



# 3

## “When the Guns Thundered, All Citizens Became Soldiers, and Every Breast Breathed War”: Education of the Armed Citizen in XIX Century Colombia

Luis Alarcón Meneses and Jorge Conde Calderón

### 1 The Manual as a Source and Object of Investigation

The documentary resources on which this work is based mainly include manuals, memoirs, chronicles, press articles, and correspondence. But because of the nature of the subject studied, it was particularly useful to consider the use of manuals, a category that includes texts for the training of soldiers and guerrillas, when analyzing questions such as the training of armed citizens in nineteenth-century Colombia. In addition to being considered an apparatus of knowledge and power (Palacio Mejía and Ramírez Franco 1998, 218), this kind of heuristic material was also accepted as a cultural artefact resulting from the nineteenth-century social and historical context. Consequently, we looked at these texts not only as documents offering information but also as

---

L. A. Meneses (✉) · J. C. Calderón  
Universidad Del Atlántico, Barranquilla, Colombia

J. C. Calderón  
e-mail: jorgeconde1@mail.uniatlantico.edu.co

cultural products demonstrating the imaginaries and various kinds of representations present in the educational spaces and times where they were used to propagate a modernized republican ideology that was to be the basis on which citizens were trained.

Some of the military instruction manuals and treatises on which this investigation is based show the virtues of the republic as well as the reasons why it should be defended by men whom these materials sought to transform into armed citizens, eager to learn not only morality, etiquette, and the values of civilized society but also the art of war, so that they could play their role as real republican soldiers ready to give their lives for their fatherland.

Treatises and instruction manuals for guerrilla warfare, treated without differentiation in this paper, were analyzed in terms of their two-fold character, i.e., as both sources and objects of study (Borre Johnsen 1996, 74). This made it possible to examine their discourses and representations concerning the republic and the citizen, while at the same time treating them as the focus of our historical interest inasmuch as they constituted basic elements of the educational practice and culture whose purpose was to move forward in the training of citizens and nation-building during a century characterized by constant civil wars. In fact, here we are not only using manuals as a valid source for the study of educational processes related to the training of armed citizens, but also as a focus of analysis and investigation, just as the new cultural historiography has done in the case of books. In this sense, the project from which this paper arose is based on the recognition of manuals as source material for the investigation of the history of education and culture while at the same time recognizing the historicity of textbooks inasmuch as they offer an account of educational processes throughout the nineteenth century (Alarcón 2012, 207–41).

From a methodological and heuristic point of view, the importance we give to military training manuals and treatises as historical objects means more than simply taking them as educational aids or teaching tools. They have also become ideological and cultural artefacts (Choppin 2000, 112–17). Therefore, their study affords us a window onto the mentality of an epoch, its social practices, and the teaching methods used for military instruction and the training of citizens,

as well as facilitating our knowledge and analysis of the culture of war that prevailed in nineteenth-century Colombia.<sup>1</sup>

## 2 Colombia in the Nineteenth Century

The emergence and consolidation of the nation-state in nineteenth-century Colombia involved the broadening of two of the state's responsibilities toward this end, the training of citizens and the creation of the nation. Both undergirded the new principle of the legitimacy of the political order based on national sovereignty and political representation. The exercise of this sovereignty as a universal principle required the correct use of reason and the training of citizens in republican virtues. As public education spread enlightenment, citizenship would gradually expand. This process underwent twists and turns in the nineteenth century in response to internal dynamics and the international context, intensified, in the century's second half, by the ideas associated with Romanticism, socialism (in all its variants) and liberalism of a new type, trends forged in the heat of the 1848 revolutionary events in France.

In Colombia, notions such as the nation, citizenship, education and or public instruction, and the republic, among others, were reinvented and adapted to the country's social reality by political currents representing differing projects for state construction that had arisen during the process of the country's independence. One moment, in 1857–1886, corresponded to a secular, radical liberalism; another, 1886–1889, to the so-called Conservative Regeneration based on Ultramontanist Catholicism. The research underlying this paper concentrated on the former, which Colombian historians call the federal period or regime that lasted for 29 years. Sovereignty was granted to each of the country's states, allowing them to have their own constitutional regime, civil legislation, justice system, budget management and autonomous territorial organization (Sierra Meija 2006). This meant, as the 1863 federal constitution put it, that the states enjoyed sovereignty and therefore were not subordinated to the central government. Consequently, that government was obliged to take a neutral position, at least formally, in regard to a state's internal political decisions and

any conflict that might break out within or between states. The federal regime was based on a liberal constitution that consecrated individual freedoms such as private property, free movement, and freedom of opinion and of the press. At the same time, it also protected the inviolability of private homes, the unrestricted right to work, citizens' right to free education, and freedom of conscience and religion.

Nevertheless, the liberal governments of the federal period found themselves in a highly traditional country, a society marked by the very powerful influence of the Church, which always strongly opposed the changes these governments sought to carry out during these years. They were also faced with a dispersed and mainly rural population. The low levels of school attendance meant the majority were illiterate and had little civic education. Furthermore, they tended to lead unstable lives due to exploitation suffered at the hands of the big landowners, who constituted, in practice, the real political power because of the weakness of the state, which had little or no presence in much of the country. This was the context in which liberal governments had to operate when, starting in 1870, they began to implement an educational reform known as the Organic Decree on Public Instruction (DOIP), convinced that education had to play an important role in training the citizenry and in the process of the country's modernization. This necessarily meant that the majority of the population had to be infused with republican values so as to construct a social base for the liberal political project and draw broad sections of the people into the new dynamics of the capitalist market. For these radical liberals, this process required the strengthening of the secular state and the launching of a democratic educational policy, with free, obligatory education free of religious interference, run according to modern pedagogical principles and provided with the necessary financial resources.

But the educational reform promoted by the radical governments prompted a reaction by the conservatives and the Church, who considered it a threat to the status quo and the control they had historically exercised over society and politics throughout a century characterized by the strong presence and influence of the Church in national life. In practice, all this limited the construction of a secular state during that period. Consequently, the society itself remained mostly unsecular, as,

of course, did public education, which faced various obstacles in training Colombian citizens to embody a greater freedom of thought and identify with the basic principles of modernity.

### 3 From Militiamen and Guerrillas to Armed Citizens

Among intercepted papers written by rebels in Cauca during the war of 1862, a letter from a soldier named Carlos to his sister Carmen proves particularly illustrative. He starts by saying he was fighting in such an isolated area that he could not be sure she would ever receive his missive. What is most revealing in the letter is his explanation for finding himself marching further and further south: "because of a political question with Ecuador", putting that in context with the following: "Some people believe, Carmen, that this disagreement with Ecuador arose only because of the reasons I told you, that some *pastusos* [a pejorative term for natives of the Colombian border city of Pasto] went into some of their villages, but I fear that this is simply a pretext on Flóres' part to commence hostilities, while the real reason might be, perhaps, a coalition with Mosquera to revive Colombia. These old ambitions to bring back the old Colombia may involve us in a horrendous war" (*Documentos curiosos escojidos* 1862).

Several elements become apparent from this soldier's statement. First of all, despite the official explanations given soldiers, civil guards, militia members and guerrillas concerning the unfolding of events, some of them expressed their own opinions about the real reasons for this war. Second, they are familiar with the recent history of the republic of Colombia, which historiography calls Gran Colombia (a name used today for the state that from 1819 to 1831 included the territories of present-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama, northern Peru, western Guyana and northwest Brazil). Lastly, for them the horrendous character of this war arose out of the ambitions of these old generals who had organized Colombia as it was configured following the War of Independence against Spain. That war was the first and main school in

which were trained the soldiers who later took part in the civil wars on a national level and local armed conflicts that wracked nineteenth-century Colombia. Similarly, the experience of that war and those that followed determined the training of an armed citizenry “useful to the fatherland” on which obedience to military regulations, orders and instructions was based (Osorio 1988, 1990, 120). The aim was to instil military discipline. This helps explain the multiplication of editions of treatises on guerrilla warfare and army training manuals.

This chapter is chiefly concerned with the training of an armed citizenry based on an analysis of those treatises and manuals. Most of them are actually transcriptions of similar texts written by European military men. In some editions, the person taking credit as the author, in fact the editor, added notes or commentaries seeking to adapt some military tactics and strategies to Colombian reality (Conde and Alarcón 2014, 17–37). In general these treatises and manuals were based on texts on *la petite guerre* translated into Spanish in the second half of the eighteenth century. *La petite guerre* was what the French called the war they fought against Austria in 1742–1743. In that conflict, irregular troops made up mainly of countrymen and peasants armed with work tools defeated one of the most powerful armies of the time. Actually, the use of guerrillas in European war goes back to the early days of that century (Giménez López 2005, 543–600).

These experiences attracted attention and study by French essayists like Armand François de la Croix. His brief book, *Traité de la petite guerre pour les compagnies franches* (1752), was later supplemented by a study written by Captain Thomas Auguste Le Roy de Grandmaison, *La Petite Guerre: ou Traité du service des troupes légères en campagne* (1756), which was to inspire similar efforts all over Europe. Grandmaison’s text and the aspiration to perfect “the art of war” influenced a Spanish captain, who translated and published it under the title *La Guerrilla o Tratado del servicio de las tropas ligeras* (1780).<sup>2</sup> Due to this translation being “adorned” with a few further thoughts and notes, it was not long before the word guerrilla replaced the original term *petite guerre* or “little war.” After that, editions of treatises on guerrilla warfare proliferated in the Spanish-speaking world, particularly one by Felipe de San Juan that came out in numerous expanded versions. His text was reprinted

several times during the War of Independence, and was considered the most complete manual for the instruction of armed citizens. Several editions were reprinted or reedited by active-duty officers. On other occasions its promotion and distribution was ordered by a particular army unit, such as the Sixth Light Brigade stationed in Cartagena, which also published a list of the regulations to be obeyed by soldiers from private to master sergeant and of commands by higher-ranking officers (*Ordenanzas del Ejército*, 1832).<sup>3</sup> The multiplication of editions of this treatise was closely related to the new role being played by guerrillas, militias and the National Guard, all of which had been incorporated into the Army of Liberation. Since soldiers were considered a basic part of the *people*, all citizens were enrolled into the Colombian army. This is why the titles of subsequent editions emphasized the book's purpose as a manual for the armed citizenry (*Instrucción de guerrilla*, 1832).

Some editions of these treatises retained the form of questions and answers following a brief introduction indicating the sections into which the book was divided. The majority began with the question, "What is meant by the term guerrilla formation?" Reply: "Guerrilla formation means the separation or methodical dispersion of a body of troops, whether to fight in rough terrain where no other formation is possible, hide or cover the manoeuvres of large bodies of troops, serve as the vanguard for columns, flank marches, or, finally, for reconnaissance" (*Instrucción de guerrilla*, 1832, 1). These manuals rarely broke with this catechistic structure. One that did was published by the colonel Remigio Márquez, who dedicated it to "the brave defenders of Colombia" (*Tratado de Guerrilla*, 1821). The book is a brief and condensed summary (barely 31 pages) of the treatise by Felipe de San Juan, which, Márquez said, came into his hands "at the time of the terrible loss of Cartagena" in 1815. He and other defenders of that city's stronghold fled to Jamaica in the face of its imminent occupation by the Spanish army of reconquest led by General Pablo Morillo.

Márquez's political and military career was perilous. In 1820 he returned from exile in Jamaica and wrote a letter to Vice President Santander listing the positions he had held during the First Republic, and asking to be brought back into military service with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and put in charge of enrolment at Mompós, just as

he had been before the last sovereign congress of the united provinces of Nueva Granada, as Colombia was called during that period. In this letter he also described the “horrors” and “misery” endured during his escape from Cartagena to Jamaica in 1815, which, nevertheless, he emphasized, did not succeed in bringing about “the degradation of prostituting my opinion by accepting a pardon.” Finally, he thanked Santander for the financial aid he had received to cover “some loans incurred” in Jamaica, “without which I would not have been able to leave that island to serve the republic” (Cortázar 1964–1970, 224–25).<sup>4</sup> The following year he printed the treatise, arguing, in the publisher’s preface, that the course of the war and advantages of Colombia’s geography—“the necessities” of this “kind of war” and the fact that “the greater part of our lands are mountainous or otherwise rough terrain”—compelled its dissemination. Then he paraphrased, in clear and simple language, the instructions for training guerrillas. He detailed how the troops were to be lined up in rows two or three deep and how, while marching, to prepare for battle, relieve a guerrilla wing, fire from fixed positions, how to break an encirclement, employ fire when advancing or retreating, how commands are given, and elucidated the use of trumpets.

Many of the instructions published and reprinted in wartime had an effect on the fighting techniques employed by militias, guerrillas and light troops, and even the National Guard whose task was the defence of urban areas. Officers’ reports and accounts of the organized and resolute withdrawal of guerrillas at the end of battles or in the midst of battle provide enough information to give an overall idea of the impact on this military instruction on armed citizens. Other elements contributing to their more effective training were the reading aloud of commands and regulations, proclamations and on-site visits by generals and members of the Army General Staff.

## 4 Manuals and Treatises in the Training of the Armed Citizenry

This manual and others of its kind circulating during that era agreed on the tactical importance of guerrilla warfare as “a flexible or fortuitous combat practice that makes use of irregular armed groups organized



into commandos or mobile units to launch rapid, surprise attacks in their own territory against enemy forces that are usually part of the regular army” (Amézcuca Luna 2011, 133–78). Military manuals, along with school textbooks, education and military instruction, represented one of the paths to the production not only of republican sentiments but also the training of a citizenry prepared to take up arms to defend the victories achieved by the republic and liberalism. Thus these manuals sought to shape not only the minds and consciousness of children and youth but also to generate a combative spirit. This goal was also influenced by the idea of perfectibility through education, a notion taken up and popularized by Pestalozzi, who believed that individuals could be moulded from infancy onward to modify their tastes, values and customs. Nineteenth-century Colombian liberals considered this task the foundation of the educational system.

Consequently, from these publications citizens were to learn the necessary moral codes and distinctive values of the new republican regime so that they would take responsibility for its defence, as laid out in an 1842 regulation: “When it comes to defending the state there is nothing comparable to military force... The militia is the shield of civil society, protecting its interests and avenging offenses against the republic. It is under its protection that other arts are freely and peacefully practiced, agriculture flourishes and commerce expands” (*Guía del Instructor*, 1861). Similarly, military manuals, along with military regulations and orders, make it possible to reconstruct the representations of the republic and citizenship present in the political discourse of the time, since these texts sought not only to provide officers and recruits with the knowledge necessary to wage irregular warfare but also to promote civic and patriotic virtues among the armed citizenship. They tried to consolidate a republican imaginary traditionally spread by the schools but simultaneously implemented in the barracks and battalions. The objective was to inject discipline into learning by inculcating the moral principles meant to forge the profile of men transformed into armed citizens. Military manuals contributed to this process. Their purpose was not only to teach war tactics but also to socialize the ideological content, identities and inclusion of the individual into a nation and a citizenry (Arteaga 2009, 301–20). Accordingly, some manuals meant for military training in the new Latin American republics emphasized that

“since a soldier is a man, if one seeks to inculcate in him the religion of duty not by means of ignominious punishments that are improper for civilization but by attracting him through reasoning worthy of the spirit of our century, it will be much easier to make him into a lethal defender of the sovereign freedom of his homeland” (Mixco 1888, 6).

These publications share with the military training manuals that circulated in Latin America during the nineteenth century a discourse encouraging love of the fatherland understood as a civic or political virtue going beyond an affinity for the cultural, ethnic and religious identity of a people, more related to a love for a shared freedom and the institutions of the republican order on which it rests. “Love of the fatherland is the moral force that turns raw soldiers into brave and invincible warriors” (Mixco 1888). Nevertheless, the predominant factor was a bellicose climate that a contemporary described in the following terms: “*When the guns thundered, all citizens became soldiers, and every breast breathed war.* In the universal movement of that sacrilegious and fratricidal war through the space of two long years, not a sound was heard in the republic except for those made by the people of New Grenada as they killed one another” (Eusebio Caro 1873, 89, our italics).

## 5 Wartime Education

It should be noted that during the nineteenth century the organization of the republican regime took place in the context of a series of civil wars “fought between armies and guerrilla units whose soldiers and fighters were for the most part poor labourers and lower-class urban workers whose participation was sometimes voluntary and sometimes not” (Carlos Jurado 2004, 673). They had to be trained in military tactics, patriotic virtues, and the principles of good citizenship. Consequently, the distinctions between these elements, political practices, and the social role of education were fuzzy, as evidenced during the war of 1876, also known as the war of the schools, sparked by the educational reform introduced by the radical liberals at the beginning of that decade.

This war contributed to a situation in which issues of education became a factor in provoking clashes between different social and political sectors, since control over individuals or efforts to shape them became a bone of contention between forces seeking to impose their political and religious principles (Clark 2007, 32–61). Thus education, or the perception of education in the eyes of the political actors in that period, ended up becoming a factor in partisan alignments because schools were seen as ideal spaces for the training of the armed citizen and the construction of the nation. Education also became an area of confrontation between two distinct powers, each of which claimed sovereignty, the Church and the liberal state, which were in turn instrumentalized in various ways by social subjects whose efforts to control education involved moral, religious and civic issues. The discourses and actions thus unleashed generated armed conflicts such as the previously mentioned one in 1876, in which some armies marched behind religious banners.

In 1864 Cerbeleón Pinzón published a catechism that contributed to a propitious climate for such situations. His *Catecismo Republicano* sought to help train soldiers, i.e., citizens in arms, individuals linked to the militias, National Guard, or rural guerrilla formations. It was also meant for learned citizens, represented by student youth who also needed to learn, protect, and spread the basics of civic education and republican order. The text combined a martial discourse and civil ideas as symbolized by the republic, whose existence, Pinzón argued, required its defence by an armed citizenry able to “give their lives, if necessary, to defend its territorial integrity, independence and honour” (Pinzón 1865, 28). This catechism meant for use in the schools run by the Colombian Guard presented a double discourse including both civic education and instruction for war. This was the common denominator during a period when war was often called upon to defend the gains of the established political regime, a reason also often invoked to justify any mass uprising “with right on its side in defence of our independence, our freedom and our rights” (Pinzón 1865, 24). In general, these manuals emphasized “the need to maintain a standing army indispensable to order” for which “it is necessary that the members who make it up are ready to fulfil its aims, not only by devoting themselves to the loyal

fulfilment of their commitments to the fatherland, but also seeking to deeply educate themselves in the military profession and the rules of the art of war” (Barriga 1860, 3). This text reveals a concern for training patriotic citizens for war, a very common practice in nineteenth-century Colombia that would continue, with slight variations, during the first half of the twentieth, to the point of becoming an element in the generation of political identities in the country (Carlos Jurado 2014, 185–210).

Furthermore, the state of war favored reading practices associated with martial themes and disciplined learning, since the reading and memorization of regulations was obligatory. In his memoirs, José María Espinosa, who ended his military career as an army master sergeant, recounted the following regarding the events of 2 October 1812 during a battle between federalists and centralists in Ventaquemada. When the latter were retreating, in order to spur on his troops and infuse them with courage, General Antonio Nariño “came up to me to take the flag from me, but I resisted giving it to him, because I knew, from the military regulations read to me every night in the barracks when I began my service, that the standard bearer should never give up the flag, not even to the army commanding general himself, and that only in the most unfortunate situation could he hand it over to a sergeant or corporal” (María Espinoza 1936, 33–34). The use of a method emphasizing the repetition of commands, orders and regulations was considered the most appropriate way to train the armed citizen. The introduction to the *Guía del instructor para la enseñanza del soldado, en 30 días* (Instructor’s Guide for Training Soldiers in 30 Days) listed, under the heading “General Observations on Method”, the following most important and basic elements in teaching soldiers: “Get rid of theoretical dissertations, demonstrate the use of arms, break down actions into as many distinct movements as possible, and practice each movement until students can execute it perfectly.” This cited guidebook was an official edition published in 1861 after multiple reprints in which “none of the 1831 regulations were changed” (*Guía del Instructor* 1861, 9).

Repetition was the method used to train soldiers in military values, transforming them into individuals whose only purpose was to comply with orders from their superiors and inculcating discipline as the

military’s highest virtue. Regarding the latter, an 1842 manual pointed out, “A cowardly and undisciplined crowd cannot push back a hardened enemy. The purpose of bravery and discipline is public happiness, and the reward is national admiration. A military man who lacks these virtues is good for nothing, he earns the opprobrium of his comrades and brings shame onto the unit in which he serves. *Discipline is the soul of armies*. Without it, soldiers become a pack of wretches more dangerous to the state than its declared enemies” (*Recopilación de las ordenanzas* 1842, 8, our italics).

This unambiguously signals that the training of a citizen in arms has both a military and civil character. Consequently, there is an emphasis on republican values as well as on discipline. The fulfilment of this duty was considered incumbent on all civilized individuals, who were to obey these norms and practice them to the letter in spaces such as schools, barracks, and the home, since a good citizen “should know and respect the republican laws and defend his fatherland.” The republican project such as it was, intended to be carried out throughout most of the nineteenth century, sought above all to strengthen the republican system as the guarantee of freedom. Therefore it was necessary to “civilize the people” through the educational system so that they would recognize, valorize, and understand the legitimacy and powers of the new political regime. This system has to be served and obeyed; in other words, citizens had to observe its principles with no further discussion, which might seem like a contradiction but was clearly the political intention (Roldán Vera 1999, 297–331).

## 6 Republic and Education

This relationship between the republic and education would be present throughout the nineteenth century in Colombia and Latin America as a whole. In that sense, the starting point was the idea that the republican government had to exercise complete power over education (Rosales 2000, 117). In fact, unlike despotic governments that installed and maintained themselves in power by instilling fear in the population, the main source of legitimacy of the political order in the republics was

the virtue of their citizens. This precondition became the only alternative that could make freedom possible. In other words, the nineteenth-century republic was the expression of a conception of democracy in which the citizens were simultaneously its basis of support and its maximum expression.

This relationship between education and the republic, as other historians have pointed out, was conceived as a space that had to strive to achieve both civic excellence and love for the fatherland. This combination also had to characterize soldiers, who were to carefully respect social etiquette, such as carefully washing themselves, neatly combing their hair and dressing as cleanly as possible every day. Shoes, belt buckles, and buttons had to be shined and clothing completely clean, with socks pulled up and “bow tie neatly tied; overcoat, jacket and vest without stains, tears or shoddy repairs; locks of hair cut short; helmet in place; so that their behaviour and martial air reflect their good training and careful attitude” (Rosales 2000, 4). In this sense, authors like Maurizio Virolli believe that the construction of the republic went hand in hand with the encouragement of patriotism. According to this author, in order to survive and prosper political liberty needed civic virtue, i.e., citizens capable of committing themselves to the common good, and the right to defend common freedoms and rights (Virolli 1997, 26). Further, he defines civic or political virtue as love for the fatherland, understood not just as one’s connection with the cultural, ethnic and religious unity of a people, but as love for common freedom and the institutions on which that freedom is based. In fact, the love that the educational system in Latin America sought to inculcate was particular in scope, a love for the common freedom of a particular people based on institutions with a particular history with particular significance for that people, both inspired by and supporting a specific way of life and culture.

Virolli proposes that we consider this history as one in which esteem for a fatherland and love for the republic have been constructed in considering freedom or unity as an end in itself. Therefore the young Latin American republics of the nineteenth century sought to instil love for a given set of institutions and establish cultural, ethnic and religious homogeneity. To this end they valued education, both in the schools

and in civic public rituals, and various publications whose goal was to train citizens as defenders of the new republican regime. That is why they emphasized, and still do, the existence of a common culture and a shared memory, the history of the fatherland.<sup>5</sup> According to a head of public education in that era, it was "urgently necessary to teach the youth about the history of our fatherland, teach them to love those who fought for our freedom" (*Informe del Director*, 1874, 4).

Privileging education as the best way to consolidate a homogenous republic was the goal of many liberals, one of whom declared, "There is a cancer eating away at this republic, and that is the people's ignorance. Thus it is necessary to pull the people out of their abject moral prostration by making them feel the power of education. In republics the people govern themselves, which demands that the people be virtuous, intelligent and educated. A republic whose people are barbarians is a republic in name only, not in essence. There is an imperious necessity for republican institutions unshadowed by religious sect and dogma; achieving this is injecting the antidote of life into the veins of the republic" (*El Adelanto de Santa Marta*, 1874, 11).

For these political and social actors it was fundamentally necessary to institutionalize school spaces and patriotic celebrations that would continue the process of teaching and learning to train armed citizens endowed with a modern ideology focused on the individual, reason, progress and the republic. For most of them, the term republic would be increasingly present in the process of constitutional normativity that took place in Colombia during the nineteenth century. In addition to serving as an indicator of the role and importance of this expression in the political vocabulary and imaginary of Colombians, an analysis of its use allows us to measure the degree of popularity the term achieved in publications of that time, including manuals for the training of the armed citizen among textual typologies comprised of manuals on etiquette and good manners, republican morals and citizenship, collections of moral maxims, compendiums on civic education, history and geography textbooks, republican catechisms, and similar manuals on politics, history, geography, citizenship, etc. Each of them was turned into an instrument for civic education in an effort to construct a new social imaginary, one that had already begun to emerge in the first decades

of the nineteenth century during the process of independence. Despite their limitations, the country's schools provided a space to break with the old ties of traditional communities and forge new ones based on the rationality of written culture. For nineteenth-century educational institutions, including military schools, these textbooks were an effective tool to build a new social order in which individuals, turned into armed citizens, could adopt a rational and civilized behaviour in both private spaces and their public life (Serrano 2008, 340).

These textbook typologies became strategies to drive the project for the nation's construction, which necessarily implied the existence of a citizenry that recognized the power of writing and arms erected in a space of law and authority as a foundational power generating a new institutional order. Thus the writing of manuals and other books of precepts played an important role throughout Latin America during the nineteenth century because they met the need to organize and institutionalize the new mechanisms of civilization and make the dream of modernization a reality. The word, Beatriz González wrote, filled the vacuums; it would help construct the state, invent borders, designate geographies to be occupied, and shape citizens, transforming them into new social subjects, protagonists of the modernizing project (González Stephan 1995, 432–50).

In our analysis of these publications, especially those used to train citizen warriors, our starting point is that this kind of manual constitutes a representation of the diverse discursive practices generated in order to discipline the behaviour of those who made up militias and guerrilla units. In addition to teaching them military tactics, these texts inculcated ideas about the republic, nation, fatherland, citizenship, the citizen, and the people.

## **7 Shaping the Armed Citizen to Defend the Fatherland**

In this way, the texts used for military instruction were part of the shaping mechanisms whose role was to transform individuals into citizens prepared to defend the republic. To this end they demonstrated the



benefits of the republic, the reasons for its defence, the transcendence of the nation and men, now transformed into armed citizens, and the need to understand that "military honour does not consist simply in performing one's duties in the barracks, campaigns and battle, but also in never allowing oneself to be used to defend or support any project, plan, plot or endeavour that would destroy or tend to damage or dilute in any way the principles and forms that characterize the republic" (*Alocución de Santos Gutiérrez* 1967). Like military instruction manuals, this kind of proclamation taught militia members to respect, recognize and valorize the importance of defending republican society and comply with the regulations governing the behaviour of members of the military, because good laws and their rigorous observance were considered "the strongest support for national happiness." This was considered an "indisputable truth, but it is also indisputable that force is necessary to ensure obedience to those laws. Nothing is as necessary for the defence of the state as military strength" (*Alocución de Santos Gutiérrez*, 1967, 6).

The discourse present in such texts manifests the universe of values of the society that generates them. They are also a reflection of the cultural context in which they are produced and begin to occupy a space in the memory of its inhabitants. Inscribed in each of these military manuals, compendiums, catechisms and military proclamations are republican stereotypes, ideologies and images, faithful vestiges and reflections of the spirit of a time characterized by changes and transformations, and continuations and continuities as well. In this sense, a study of the republican representations and imaginaries in these texts will find a viable alternative in the conceptual and methodological postulates suggested by Roger Chartier. He holds that books, like all texts, are a representation of the world in which they are written and the culture that appropriates them, or, in other words, the cognitions of their authors and users. Thus such representations, in terms of their formal structures, metaphors and simulacra and not just their content, also convey a meaning that ends up being perceived as a semantic agreement among the subjects of a particular group in which the texts circulate (Chartier 1996). Consequently, we understand the military instruction manuals analyzed here as representations of the republican universe in which they were inscribed and appropriated.

Thus, throughout the nineteenth century in Colombia, the republican regime was the object of representations of various kinds directly related to a concern for consolidating the national project as well as the political, military and cultural circumstances and political realities of the era. The republic, understood as fatherland, nation, territory or sovereign space, was an essential part of the discourse of nineteenth-century political, social and military actors. They argued for the importance of a republican army comprised of thinking men who voluntarily accepted the contingencies of battle and the hardships of a military campaign firmly determined to contribute to the triumph of a principle, the eternal glory for which they had abandoned their homes, interests, and families. The republic was a constant in the military references emphasizing the sacrifices that should be made for its sake by the armed citizens to whom its defence was delegated, above their personal interests and family ties, as explained in a military guidebook: “Love for the Fatherland, my son, is the most noble and generous sentiment; it leads us to love it more than we love ourselves, because a true citizen is always ready to sacrifice his interests, his blood and even his life” (Puig 1821, 22). The aim was to prepare citizens in the art of war, a process in which writings such as proclamations, guidebooks, instructions and manuals played an important role as generators of a military culture in a society such as Colombia, and Latin America in general, whose members were for the most part illiterate. Nevertheless, this was not an obstacle for some, who learned to read by practicing reading aloud. In fact, in the region and especially in spaces where people came together and socialized such as the militias and other military organizations, it was common practice for an individual who had mastered “the art of reading” to read aloud to others, not only the main news items in the press, especially those related to military and political matters, but especially texts describing the military tactics that armed citizens should learn (Chartier 1995, 2005, 89–95).

Consequently, throughout the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, the practice of reading aloud made it possible to familiarize individuals, including those who were illiterate (Guerra 1992, 288–318), with the republican imaginaries and particularly terms such as citizenry, nation, fatherland, liberty and equality. These same

themes were addressed in manuals for training soldiers and guerrillas. The reading aloud of both commands and orders was part of military routine. Men, from privates to the highest-ranking officers, repeated them daily so that they became part of their language. Training was divided into lessons that had to be memorized (*Resumen de las voces*, n.d.). This was indispensable for the maintenance of discipline and order in battle. Equally indispensable was the ability to distinguish between various military ranks, use weapons, assume battle formations, fall into and break ranks, all while strictly obeying commands. These were very useful "practical lessons" that trained great soldiers, officers and "worthy gentlemen like D'Elúyar, Macedonio Castro, the Girardots (Pedro and Atanasio), Hermógenes Maza and others" (María Espinosa 1936, 30).

## 8 Between the Warrior Ethos and Military Glory

The training of the armed citizen was fundamental in inculcating this *warrior ethos* whose importance was twofold. The first dimension was the teaching of duties and "the constant and uniform practice that always exists in permanent organizations, and not in others, and the simplification and perfection of the system so that men gradually acquire the training and perfection that will one day allow them to become an outstanding General Staff officer and ultimately a trusted general distinguished for his knowledge" (*Observaciones a la ley orgánica* 1833). The second was to inspire them with a warrior ethos and an aspiration for military glory.

What, for these men who fought the wars of the nineteenth century, was this military glory so constantly discussed? This glory was the object of a strict state and social control, since if used well, it could serve as "a highly effective incentive" in civil wars, but if out of control, or used toward perverse ends, it could also have terrible negative consequences (Rabinovich 2009).<sup>6</sup> It was the spiritual nourishment necessary to persist in combat until the shedding of the last drop of blood, the enemy's

and one's own. This nourishment was provided by proclamations such as "Ardour for the glory of the fatherland makes everything possible."<sup>7</sup> In this way military leaders became specialists in proclamations full of epic prose and phrases conveying their yearning for freedom. An 1820 proclamation addressed to the armed citizens asked them to "exterminate the handful of tyrants and drive them out of our capital; strive and learn to become liberators of your fatherland; the gates of honour and glory are open; hasten and unite in the service of the forces under my command. The prize awaits you for your heroic efforts, courage and persistence for your freedom." To fill them with the spirit of greater courage, warrior daring and total commitment, the author of the proclamation offers to "gladly shed my blood so that Colombia may live and its enemies die" (*Fondo Ortega Ricaurte*, n.d., 768–69).

On some occasions military leaders issued proclamations meant to inspire a warrior ethos from locations far removed from the battlefield. For example, General Pedro Alcántara Herrán sought to stimulate this spirit using printing presses located far from the United States of Colombia in whose fields the War of 1862 was being fought. The general sent his soldiers a message in this spirit: "There is no one so invalid that they cannot do something for their fatherland if they desire to do so; serving one's fatherland is serving oneself. Renounce, once and for all, the terrible speculation on neutrality, indecision and cooperation with the good in words only while in deeds, if only with your indifference, you effectively serve evil. In politics and war, as in commerce, the economy consists in the timeliness and sufficiency of the sacrifices. Therefore on the battlefield nothing is more human and economic than dispatch by bayonet" (*Documentos curiosos escojidos*, 1862, 22–23). General Alcántara was writing in New York, in another United States.

The distance between New York where General Alcántara was exiled and the fields of Colombia where the war was taking place made it easy for him to feign a certain political or military generosity. He appeared as a selfless man who wanted nothing more than to offer his services to the fatherland, maintain order and obey the law. He also indicated the main reason for waging war: "We do not wage war to exact vengeance on anyone, but simply to re-establish peace, order and the rule of law in the Republic" (*Documentos curiosos escojidos* 1862, 27). The generosity

of the general and all those "ambitious old men" contrasts sharply with the finger pointing at the end of the letter written by the soldier cited at the beginning of this paper. He concludes by asking his sister, "Now, dear Carmen, what do you say about these events and the implications they will have on our internal war, and above all the immense risk to the Cauca Valley because of our separation?" In the next line he answers his own question: "Although some people are satisfied with the return of the Antioquians, believing that this will be enough so that they do not invade the Cauca Valley, I am not, because I know that the Antioquians are purely *Antioquians*" (*Documentos curiosos escojidos*, 1862, 17).

Although his soldier had been trained as a citizen armed for war and ready to obey orders, his was a voice authorized to reflect on the realities and political, economic and regional interests underlying the conflict. In the end, he shared with other soldiers the inclement climate, rain, unhealthy conditions, hunger when rations, almost always short because of the scarcity of food, ran out, separation from his family, epidemics, and the commands of his superiors whose orders had to be carried out with rigorous discipline as laid out in the manual and military regulations.

*Translated from Spanish by Leo Stephen Torgoff*

## Notes

1. Texts belong to a given space and time, and cannot be studied in isolation and decontextualized from the historic moment of which they are a part. To do so would border on anachronism, to be avoided by historians of education and culture. There is also the risk of falling into an immediatist and ahistorical vision, which has been the case with some education specialists who, with regard to textbooks, restrict themselves to noting the pedagogical methods or precepts they demonstrate and their curricular content, ignoring the fact that the manual they are analysing is the product of a particular social group and era from which it cannot be abstracted. Its complexity, characteristics, content and transformations are the product of the specific conditions and circumstances that, despite their sometimes apparent homogeneity, render them different for each social group and era.

2. *La guerrilla, ó, Tratado de servicio de las tropas ligeras en campaña. Escrito en francés por el señor Grandmaison*. Translated from French by D. \_\_\_\_, Capitán y Comandante de las Compañías Provinciales de Valencia (Bogotá: Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, 1780), 1a, 9520.
3. *Ordenanzas del Ejército. Obligaciones desde el soldado hasta el sargento mayor inclusive. Con las Órdenes Generales para oficiales y leyes penales* (Cartagena de Colombia: José Casanova, 1832), BNC, Fondo Pineda 123(3); *Instrucción de Guerrilla por el Sr. D. Felipe de San Juan*, compiled and extended by Lieutenant Colonel D. Alfonso Balderrábano, Sergeant Major of the Light Infantry Regiment Doyle Shooters, and by D. Juan Bautista de Maortua, Lieutenant of the same, with later revisions by the latter, 3rd ed. (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Nacional, 1823), reprinted by the Officers' Corps of the 6th Light Brigade (Cartagena: José Casanova, 1832), BNC, Fondo Pineda 123(2). For other editions, such that of 1819, consult the BNC, Fondo Pineda 123(6); the Chilean edition of 1823, BNC, Miscelánea JAS 103(3). Other editions of this typical guerrilla manual appeared throughout the nineteenth century, such as in 1841 (BNC, Miscelánea JAS 60(7)), and an 1860 edition, BNC, Fondo Pineda 688(8).
4. Roberto Cortázar, ed., "Remigio Márquez al señor vicepresidente Francisco de Paula Santander, Santa Marta, abril 18 de 1821," *Correspondencia dirigida al general Santander* (Bogotá, Academia Colombiana de Historia, 1964–1970), vol. 7, no. 2373, 224–25.
5. One study of the role played in history by the construction of national identity is Carolyn Boyd's *Historia Patria* (Barcelona: Pomares Corredor, 2000).
6. Alejandro M. Rabinovich, "La gloria, esa plaga de nuestra pobre América del Sud," *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos* (2 February 2009), <http://nuevomundo.revues.org/index56444.html>, accessed June 12, 2018.
7. Luis Horacio López Domínguez, ed., op. cit., 97.

## Bibliography

### Military Training Manuals

*Guía del Instructor para la enseñanza del soldado, en 30 días*. Translated into Castilian by Colonel S. J. Arteaga. Bogotá: Imprenta de la Nación, 1861. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 655(10).

- Instrucción de Guerrilla por el Sr. D. Felipe de San Juan.* compiled and extended by Lieutenant Colonel D. Alfonso Balderrábano and D. Juan Bautista de Maortua, with later revisions. Third edition. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Nacional, 1823. Reprinted by the Officers' Corps of the 6th Light Brigade, Cartagena: José Casanova, 1832. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 123(2).
- Instrucción de guerrilla para el uso de ciudadanos armados del batallón de tiradores de Cerinsa; con el aumento de una combinación para las evoluciones más necesarias de tropa ligera.* Bogotá: J. A. Cualla, 1832. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 713(4).
- La guerrilla, ó, Tratado de servicio de las tropas ligeras en campaña. Escrito en francés por el señor Grandmaison.* Translated from French by D. Capitán y Comandante de las Compañías Provinciales de Valencia. Bogotá: Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, 1780. 1a, 9520.
- Observaciones a la ley orgánica militar sobre el Estado Mayor; por un Inválido del Ejército que no es ni puede ser oficial de él.* Cartagena: Manuel María Guerrero, 1833.
- Ordenanzas del Ejército. Obligaciones desde el soldado hasta el sargento mayor inclusive. Con las Órdenes Generales para oficiales y leyes penales.* Cartagena de Colombia: José Casanova, 1832. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 123(3).
- Recopilación de las ordenanzas jenerales del ejército e instrucción militar de caballería, comprende las obligaciones del soldado, cabo i sargento de caballería e infantería con las leyes penales y algunas instrucciones selectas.* Bogotá: Juan N. Barros, 1842. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pinera 24(8).
- Resumen de las voces de mando para las maniobras de Infantería.* Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 123(5).
- Tratado de Guerrilla para el uso de las tropas ligeras de la República de Colombia.* Santa Marta: Imprenta del Seminario por Tadeo Rodríguez, 1821. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Fondo Pineda 123(1).

## Other Archived Sources

- Archivo General De La Nación. Fondo Ortega Ricaurte (AGN). Box 193.
- Documentos curiosos escojidos de entre otros muchos que se interceptaron últimamente, en el Cauca, a los rebeldes Canal, Arboleda, Enao y compañeros.* Bogotá: Imprenta de Cundinamarca, 1862. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia (BNC), Fondo Pineda 3 (pieza 17).

*Informe del Director de Instrucción Pública del Estado del Magdalena* (1874). AHM, box 11, file 2.

## Further References

- Alarcón, Luis. 2012. "Analfabetos pero republicanos. El mundo del libro escolar en el Caribe colombiano, 1857–1886." *Historia y Sociedad* 23: 207–41.
- Alocución de Santos Gutiérrez a los colombianos*. 1967. Cartagena: Imprenta Ruiz e Hijo.
- Amézcuca Luna, Jarco. 2011. "Entrevista a Christon Archer, El ejército realista y la guerra de independencia de México." *Tzintzun: Revista de estudios históricos* 53: 133–78.
- Arteaga, Carmen. 2009. "Una lección de sociales: Representación de la ciudadanía transmitida en libros de texto de primaria venezolano." *Espacio Abierto. Cuaderno Venezolano de Sociología* 18 (2): 301–20.
- Barriga, Sisto. 1860. *Manual de Infantería de línea para el ejército de la confederación*. Tunja.
- Borre Johnsen, Egil. 1996. *Libros de texto en el calidoscopio. Estudio crítico de la literatura y la investigación sobre los textos escolares*. Barcelona: Pomares-Corredor.
- Boyd, Carolyn. 2000. *Historia Patria*. Barcelona: Pomares Corredor.
- Caro, José Eusebio. 1873. *Obras Escogidas en Prosa y en Verso*. Bogotá: El tradicionalista.
- Chartier, Roger. 1995. *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the 14th and 18th Centuries*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 1996. *El Mundo como representación. Historia cultural entre política y representación*. Barcelona: Editorial Gedisa.
- . 2005. *El presente del pasado Escritura de la historia, historia de lo escrito*. Mexico: Universidad Iberoamericana.
- Choppin, Alain. 2000. "Pasado y presente de los manuales escolares." In *La cultura escolar de Europa. Tendencias históricas emergentes*, edited by Julio Ruíz Berrio, 112–17. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva.
- Clark, Meri. 2007. "Conflictos entre el Estado y las elites locales sobre la educación colombiana durante las décadas de 1820 y 1830." *Historia Crítica* 34: 32–61.
- Conde, Jorge, and Luis Alarcón. 2014. "La conversión de milicianos y guerrilleros en ciudadanos armados de la República de Colombia." *Historia Caribe* 25: 17–37.



- Cortázar, Roberto, ed. 1964–1970. "Remigio Márquez al señor vicepresidente Francisco de Paula Santander, Santa Marta, abril 18 de 1821." *Correspondencia dirigida al general Santander*. 14 vols. Bogotá, Academia Colombiana de Historia, Vol. 7, no. 2373, 224–25.
- El Adelanto de Santa Marta*, 10 November 1874, 3.
- Espinosa, José María. 1936. *Memorias de un abanderado*. Bogotá: Editorial Minerva.
- Giménez López, Enrique. 2005. "Conflicto armado con Francia y guerrilla austracista en Cataluña (1719–1820)." *Hispania* 65/2 (220): 543–600.
- González Stephan, Beatriz. 1995. "Modernización y disciplinamiento. La formación del ciudadano: Del espacio público y privado." In *Esplendores y miserias del siglo XIX. Cultura y Sociedad en América Latina*, edited by Beatriz González Stephan et al. Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores.
- Guerra, François-Xavier. 1992. *Modernidad e Independencias*. Madrid: Mapfre.
- Jurado, Juan Carlos. 2004. "Soldados, pobres y reclutas en las guerras civiles colombianas." *Revista de Indias* 64 (232): 673–96.
- . 2014. "La guerra como administración estatal. La Guerra Civil colombiana de 1851." *Revista de Indias* 74 (260): 185–210.
- Mixco, Calixto. 1888. *Tratado de moral militar*. San Salvador: Imprenta Nacional.
- Orosio, Alejandro. 1988. "Reglamento para la Conservación de los Ejércitos de la República [26 November 1819]." In *Diarios de Campaña, Libro de Ordenes, y Reglamentos Militares 1818–1834*, edited by Francisco de Paula Santander. Bogotá: Biblioteca de la Presidencia de la República.
- . 1990. "Memoria del Ministro de Guerra y Hacienda." In *De Boyacá a Cúcuta. Memoria administrativa, 1819–1821*, edited by Luis Horacio López Domínguez. Bogotá: Biblioteca de la Presidencia de la República.
- Palacio Mejía, Luz, and Marta Ramírez Franco. 1998. "Reflexiones sobre el texto escolar como dispositivo." *Revista Educación y Pedagogía* 10 (21): 217–36.
- Pinzón, Cerbeleón. 1865. *Catecismo Republicano para instrucción popular*. Bogota: El Mosaico.
- Puing, José. 1821. *Guía para todo joven militar*. Barcelona: Imprenta Constitucional.
- Rabinovich, Alejandro M. "La gloria, esa plaga de nuestra pobre América del Sud." *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*. 2 February 2009. Accessed June 12, 2018. <http://nuevomundo.revues.org/index56444.html>.
- Roldán Vera, Eugenia. 1999. "The Monitorial System of Education and Culture in Early Independent Mexico." *Paedagogica Historica* 35 (2): 297–331.

- Rosales, José María. 2000. "La educación de la identidad cívica: sobre las relaciones entre nacionalismo y patriotismo." In José Rubio Carracedo and José María Rosales. *Ciudadanía, nacionalismo y derechos humanos*. Madrid: Trota.
- Serrano, Sol. 2008. "La escuela chilena y la definición de lo público." In *Los espacios públicos en Iberoamérica. Ambigüedades y problemas. Siglos XVIII–XIX*, edited by François-Xavier Guerra, Annik Lempérière et al. Mexico: FCE.
- Sierra Mejía, Rubén (ed.). 2006. *El radicalismo colombiano del siglo XIX*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Virolli, Maurizio. 1997. *Por amor a la patria*. Madrid: Acento.