (2007a). Angola: From Revolutionary Movement to Reactionary Regime. In *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties; Cases from Latin America and Africa* (pp. 10). Palgrave Macmillan.

CNDD-FDD

In Burundi, the hopes for a new era of participatory democracy that arose from the Arusha agreement, quickly faded away as the liberal pillars that the Arusha agreement was built upon were abandoned. While suffering from oppression for centuries, as a ruling party, CNDD-FDD resorted to practices that used fear and repression to influence elections, quashed opposition, and silenced civil society. Once in power, the rebel group that was devoted to restoring democracy and promoting social justice, replicated the very same practices that it once opposed. In large part, this came as a result of internal factionalism that sidelined those who held progressive ideas. But also, a landslide victory in 2005 gave the party the means to use its influence in an unfettered way, dwarfing the opposition, and controlling most institutions.⁹⁰¹

One would wonder if the FMLN would have exploited the institutions in an authoritative manner, had it reached a level of power that had allowed it to do so. From the data collected above, this would seem inconceivable, given their massive contribution to the democratization process in El Salvador. It would be interesting to further investigate the democratizing record of cases where post-insurgent parties with democracy-compatible values gain this type of political upper hand.

SPLM

Even more spectacular was the Sudan SPLM's inability to withhold peace, build solid institutions, and implement good governance. Corruption, internal strife, power struggle, and a weak commitment to democracy led to renewed violence and ethnic clashes.⁹⁰² Despite several attempts to broker peace and the signature of multiple peace agreements, SPLM's transition to political life failed to achieve any progress and was characterized by an impotent political wing, a weak ideology, narrow ethnic appeal and inability to gain national

⁹⁰¹ Burihabwa, N., & Curtis, D. (2019). The Limits of Resistance Ideology? The CNDD-FDD and the Legacies of Governance in Burundi. *Government and Opposition*, 54(3), 559-583.

⁹⁰² Castillejo, C. (2016). *The Role of Ex-Rebel Parties in Building Peace*.

<https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/196432/58c5d33363f2f7060599cd2e44ab1658.pdf>

legitimacy.⁹⁰³ The SPLM/A had fought a long-drawn-out war against the Sudanese and, much like the cases covered in this study, ended the armed struggle with a peace agreement signed in 2005. Led by the charismatic, U.S.-educated John Garang, the SPLM/A proclaimed a national vision of a New Sudan with a purely 'Sudanese identity' as contrasted with African, Arab, Muslim or Christian. Recognizing the Ethiopian Derg as a potential source of funding, the SPLM/A espoused Marxism-Leninism, the ideology endorsed by regime's strongman, to secure financial resources. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Ethiopian regime, the SPLM/A had to seek other sources of material support. Garang turned his attention to other funding streams, trying to devise new strategies to replenish its coffers.⁹⁰⁴ According to Young, this situation captured the attention of the U.S. who saw in this dynamic struggle an opportunity to defend causes that were in keeping with its beliefs. Support of democracy seekers, and the liberation of oppressed Christians from the Muslim dominance motivated the U.S. to intercede and mediate a peace settlement. In 2005, under the auspices of the U.S. and other supporters, a peace agreement putting an end to the conflict was signed. The agreement outlined new measures for providing security and sharing power and wealth in an equitable way, and announced a six-year period at the end of which a referendum on independence would be held.⁹⁰⁵ Garang's death six months after the signature of the agreement, unleashed a wave of violence that revealed the weakness of the agreement and the fragility of peace.⁹⁰⁶ Despite raising hopes for national unity and improved governance, the CPA agreement did little to address past grievances and revealed the SPLM's ineptitude to govern.

According to Young, the establishment of governance institutions modeled after the Western example -and ill-suited to the realities of Southern Sudan- bare much responsibility for this failure. But also, the SPLM's conversion into a political organization suffered many shortcomings. In addition to being institutionally weak and high-handed, the SPLM suffered

⁹⁰³ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁵ Ottaway, M., & Hamzawy, A. (2011). *The Comprehensive Peace Agreement*.

⁹⁰⁶ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

from the absence of a clear ideological basis. This in part, explains the group's unperturbed changeover as it dropped Marxism-Leninism and embraced Western-style democracy, easily adjusting to the needs of its new benefactor. As the SPLM/A shifted ideological gears, it also changed its aspirations. For pragmatic reasons, Garang had embraced national unity under the vision of a 'New Sudan' for most of its existence. That was largely driven by the need to accommodate his initial sponsor the Ethiopian leader, a champion of Africanism staunchly opposed to secessionism, being internally involved in a secessionist war himself in Ethiopia. Garang's strong leadership was able to enforce his vision of a 'New Sudan', containing the many rank-and-file members of his movement who despised the notion of a united Sudan and longed for secession. As the SPLM/A switched allegiance, the contemplation of self-determination and even secession resurfaced. After the death of Garang, the separatists came to the fore and put their plans into action. According to Young, the ideological switch was an easy conversion since the party didn't have any politics to begin with.⁹⁰⁷

Overshadowed by the armed wing, the political wing 'was never more than a shell' (Young, 2007, p. 157) and remained as such even after the signing of the peace agreement.⁹⁰⁸ Certainly, the party's failure to deliver was a result of the local and international contexts, but also of its weak political structures. While the lack of an ideological underpinning wasn't the only impediment to the SPLM's ability to reform itself and bring about positive change in Sudan, it is certainly safe to assume it largely contributed to this outcome.

RENAMO

Renamo's third attempt to achieve peace with the Mozambican government in 2019 brought some hope for a true transformation but the prospects are grim. Despite establishing itself as a serious electoral contender and abandoning the resort to violence, Renamo was not able to make the leap from an instrument of regional powers - turned into protector of the

⁹⁰⁷ Young, J. (2022). *Author's interview with John Young* [Interview].

⁹⁰⁸ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

marginalized- to an actual defender of the people it intended to represent.⁹⁰⁹ The challenges of the postwar environment were many: The absence of a real solution to the grievances that characterized the country during the war,⁹¹⁰ Renamo's very nature as a proxy army, and the party's lack of ideology.⁹¹¹

According to Manning, Renamo's exclusive wartime focus on military strategy -totally neglecting the ideological aspect of the struggle- posed many challenges in the postwar period. The task was all the more difficult giving that its political rival Frelimo, had worked out its ideological definitions since the war days. Intense debates would regularly take place to define goals and agree on strategies to achieve their political objectives. When the country transitioned into a multi-party democracy, Frelimo's internal organizational structures were well developed with decision-making structures well established at all levels of the institution. As it assumed power, the party's self-examination methods, already in place since the war days, helped the party cope with obstacles. When unsuccessful government policies, a failing economy, and corruption accusations emerged, the party embraced a new constitution that transformed the governing system from a one-party state to a multi-party democracy. On the other hand, created as a proxy army, Renamo focused its armed struggle on military victories with little attention to political goals. It's only in the mid-1980s that Renamo decided to establish itself as an organization with a serious political wing. Renamo's structures were largely underdeveloped and the party's debut into politics exhibited lack of preparedness and incompatibility with democratic politics.⁹¹²

Even so, as a political party, Renamo earnestly tried to enter and contribute to the political process but its efforts were thwarted by opponents who dominated the art of political

⁹⁰⁹ Cahen, M. (2020). La RENAMO à l'heure de sa sixième défaite aux élections générales (15 octobre 2019). *Politique Africaine*, 160(4), 187-209.

⁹¹⁰ Manning, C. (2004). Armed Opposition Groups into Political Parties: Comparing Bosnia, Kosovo, and Mozambique. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 39, 54-76.

⁹¹¹ Manning, C. (2007c). Revolutionaries to Politicians: The Case of Mozambique. In K. Deonandan, D. Close, & G. Prevost (Eds.), *From Revolutionary Movements to Political Parties, Cases from Latin America and Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁹¹² Ibid.

gamesmanship. Several attempts at putting forward legislation aimed at decentralizing power, were sabotaged by the Frelimo-controlled parliament, including a 2000 proposal that would have allowed Renamo to appoint governors in the provinces where it won electoral majorities⁹¹³ and a 2015 attempt to expand the powers of regional assemblies in six provinces where it had performed best in the previous year's elections. Despite the defeat, the legislative proposal, along with Renamo's leader's pledge to refrain from any violent attempts to reverse the parliamentary verdict, reflected Renamo's adherence to democratic practices and the party's factual willingness to abide by the rules of peaceful democracy.⁹¹⁴ Without any doubts, the circumstances that post-insurgent parties face when they enter the political arena greatly influence their behavior. The stability of the political context and the country's experience with democracy play a significant part in these developments. In the case of Renamo, the international community's support and the incentives used to sustain the party's commitment to peace proved to be effective tools. Lacking legitimacy, Renamo heavily relied on the international community's help to restore its image from a puppet organization to a party in its own right, eager to present itself under a whole new light. The party's lack of political experience, and party members' lack of preparedness for the postwar undertakings proved to be major challenges for Renamo. Limited knowledge of the legislative process and its key players, certainly affected its ability to deliver. Despite exerting serious efforts to remedy this problem -such as enlisted skilled recruits, qualified to represent the party in official commissions and the legislature- old party members' lack of preparedness for the world of politics presented many challenges and affected the party's performance in adverse ways.⁹¹⁵

The case of Renamo raises many questions. As an armed organization, Renamo lacked the core values that characterize many similar armed groups, the grievances of which served as a substantial ground for the emergence of an ideological core. As a political party however,

⁹¹³ The Economist Intelligence Unit. (2015b). Renamo's parliamentary bill unlikely to be approved *The Economist*.

⁹¹⁴ The Economist Intelligence Unit. (2015a). Renamo's autonomy bill rejected by parliament

⁹¹⁵ Manning, C. (2022). *Author's interview with Carrie Manning* [Interview].

Renamo did adhere to the rules of democracy, contesting elections, organizing peaceful demonstrations, and attempting several times to put forward legislation that was in line with certain democratic principles. While Renamo's performance as a political party remained limited and didn't necessarily achieve transformative changes on a national level, it can be argued that the party's adherence to the rules of electoral democracy contributed to a better democracy in some measure.

In her study of the SPLM/A's transition into a political party in South Sudan, De Alessi contends that the death of the party leader, main architect of the peace agreement, coupled with the absence of a clear political program undermined the SPLM's ability to deliver real democratic changes.⁹¹⁶ This research has shown that the absence of these two elements in the AD M-19 didn't abate the party's keenness to ameliorate the country's democratic conditions and improve citizens' living conditions. Indeed, despite the sudden death of its party leader -who was also one of the main architects of the peace agreement- and the absence of a well-articulated party program, the AD M-19 was able to contribute to a major democratic breakthrough from the very outset of its political life. I argue that these important contributions are credited to the party's core values which translated into general principles that guided the AD M-19 leaders in their post-agreement actions. These general principles were the common thread that would serve as the basis for most party decisions including the controversial choice to build alliances with representatives from traditional parties. In the case of the SPLM in contrast, the absence of ideological commitments hampered the transformation. Described by his closest allies as arrogant, corrupt and autocratic, the group leader John Garang, found it unnecessary to espouse any revolutionary philosophy. According to Young, the organization was guided by pure pragmatism, viewing human rights as a "bourgeois concept" that shouldn't carry much weight in the group's actions. In Young's words, under Garang's oppressive leadership, "Politics became militarized and... crude and formula-like."⁹¹⁷

⁹¹⁶ De Alessi, B. (2012). *The War to Peace Transition of the SPLM/A into the SPLM during the implementation of the Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement* SOAS, University of London].

⁹¹⁷ Young, J. (2007). *Sudan: The Incomplete Transition from the SPLA to the SPLM*. Lynne Rienner Publishers

While the AD M-19's all-embracing approach was favorable to peace and democracy promotion, it proved to be detrimental to the party. The AD M-19 was able to put together a noble project, in collaboration with political opponents, to address some of the country's most pressing needs, putting aside the rigid beliefs that would have limited their options and constricted their choices. The same holds true for the Lebanese Forces whose political resilience helped overcome the challenges of the postwar conditions. As in the case of Renamo, the postwar political environment remained largely unchanged. In Lebanon, very few elements of the Tai

ff agreement actually materialized, the country remained under foreign occupation for another 15 years, and the political accord failed to rebuild the State in a meaningful way. Further still, the party leader was jailed and the organization was banned from political activity from 1994 until 2005. Nonetheless, when the party resumed its operations, it did so with a clear focus on democratic improvements. I argued that the Lebanese Forces' peacetime behavior remained in line with its founding fathers' philosophy, largely influenced by Malik's ideals, and based upon the principles of personal freedoms and the promotion of human rights. Renamo's emergence as a foreign proxy, lacking a political program and the core values that characterize resistance movements might have shaped its evolution as a political party. As an armed group, Renamo was known for its absence of a political platform, having been created by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Office (CIO) and later used by South Africa as a tool for the destabilization of Mozambique. Mostly composed of forced recruits, Renamo was infamous for its savagery, attacks on health clinics and schools, and indiscriminate mutilation practices.⁹¹⁸

Future research could examine Renamo's inception history, and explore the relationship between the armed group's core beliefs and its future evolution into a political player. South Africa's ancestral art of deliberation and its broad-based consultation tradition is also worth exploring as a possible foundation for the ANC's behavior as a post-insurgent party. The

⁹¹⁸ Vines, A. (2013). Renamo's Rise and Decline: The Politics of Reintegration in Mozambique. *International Peacekeeping*, 20(3), 375-393.

party's inclusive and participatory traditions might have driven the ANC policies as a ruling party and empowered citizens to influence decision makers and hold political actors to account. These observations may be considered a further validation of the assumption that wartime core values are likely to be carried over after the guns fall silent and determine the former armed groups' peacetime behavior.

PERSPECTIVE ON THE FARC PARTY

In 2016, a historic peace agreement was reached between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government. Under the terms of the agreement, the group formed a political party and was awarded five seats in the Senate and another five in the House of Representatives for 10 years.⁹¹⁹ Despite initially keeping its famous acronym but rebranding it as the Revolutionary Alternative Common Force, at the second party convention in January 2021, members chose to change the name to *Comunes* [Commons]. The change in name mainly aimed at avoiding confusion with the so-called "FARC dissidents", the former guerrilla members who remained in the bushes, choosing not to join the peace process.⁹²⁰ While the peace accord ended a 50-year armed conflict with the continent's oldest guerrilla, the much-anticipated results are rather unsettling. Three years after the signature of the agreement several former FARC leaders released a video calling for a return to arms.⁹²¹ With the rearmament of these leaders and other disgruntled members, rumors of serious divisions were confirmed and fractures in the political base grew more evident. In the March 2022 parliamentary elections, *Comunes* won a mere 52,000 votes, a significantly lower number than the 2018 elections when the recently demobilized FARC

⁹¹⁹ Acuerdo Final. (2016). *Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera*.

⁹²⁰ Justice for Colombia. (2021). *FARC political party changes name to Comunes*
<https://justiceforcolombia.org/news/farc-political-party-to-be-called-comunes-from-now-on/>

⁹²¹ Janetsky, M. (2019). Ex-FARC leaders' return to arms brings back memories of bloodshed
Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/8/30/ex-farc-leaders-return-to-arms-brings-back-memories-of-bloodshed>

party had received 85,000 votes, already considered a pale part of the voting share.⁹²² With these results, the former combatants' representation has never been as uncertain.

As political players, the *Comunes* Senators and Congressmen faced a rough beginning. Operating in a hostile environment and suffering from inadequate experience in formal politics, *Comunes* representatives struggled to make their voices heard. Gradually, the fledgling party learned the skills required to play the political game. After a crash course on the workings of the legislative branch of government, *Comunes* representatives were able to present a number of draft legislations on topics such as strengthening political participation, increasing basic income, and insuring basic public services. Additionally, the *Comunes* party carried out about 10 congressional debates on political control over alleged human rights violations during national strikes, the prisons crisis, and the murders of social leaders.⁹²³ However, most projects failed to pass which led the legislators to consider alliances with opposition colleagues, in hope to achieve better results.⁹²⁴

When asked to comment on the recently formed FARC party, many former AD M-19 members voiced their doubts about the party's ability to sustain itself over time. To the former militants, the FARC party was bound to suffer the same fate as the AD M-19. Despite their complimentary seats in congress, a decent political experience, and a disciplined party, interviewees were concerned that the former guerrilla's links to drug-trafficking, its past human rights record, and dismal popularity would undermine the party's future. According to Novoa, the core values that the M-19 once prided itself on, are lacking in the FARC political project. The former guerrilla's unpunished crimes including the use of child soldiers, abduction and killing of civilians, engagement in widespread sexual violence, and cruel

⁹²² Yordi, L. (2022). Colombia Elections 2022: An uncertain political future for the former FARC guerrilla. *LSE, London School of Economics*.

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2022/03/15/colombia-elections-uncertain-future-farc/>

⁹²³ Villanueva, J. (2021). Partido Comunes: así ha sido su participación en al Congreso. *Radio Nacional de Colombia*. <https://www.radionacional.co/actualidad/paz/partido-comunes-su-participacion-en-el-congreso-acuerdos-paz>

⁹²⁴ Altamar, F. G. (2021). Partido Comunes: la difícil tarea de hacer política en Colombia *El Espectador*. <https://www.elespectador.com/colombia-20/paz-y-memoria/como-ha-sido-el-trabajo-de-los-exguerrilleros-y-miembros-del-partido-comunes-en-el-congreso/>

treatment of combatants to name a few, have tarnished the party's image and remain very vivid in Colombians' memory. To Novoa, the main challenge to the FARC is that these attributes are deeply fixed in peoples' minds. He explained, "Public opinion began to see them not as political rebels but as criminals associated with drug trafficking and the armed conflict. This perception led them to levels of degradation that the M-19 never reached, even if sometimes it got close to that." To the magistrate of the electoral council the difference between the AD M-19 and the FARC is vast. As an armed group, the FARC paid little attention to people's real needs and acted as an army of the people giving paramount importance to the power of arms, "The concept of public opinion to the FARC was a mockery; they underestimated the importance of popular support... They fought on behalf of the people with an unfavorable public opinion." ⁹²⁵

Six years into the post-war period, the FARC party faces new strains. Deep divisions threaten to annihilate the little successes accomplished, and the party appears to be losing its popular base. Furthermore, ex-FARC combatants have been the target of a wave of violence that, as of November 2020, had claimed 200 lives.⁹²⁶ In 2021, two *Comunes* senators, criticizing the party leaders' non-democratic practices, started their own movement boding ill for the party's long-term future.⁹²⁷ The wave of optimism and the much-touted changes that accompanied the AD M-19's transition from armed group to political party seem quite a distance away. The FARC party's future appears to be fatally linked to its inglorious past and the values that guided the group's decisions and actions before 2016. Future research could further explore the potential effects of the FARC guerrilla's core values on its evolution as an armed group and its performance as a political party.

⁹²⁵ Novoa, A. (2018a). *Author's interview with Armando Novoa* [Interview].

⁹²⁶ Charles, M., Basar, B., & Forero, J. D. (2020). *A Criminal Peace. Mapping the Murders of Ex-FARC Combatants*.

⁹²⁷ Janetsky, M. (2021). Colombia ex-rebels grow disillusioned with FARC party 5 years after peace *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombia-ex-rebels-grow-disillusioned-with-farc-party-5-years-after-peace-2021-12-02/>

CONCLUSION

When presidential candidate, Gustavo Petro was asked what his late guerrilla comrades would think of his rise to Colombia's presidency, the presidential hopeful answered, "They would have felt it was all worthwhile."⁹²⁸ The emergence of the AD M-19 was a turning point in the history of Colombia. Despite its disappearance, this novelty in the public arena contributed to the drafting of a constitution that consecrated human and political rights and enabled the political left to establish itself with a bigger presence on the Colombian political scene, eventually reaching the highest office in the nation. That was also the case in El Salvador where the FMLN introduced unprecedented changes in a country notorious for its violence, human rights violations, and widespread impunity. In the cases of the Lebanese Forces and Sinn Féin -while experiencing more steady political journeys- their overall contributions to democratic life were less transformative, even if critically important. On the island of Ireland, post-agreement Sinn Féin is credited for championing human rights and social equity, fighting discrimination, and giving a voice to the underprivileged. The Lebanese Forces' transformation into a political party brought the issues of human rights to the fore and contributed to the promotion of transparency and social welfare.

This qualitative approach revealed that the four parties' peacetime behavior might have been influenced by the organizations' historical memories and moral obligations as armed groups. It seems indeed that the intellectual foundations that inspired the insurrections remained constant and transpired in the post-conflict period. Despite adapting their ideologies to fit the needs of the post-war context, as political parties, these groups remained devoted to the ethical commitments that triggered and accompanied their armed struggles. But the experience of Renamo also demonstrates that even parties who lack such values could be willing to embark on the path to democracy for various other reasons and if given a chance, contribute to improved democratic practices. The extent to which the armed groups' wartime principles and beliefs make this transformation more likely, in particular

⁹²⁸ Stott, M., & Long, G. (2022). Former Urban Guerrilla Homes in on Colombia's Presidency. *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/927a92d3-a4fb-4a37-bb23-414ebcc1a672>

when in power with a weak opposition, could be the subject of further studies. This topic has been indirectly touched upon by Berti (2016)⁹²⁹ who studied the political identity of Hamas and Hezbollah, two armed groups with official political representation. Berti explored the wartime legacy of these groups and their impact in shaping the two organizations' political trajectories. But while these groups have legitimate political presence, they haven't relinquished their arms and their behavior remains largely determined by their military status. To my knowledge this is the first study dealing with post-insurgent groups' contributions to democracy and the incentives that determine these groups' peacetime behavior. The findings of this thesis could inform policy makers as they consider the worthiness of peace negotiations with armed groups, and the extent to which these new political actors' participation in political life offsets the social, economic and emotional costs of negotiating peace with the enemy.

⁹²⁹ Berti, B. (2016). Rebel politics and the state: between conflict and post-conflict, resistance and co-existence. *Civil Wars*, 18(2), 118-136.

ANNEX I : METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The bulk of my research relied on 50 in person interviews with members, former members and dissidents of the parties studied, as well as other stakeholders. Most of the interview questions were organized as follows:

Political transition

- Peace agreement: Did the peace accord address the movement's main grievances? In the post-agreement phase, did the state abide by its commitment to honor the settlement agreed on? Did the content of the agreement impact the development of the party?
- Reintegration of former combatants: Was that effort successful and did it affect the performance or the growth of the party in any way?
- Organizational legacy: What was the party's previous political experience and how that experience -or lack of- impacted the evolution of the party?

Internal functioning

- Political development: What was the movement's experience of party formulation, consolidation and evolution? How did its members come to assume political functions in constitutionally-recognised bodies (i.e. local, regional and national assemblies and governments), or become integrated in a state security apparatus (i.e. police, army)?
- Communication: How did internal communication evolve over time and what channels of communication did the party use to ensure intra-party participation? How about communication with the constituents? What channels did the party use to outreach to constituents?
- Internal structure: When the party was established, how was it organized? Did it maintain the same structure as the one used during the conflict? How about internal discipline? Were there remnants of the wartime military structure?
- Internal democracy: did the movement abide by the party bylaws? To what extent did these bylaws promote internal democracy? Were individual opinions valued and taken into consideration? What mechanisms were established to encourage more participation?

- Internal cohesion: How did the end of the war impact the group's cohesion? Was there ideological homogeneity inside the party? Did the party formation give rise to many dissidents and how did they impact the evolution of the party?
- Inclusion of women and other minorities: Did the party have voluntary quotas for women and minorities in the selection procedures within the party? Did it use gender sensitive policies to promote women participation inside the party and as party representatives?
- Funding: How did the party manage its finances after embarking on its political transition? Did its members benefit from any peace dividends or wealth redistribution that might have accompanied the post-war development?
- Ethnic diversity: did the party represent a specific section of the population? If so, how important was the sectarian appeal in the development of the party and did that interest change over time?
- Relations with other non-state actors: Did the movement form alliances with other like-minded groups, or did they compete with other groups claiming allegiance from the same community or social base? In the post-agreement phase, were there some dissident groups which continued their armed activities, and if yes, what influence did such factors have on the movement's post-war political engagement?

Party evolution over time

- Shift in leadership: What was the movement's experience of leadership change? Did the change in leadership impact the party in any way? How important was the image of the leader?
- Shifts in the constituent base: Was there any change in the voter base and party perception over time? Did the party change its positions according to new voter priorities?
- Shifts in ideology: How did the party ideology evolve overtime? Did it change its priorities or its discourse to adapt to the political environment?
- Core values: What were your core values during the fight? Did these values change? How were these values reflected in the achievements?

International factors

- Regional and international dynamics: What was the impact of major events in the international arena on the movement's strategic choices and course of action?
- Third-party intervention: Did the movement rely on external support bases such as diaspora communities or foreign allies? What degree of international legitimacy and recognition did the movement enjoy, and what strategies were employed to harness international assistance? What degree of financial, human, or logistical support was offered by foreign agencies for post-war peacebuilding?

Achievements

- How do you evaluate the success of your party on a political level?
- What do you consider your biggest achievements? These could be lobbying efforts that made an impact on public opinion, proposed laws that paved the way for a meaningful change, laws that were ratified, or a constitutional change
- How difficult was it to reach these goals and what factors if any helped advance or hampered these achievements?
- Were those achievements in line with the demands or the reforms that lied at the core of your fight as an armed group?
- Looking back at your past experiences, what actions do you regret taking and what decisions you regret making?
- Did your history as a former armed group play any role in your overall performance? Did you feel you needed to demonstrate that your fight was worthwhile? Did your past experiences make you more productive or eager to deliver?

Interviews were conducted with 45 persons; 8 regarding the Sinn Féin party, 14 in connection to the Lebanese Forces, 10 about the FMLN, and 10 with regards to the AD M-19. Informational meetings were also held with three ambassadors and two prominent scholars. The discussions were conducted in English, Spanish, French and Arabic depending on the case. The people interviewed include:

Lebanese interviewees:

1. Richard Kouyoumjian, Former LF Minister of Social Affairs (May 2017)

2. Roy Badaro, Economic Adviser to the LF (November 2017)
3. Ghassan Hasbani, Head of the Cedars Institute, former Deputy Prime Minister, former LF Minister of Health (May 2019)
4. Antoine Mrad, Advisor to the LF party leader for religious matters, former Editor in Chief of Radio Liban Libre (RLL) (May 2019)
5. Charles Jabbour, Head of LF Media Department (May 2019)
6. Elie Khoury, LF President advisor for Foreign Affairs and Head of Lebanese Information Center (LIC) (May 2019)
7. Me. Fady Zarifeh, LF Assistant Secretary General for Administrative Affairs (May 2019)
8. Dr. Wissam Raji, Head of the LF Center for Democracy and Governance (CDDG) (May 2019)
9. Elie Baraghid, Head of LF Party Leader's office (May 2019)
10. Elie Hindi, former Head of Middle East Institute for Research and Strategic Studies MEIRSS (June 2019)
11. Dr. Antoine Habchi, Head of Political Formation department, LF Member of Parliament since 2018 (July 2019)
12. Georges Okais, LF Member of Parliament and Member of the Parliamentary Committee on the Public Procurement Law (February 2022)
13. Richard Kouyoumjian (May 2017 & June 2020)
14. Antoine Najem, Philosopher and one of the most influential thinkers behind the Kataeb/Lebanese Forces ideology (June 2022)

Irish interviewees:

15. Séanna Walsh, former prisoner, former member of the Belfast city Council, and Legacy Officer (October 2017)
16. Ruadhán Mac Aodháin, former Sinn Féin member (July 2019)
17. Micheal Mac Donncha, former An Phoblacht journalist, former Dublin City Counselor, and former Lord Mayor of Dublin from 2017-2018 (July 2019)
18. Feilim O'hAdhmaill, Sinn Féin Member, former prisoner, and lecturer in the School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork, Ireland (August 2019 & June 2022)

19. Jim Gibney, main contact between the prisoners during the hunger strike, one of the Sinn Fein leaders for 30 years, currently advisor to senator Niall O'Donngaile (November 2019)

20. Feilim O'hAdhmaill (June 2022)

Salvadoran interviewees:

21. Juan Javier Martinez, former FMLN Vice-Minister of Justice and Vice-Minister of Security (October 2017)

22. Salvador Samayoa, one of the signatories of the Chapultepec peace agreement, former Minister of Education (May 2018 & May 2022)

23. Roberto Cañas, former FMLN member of the peace agreement negotiating team, and former member of the Political Commission and the National Council of the FMLN (May 2018)

24. Ana Guadalupe Martinez, one of the founders of the FMLN, one of the signatories of the Chapultepec peace agreement, twice member of parliament, the first time with the FMLN and the second time with the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). Currently a member of the *Leadership* party. (May 2018)

25. Charlin Suniga, National Secretary of the FMLN Youth (May 2018)

26. Francisco Jovel, one of the signatories of the Chapultepec peace agreement, former member of the General Command of the FMLN, former PRTC leader from 1979 to 1992. Left the FMLN to join the FDR. Currently a legislative analyst (May 2018)

27. Roger Alberto Blandino, former FMLN militant, twice FMLN Mayor of Mejicanos and twice Member of Parliament (May 2018)

28. Rolando Mata, former FMLN militant and former (3 terms) Member of Parliament (May 2018)

29. Lorena Peña, former FMLN Member of Parliament, and former First Vice President of the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador (May 2022)

30. Salvador Samayoa (May 2022)

Colombian interviewees:

31. Dario Villamizar, former Secretary of the Collegial administration of the AD M-19 & former President of the International Secretariat of the AD M-19 (January 2017)
32. Alvaro Villaraga, former member of the EPL (April 2017)
33. Armando Novoa, former member of the AD M-19, former advisor to the AD M-19 for the Constituent Assembly (April 2018)
34. Camilo Gonzáles Posso, former AD M-19 Minister of Health and currently president of INDEPAZ, the Institute for Peace and Development (April 2018)
35. Carlos Franco, former member of the central command of the EPL, former President of the AD M-19, Director of the Colombia Presidential Human Rights Program from 2002-2010 (April 2018)
36. Otty Patiño, former member of M-19 and former member of the Constituent Assembly (May 2018)
37. Pablo Tattay, one of the founders of the Quintín Lame indigenous guerrilla (May 2018)
38. Rosemberg Pabón, former leader of the M-19, one of the main executers of the Dominican Republic Embassy siege, former member of the Constituent Assembly, former mayor of Yumbo, former Senator.
39. Antonio Navarro, former Member of the Constituent Assembly, former Minister of Health, former Mayor of Pasto, former Congressman, former Governor of Nariño, Senator (June 2018)
40. Dario Villamizar (Jan 2017 & May 2022)

Scholars:

41. Dr. Carrie Manning (*May 3 2022*)
42. Dr. John Young (*May 2, 2022*)

Ambassadors:

43. Dr. Gerard McCoy, Irish Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (January, 2022)
44. Dr. Nelson Yemil Chabén, Uruguayan ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (December 2021)

45. Mr. Cosbert Rubushe, South African ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (December 2021)

46. Dr. Miguel Ceballos, former High Commissioner for Peace and presidential candidate in Colombia (October 2022)

In addition, and in order to later use as part of the analysis, a collection of the archives of the AD M-19 were gathered from Mr. Dario Villamizar who shared more than 250 documents including party statutes, draft legislations, media coverage, minutes of meetings, and different types of correspondences.

ANNEX II : POLITICAL PARTIES ACHIEVEMENTS

| AD M-19 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Contribution | Mechanism | Convention/Instrument | Convention/Instrument Excerpt |
| Promoted gender equality | AD M-19 Senator proposed legal instruments that would enhance women's role and participation in society | Art. 3 of CEDAW | States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women , for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men. |
| Promoted the right to form unions | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 8 of ICESCR | The right of everyone to form trade unions and join the trade union of his choice, subject only to the rules of the organization concerned, for the promotion and protection of his economic and social interests. No restrictions may be placed on the |

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| | | | exercise of this right other than those prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public order or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others |
| Promoted the right for health protection and social security | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 9 of ICESCR | Right to social security, including social insurance |
| Promoted the right to housing and property ownership | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 11 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of |

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| | | | international co-operation based on free consent. |
| Promoted better health for all | Participation in government (Health Ministry) | Art. 12 of ICESCR | Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health |
| Promoted the right to education | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 13 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, |

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| | | | tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. |
| | | Art. 15 of ICESCR | Right to take part in cultural life |
| Advocated against death penalty | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 6 of ICCPR | Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. |
| Promoted the prohibition of cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 7 of ICCPR | No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation. |

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| Promoted dialogue and non-violent solutions | Adopted peace language | Art. 20 of ICCPR | Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law. Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law. |
| Defended the rights of ethnic minorities | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 27 of ICCPR | In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. |
| Promoted consumer protection | AD M-19 proposals for the Constituent Assembly | Art. 4 of UNCTAD | Member States should develop, strengthen or maintain a strong consumer protection policy, taking into account the guidelines set out below and relevant international agreements. In so doing, each Member State must set its own |

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| | | | <p>priorities for the protection of consumers in accordance with the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the country and the needs of its population, and bearing in mind the costs and benefits of proposed measures.</p> |
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SINN FÉIN

| Contribution | Mechanism | Convention/Instrument | Convention/Instrument Excerpt |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Promoted gender equality | <p>Intra-party measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Elected a woman as leader of the party *Adopted quotas for female leadership positions in the party | Art. 7 of CEDAW | <p>States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the</p> |

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| | | | <p>implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;</p> <p>(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality</p> | <p>Draft bills including: *Domestic Violence *Paid Leave</p> | <p>Art. 11 of CEDAW & Art. 4 of Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women</p> | <p><u>Article 11 of CEDAW</u> 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular: (a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings; (e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;</p> <p><u>Art. 4 of Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women</u> States should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to</p> |
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| | | | <p>avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination. States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality</p> | <p>Policy documents such as: *The Vision for Women's Healthcare</p> | <p>Art. 12 of CEDAW</p> | <p>States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.</p> |
| <p>Advocated for LGBTI rights</p> | <p>Campaigned in support of same-sex marriage</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR</p> | <p>Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex,</p> |

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| | | | language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. |
| Fought discrimination on the basis of accent and social status | *Draft Bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of someone's accent or perceived socio-economic background | Art. 2 of UNDHR | Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. |
| Defended the rights of rural communities and low-income families | Suggested amendments to the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill, to reduce the heavy burden (taxes and job losses) it put on rural communities, and vulnerable workers and their families. | Art. 7 of ICESCR | Right to just and favourable conditions of work |

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| <p>Promoted the right to social assistance and protection</p> | <p>Draft Bills such as: *Parental bereavement leave, that proposed to give mourning parents a legal right to time off work</p> | <p>Art. 10 of ICESCR</p> | <p>Right to the widest possible protection and assistance for the family, especially mothers, children and young persons</p> |
| <p>Promoted adequate housing and social equality</p> | <p>Draft Bills such as: *Amendment of the Affordable Housing Act to remove an exemption that benefits developers and investors at the expense of disadvantaged communities</p> | <p>Art. 11 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.</p> |

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| <p>Promoted equal access to education</p> | <p>Draft Bills: *Bill that aims to regulate the seeking of 'voluntary contributions' to ensure equal access to education to all Irish citizens</p> | <p>Art. 13 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right: (a) Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all; (b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education; (c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the</p> |
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| | | | progressive introduction of free education |
| Advocated in favor of ethnic minorities and asylum seekers | <p>Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Included anti-racist elements in its manifestos *Opposed limiting the right to citizenship *Campaigned for amnesty for asylum seekers *Supported the rights of the 'traveller community' | Art. 27 of ICCPR | In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. |

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| <p>Promoted consumer protection</p> | <p>Draft Bills: *Bill in favor of householders who are supplied with excess electricity from small scale renewable energy *Bill to tackle bogus self-employment *Ban on Rent Increases Bill *Insurance Bill to ban the practice of 'dual pricing'</p> | <p>Art. 4 of UNCTAD</p> | <p>Member States should develop, strengthen or maintain a strong consumer protection policy, taking into account the guidelines set out below and relevant international agreements. In so doing, each Member State must set its own priorities for the protection of consumers in accordance with the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the country and the needs of its population, and bearing in mind the costs and benefits of proposed measures.</p> |
| <p>Helped improve transparency and accountability</p> | <p>Draft Bill: *Regulation of Lobbying Bill to improve transparency and accountability in Irish political lobbying</p> | <p>Art. 5 of UNCAC</p> | <p>Each State Party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop and implement or maintain effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation</p> |

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| | | | of society and reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity, transparency and accountability. |
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LEBANESE FORCES

| Contribution | Mechanism | Convention/Instrument | Convention/Instrument Excerpt |
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| Promoted gender equality | Intra-party measures: *Created a special department intended for activating the role of women *Made some efforts to put women at the fore | Art. 7 of CEDAW | States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public |

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| | | | <p>functions at all levels of government;</p> <p>(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality</p> | <p><u>Passed legislation:</u> *Repealed article 562 of the criminal code, a law mitigating the sentence of perpetrators of 'honor crimes'</p> <p><u>Draft bills:</u> *To introduce tougher penalties on crimes of killing, wounding, injuring or beating women *Against a law that exonerates a perpetrator of sexual offence who married his victim *To increase penalties for the murdering, wounding, abusing and beating of wives and women *To amend</p> | <p>Art. 2 of CEDAW</p> | <p>Condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake: (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle</p> |
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| | <p>articles of the Lebanese Penal Code relating to crimes of marital rape</p> <p>*To end discrimination between men and women especially in relation to the offense of adultery</p> | | |
| <p>Promoted gender equality and child protection</p> | <p>Draft Bill:</p> <p>*To prevent child marriage</p> | <p>Art. 16 of CEDAW</p> | <p>The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages</p> |

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| | | | in an official registry compulsory. |
| Promoted children rights | Draft bill: *To ban corporal punishment | Art. 19 of CRC | States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child. |

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| <p>Demanded adequate government protection and assistance</p> | <p>Draft Bill: *To establish a government body tasked with the management of crisis, emergencies and disasters (Following the August 2020 Beirut port explosion) *To demand tax exemption on basic food products and other services and commodities such as transportation, pharmaceutical products, and stationaries (Following the 2019 economic collapse)</p> | <p>Art. 11 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.</p> |
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| <p>Promoted measures to attend vulnerable groups, including children, women, people with special needs, the elderly, drug-addicted, and the destitute</p> | <p>As members of government: *Improved the provision and quality of services in remote areas *Redirected wasted resources to benefit the neediest section of the population *Dramatically improved poor families' access to food stamps *Secured seasonal financial aid through UNICEF *Developed several programs to protect children and reduce domestic violence *Initiated the Disability Rights Act, to include a minimum of</p> | <p>Art. 9 & 11 of ICESCR & Art. 29 CRPD</p> | <p><u>Art. 9 of ICESC:</u> Right to an adequate standard of living & Right to social security, including social insurance <u>Art. 11 of ICESC:</u> The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. <u>Art. 29 of CRPD</u> To promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs</p> |
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| | <p>three percent of people with disabilities in the public sector *Initiated the work to develop the disability rights insurance program</p> | | |
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| <p>Promoted better health for all</p> | <p>As members of government: *Initiated the legal and administrative framework for comprehensive health coverage *Launched the distant hospitalization initiative *Supported the local pharmaceutical industry *Initiated a food safety campaign *Improved a hotline service to attend to peoples' medical needs *Initiated a number of programs aimed at raising awareness about detection and prevention of disease</p> | <p>Art. 12 of ICESCR</p> | <p>Right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health</p> |
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| | <p>*Modernized the health service and medical care</p> <p>*Introduced the digitization of services.</p> | | |
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| <p>Promoted education for all</p> | <p>Draft Bill: *To compel the government to contribute funds to children education</p> | <p>Art. 13 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right: (a) Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all; (b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education; (c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the</p> |
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| | | | progressive introduction of free education |
| Campaigned against death penalty | Draft Bill: *To abolish death penalty | Art. 6 of ICCPR | Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. |
| Promoted dialogue and non-violent solutions | *Presented a public act of contrition *Adopted a peace language *Invited constituents to bypass | Art. 20 of ICCPR | Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law. |

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| | sectarianism and focus on a national project | | |
| Promoted children rights | Draft Bills: *To set a minimum age for marriage | Art. 24 of ICCPR | Rights of children |
| Promoted integrity and combatted the practices of corruption and smuggling | Passed Legislation: *To lift banking secrecy to facilitate a forensic audit of the country's central bank Draft bills: *To make the High Judicial Council less vulnerable to political pressure *To combat corruption in the private sector *To promote the right to access information | Art 1. of the UNODC Resolution 9/1 | To promote and strengthen measures to prevent and combat corruption more efficiently and effectively; (b) To promote, facilitate and support international cooperation and technical assistance in the prevention of and fight against corruption, including in asset recovery; (c) To promote integrity, accountability and proper management of public affairs and public property. |

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| | *To impede smuggling, a practice that was causing great harm to the national economy | | |
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FMLN

| Contribution | Mechanism | Convention/Instrument | Convention/Instrument Excerpt |
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| Promoted human rights | Government policy: *Appointed a National Counsel for the Defense of Human Rights tasked with monitoring the human rights situation at the national and institutional level *Established National commissions for | Art. 2 of ICCPR | Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. |

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| | <p>the search of disappeared children and adults</p> <p>*National Food Security and Nutrition Policy</p> <p>*National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy</p> <p>*Streamlined human rights practices making them a guiding principle for the work of the State</p> | | <p>Where not already provided for by existing legislative or other measures, each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take the necessary steps, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the present Covenant, to adopt such laws or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the rights recognized in the present Covenant.</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality and fought discrimination on the basis of gender</p> | <p>Government policies: *Girls and women's rights markedly improved, and special courts to address gender-based violence were set up *Special provisions to prevent discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in public administration were put in place *Gender Equity and Equality Policy and implementation plan of the Ministry of Education *National Equality Plan</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR & Art. 2 of CEDAW</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.</p> <p>Art. 2 of CEDAW Condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake: (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the</p> |
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| | <p>*Action plan for the National Policy on Access to a Violence-Free Life for Women</p> <p>*Strategy for the Prevention of Femicide and Sexual Violence against Women</p> | | <p>practical realization of this principle</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality and fought discrimination on the basis of gender</p> | <p>Government policies (cont'd): *The Salvadoran Institute for Women Development (ISDEMU) *Banca Mujer *Specialized Courts for a Life Free of Violence and Discrimination against Women *Pact for the Defense of Civil and Political Rights of Women *National System for Substantive Equality and its National Plan *System of Statistics and Monitoring for Equality *Safe El Salvador Plan (addressing gender-based violence)</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR & Art. 2 of CEDAW</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.</p> <p>Art. 2 of CEDAW Condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake: (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the</p> |
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| | <p>*Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health</p> <p>*Created the Sexual Diversity Division, under the Social Inclusion Secretary</p> <p>*Established women specific budgets in all ministries</p> | | <p>practical realization of this principle</p> |
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| <p>Promoted gender equality</p> | <p>Intra-party measures: *Established quotas for woman representation</p> | <p>Art. 7 of CEDAW</p> | <p>States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.</p> |
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| <p>Promoted social inclusion, gender equality and LGBT rights</p> | <p>Legislation: *The Domestic Violence Act *Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-Free Life for Women *Act on Equality, Equity and the Elimination of Discrimination against Women *Act on the Promotion, Protection and Development of Microenterprises and Small Businesses (women targeted) *Law on Political Parties (quota for women candidates) *Presidential decree recognizing Lesbian, Gay,</p> | <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR</p> | <p>Art. 2 of CEDAW States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women</p> <p>Art. 2 of UNDHR Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.</p> |
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| | <p>Bisexual, and Transgender</p> <p>*Bill for a new Gender Identity Law</p> <p>*National Plan for Development, Protection and Social Inclusion</p> | | |
| <p>Ensured the protection of Salvadoran migrants</p> | <p>Passed legislations:</p> <p>*Adopted the Special Act on the Protection and Advancement of Salvadoran Migrants and Their Families</p> | <p>Art. 7 of International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families</p> | <p>States Parties undertake, in accordance with the international instruments concerning human rights, to respect and to ensure to all migrant workers and members of their families within their territory or subject to their jurisdiction the rights provided for in the present</p> |

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| | | | Convention without distinction of any kind such as to sex, race, colour, language, religion or conviction, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, nationality, age, economic position, property, marital status, birth or other status. |
| Promoted social safety | Passed legislation: *Adopted the Framework Act on Civic Harmony and Antisocial Behaviour | Art.3 of the UDHR | Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. |
| Promoting youth employment | Government policy: *Established the 'Young People with Everything' employment and employability program | Art. 6 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right. |

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| Promoted just and favorable conditions of work | Government policy: *National Policy on Decent Work | Art. 7 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work |
| Promoted social protection | Passed legislations: *Adopted the act on Social Development and Protection & the General Act on Prevention of Workplace Hazards | Art. 9 of ICESCR & Art. 3 of UDHR | Art. 9 of ICESCR The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance Art. 3 of UDHR Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. |
| Promoted adequate standard of living | Government policies *National Housing Policy *Amanecer Rural (Rural Dawn) program | Art. 11 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take |

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| | | | appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent. |
| Expanded healthcare to El Salvador's poor departments delivering quality medical access to underprivileged areas | <p>Government policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The National Women's Hospital *National Health Policy *National Policy on Social Participation in Health *Policy for Gender Equality and Equity in Health *Strategic National Plan to Reduce Maternal, Perinatal and Neonatal Mortality *National | Art. 12 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health |

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| | Drinking Water and Sanitation Plan | | |
| Expanded healthcare to El Salvador's poor departments delivering quality medical access to underprivileged areas | <p>Passed legislations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The Medicines Act *The Mental Health Act *National Comprehensive Health System Act | Art. 12 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health |
| Alleviated education costs for disadvantaged families | <p>Government actions/policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Provided free meals, school supplies, shoes, and uniforms to public school children | Art. 13 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education |

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| | *National Literacy Program | | |
| Promoted the right to education | Passed legislations: *The General Education Act *Act on the Teaching Profession | Art. 13 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education |
| Reduced adult literacy rates by nearly half | Government policy: *Initiated a community program where high schoolers taught reading, writing and basic math to illiterate adults in their community. | Art. 13 of ICESCR | The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education |

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| <p>Promoted culture</p> | <p>Passed legislation: *Enacted the Culture Act</p> | <p>Art. 15 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone: (a) To take part in cultural life; (b) To enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications; (c) To benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author</p> |
| <p>Promoted culture</p> | <p>Government policy: *Public Policy on Culture</p> | <p>Art. 15 of ICESCR</p> | <p>The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone: (a) To take part in cultural life; (b) To enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications; (c) To benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or</p> |

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| | | | artistic production of which he is the author |
| Promoted prison rehabilitation | Government policy: *The “I’m Changing” prison management program | Art. 10 of the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners | With the participation and help of the community and social institutions, and with due regard to the interests of victims, favourable conditions shall be created for the reintegration of the ex-prisoner into society under the best possible conditions. |
| Promoted judicial independence | Chapultepec agreement: *The reforms requested that Supreme Court justices, the attorney general, the state counsel, and the newly established National Counsel | Art. 14 of ICCPR | All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial |

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| | for the Defense of Human Rights all be elected by 2 out of 3 members of the legislative assembly. | | tribunal established by law. |
| Restored trust in the justice system | General Amnesty Act of 1993 declared unconstitutional | Art. 14 of ICCPR | All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. |

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| <p>Promoted freedom of opinion and expression</p> | <p>Government policy: *Banned political persecution and promoted freedom of thought</p> | <p>Art. 19 of ICCPR</p> | <p>1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference. 2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice. 3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre</p> |
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| | | | public), or of public health or morals. |
| Promoted the right to freedom of association | Government policy: *Promoted freedom of organization | Art. 22 of ICCPR | Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests. |

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| <p>Promoted children rights</p> | <p>Passed legislation: *The Child and Adolescent Protection Act *The General Act on Young People *The Special Act for the Regulation and Establishment of Employer-Sponsored Childcare Facilities</p> | <p>Art. 24 of ICCPR</p> | <p>Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State.</p> |
| <p>Promoted children rights</p> | <p>Government Policies: *National Policy for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents *National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Child and Adolescent Pregnancy</p> | <p>Art. 24 of ICCPR</p> | <p>Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State.</p> |

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| | *National Strategy for Comprehensive Early Childhood Development | | |
| Promoted citizen participation in democratic decision-making | Government policies: *Citizen Participation Policy of the executive branch *More democratic voting system *Absentee voting system for Salvadorans living abroad | Art. 25 of ICCPR | Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: (a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors; (c) To have access, on general terms of equality, |

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| | | | to public service in his country |
| Promoted the rights of indigenous people | Passed legislation: Amended article 63 of the Constitution to reflect its recognition of indigenous people's rights | Art. 27 of ICCPR | In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language |
| Promoted the rights of indigenous people | Government policies: *Public Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador | Art. 27 of ICCPR | In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in |

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| | <p>*National Health Policy for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador</p> <p>*National Action Plan for the Indigenous Peoples of El Salvador</p> | | <p>community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language</p> |
| <p>Promoted the rights of the elderly</p> | <p>Passed legislation:</p> <p>*Act on Comprehensive Care for Older Persons</p> | <p>Articles 1-18 of the United Nations Principles for Older Persons</p> | <p>Older Persons's rights for independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment, and dignity</p> |
| <p>Promoted transparency</p> | <p>Passed legislation:</p> <p>*Access to Public Information Act</p> | <p>Art 5. of the UNCAC</p> | <p>1. Each State Party shall, in accordance with the fundamental principles of its legal system, develop and implement or maintain effective, coordinated anti-corruption policies that promote the participation of society and reflect the principles of the rule of law, proper management of public affairs and public property, integrity,</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>transparency and accountability.</p> <p>2. Each State Party shall endeavour to establish and promote effective practices aimed at the prevention of corruption.</p> |
| <p>Combatted trafficking in persons</p> | <p>Passed legislation: *Special Act against Trafficking in Persons</p> | <p>Art. 6 of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime</p> | <p>Assistance to and protection of victims of trafficking in persons</p> |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Ratified UN conventions</p> | <p>Government action</p> | <p>Ratified the: *Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights *Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p>Withdrew its reservation to: *The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment</p> | |
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