

# **The Political Ecology of Peace**

Qualitative study on Indigenous people's peacebuilding  
in the post-conflict Colombia



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## Abstract:

This study examines indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia in line with the liberal peace project, which frames the territorial peacebuilding in Colombia. The need for exploring alternatives to the peacebuilding paradigm as an emblem of the liberal peace is urged; as it attempts to achieve a standardized peace while developing war-torn countries. The problematic dimension of the development discourse within the liberal peace is deconstructed. Development discourse presents underdevelopment as the root of violence, an unfixed dominant narrative enabling other narratives to emerge. Such narratives are the indigenous vision on peacebuilding. The arguments of this study were elucidated by deploying a decolonial theory under the umbrella of political ecology studies. The political ecology of peace is proposed as a conceptual framework for understanding indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia.

Drawing on critical ethnography and qualitative methods such as interviews, the findings suggest that indigenous visions of peacebuilding encompass a multidimensional nature rooted in a history of resistance, cultural identity and dependence on mother earth. Thus, such visions can have the potential to influence alternative models of development to build the roots of territorial peacebuilding in Colombia.

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## List of Acronyms

CCC	Colombian Constitutional Court
CMH	Centro de Memoria Histórica
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Center
ILO	International Labor Organization
MNC	Multinational Corporations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
ONIC	Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia
PA	Peace Accord
PND	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency UNHCR
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## Introduction

*“What we are going to do to build peace is not the question. But rather, what have we done in order to build a millenary peace is what matters”*

*(Aida Quilcue)<sup>1</sup>*

The words of one of the indigenous participants in the research reflect that historically, Indigenous peoples in Colombia have been building peace throughout a resistance process rooted in cultural identity and spirituality. Such resistance entails a struggle for mother earth while recovering ancestral lands. The political ecology of peace hence is a proposed concept that seeks to fill a knowledge gap within the field of political ecology studies. It aims to constitute a paradigm of understanding indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia.

Indigenous people in Colombia who have inhabited the territory for more than 12000 years are being historically ostracized and effectively annihilated. Since the colonization of their lands 500 years ago, resistance has taken place. Violence occurring on ancestral lands was exacerbated by 52 years of the Colombian internal armed conflict. This is due to the fact that their ancestral lands<sup>2</sup> with abundant natural resources are strategically located either to serve as a corridor to smuggle illegal crops or to fulfil multinational corporations' hunger for natural resources<sup>3</sup>.

After the signing of the Peace Accord (PA) in 2016 between the Colombian Government and the oldest guerrilla of Latin America, FARC, indigenous people continue to endure further violence and forced displacement (UNHCR, 2017). While peacebuilding has begun slowly

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<sup>1</sup> Member of Nasa tribe and human rights and peace adviser of the Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC). Interviewed Jan 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The concept of ancestral land in Colombia has just gained significance in the Colombian constitutional system. This is as a result of indigenous people's claims for recognition of their collective rights. That is to say, territory, as a collective right cannot be separate of cultural identity, sovereignty, consultation and so on. Ancestral territory is not just that titled by the government, but that one whereby cultural and spiritual practices, sacred sites, political organization was and has been taking place since precolonial times in a specific historical context of an indigenous territory.

<sup>3</sup> The Colombian Constitutional Court (2009), equally the Government, have acknowledged existing causal factors of the armed conflict which have contributed to threaten the cultural existence of these groups, and equally have depleted the environment, thus some of the core factors are: discrimination, land-grabbing, logging, illegal and legal mining, monocrops of biofuel, sugar cane, among others.

with the demobilization of FARC members, a cease-fire, illegal crop eradication, demarcation areas which were previously occupied by guerrillas throughout 52 years of civil war (Watts 2017), violence against human rights activists, particularly ethnic<sup>4</sup> leaders has continued to increase in those vacuum regions where FARC exerted power over half a century.

So far, since the PA was signed, more than 100 human rights activists and land defenders have been murdered (The Guardian 2017, Telesur 2017). This situation has led to pivotal actions carried out by indigenous groups across the country, one example being the “Liberation for Mother Earth” in the Cauca Region (Watts 2017). Thereupon, the Nasa tribe attempted to take a stand, as their territories are encroached by agribusiness, mining companies, or criminal gangs supported by the power of right-wing groups.

Peacebuilding has become a challenge in most of the territories previously held by FARC in the periphery of Colombia where ethnic minorities are settled. This is due to the power vacuum left by FARC leaving the door open for territorial control by paramilitary groups. The situation has resulted in many protests led by social and grassroots organizations, who remonstrated with the Colombian government, acting in order to protect human rights by means of building an inclusive peace with regards to marginalized communities. Notably, the most vital action taking place in order to build peace from indigenous people’s stance has been “La Minga<sup>5</sup>” for defending life and territory which has gathered more than 100,000 indigenous people across the country, who non-violently claimed implementation of peace in their territories, similarly ending human rights aggressions and exploitation of their lands, as the first step towards achieving the so-called “sustainable and lasting peace”.

### Importance of the topic

Over the past twenty years significant literature in the field of peace and conflict studies has grown up around the ambiguity of the theme of peacebuilding. Extensive research (Paris 1997, 2002, 2004, Tschirgi 2004, Krause & Jütersonke 2005, Mac Ginty 2008, Richmond,

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<sup>4</sup> Colombia proclaimed itself as multicultural since the 1991 Political Constitution. This is grounded on the idea of recognition of ethnic minority groups, who historically had been abandoned by the Colombian state and ignored by society. According to Colombia’s 2005 census, 3.43 % of its population are indigenous people, and 10.52% are black communities or afro Colombian descendants (DANE, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> La minga means a meeting (RAE, 2014). It originates from quechua *mink’a* or *minga*, which means asking for help in return to a favour. In the pre-Columbian tradition, minga embodies a community work for social purposes, in order to receive something in return (REEVE, 1988). In the Colombian context, it refers to a mobilization of indigenous people by means of claiming their rights towards the government.

2010, Comish 2014, Amaechi 2017, among others) argue that the peacebuilding paradigm as the emblem of the so-called “liberal peace” or western peace, ought to be scrutinized. This is mainly because it attempts to apply a standardized peace to diverse complex socio-cultural post-conflict environments (Mac Ginty 2008), while expanding the liberal interventionism in the name of development. The pursuit of the liberal peace sees developing war-torn societies considered otherwise underdeveloped as the only way to addressing roots cause of violence (Duffield (2014). Such approach is likely to be seen as a weak model of creating stable peace<sup>6</sup> (Amaechi 2017:15, Mac Ginty 2008:140, Paris 1996:56).

The phenomenon of peacebuilding in Colombia is embodied by the territorial peacebuilding concept, which is the axis of the PA. It attempts to develop rural Colombia by means of addressing inequality as the root cause of violence. In this scenario, different conceptions towards models of development that will consolidate territorial peacebuilding are taking place. Bearing this in mind, I contend that the phenomenon of peacebuilding in Colombia is open to interrogation, as it is framed by the liberal peace project which conveys one way to achieve peace. This is to say, implementing a dominant model of development. Herein, an alternative approach to peacebuilding such as the indigenous one is pertinent. This is because indigenous participation in territorial peacebuilding in Colombia could pose an interesting opportunity to, on one hand, rethink the Colombian model of development, and on the other hand, place nature at the core of building peace. However, many challenges are faced by indigenous to consolidate their alternative approach to peacebuilding. This study will underscore some of them.

## Purpose of the study

This study aims to search for an alternative approach to peacebuilding. In other words, a vision of peacebuilding from indigenous people in Colombia. Yet, any attempt to romanticize indigenous’ perceptions on peace ought to be opposed. In lieu, critical examination and contestation are provided, as the debate on romanticizing indigenous as peaceful is problematic indeed (Richmond 2010:29). In this direction, I will advance the argument that

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<sup>6</sup> According to Paris (1996:56) The process of economic liberalization brought in countries like Rwanda, Angola, Salvador or Nicaragua has contributed to sparking violence instead off consolidating peace.

implementing peace in Colombia will serve as an analytical platform to critically deconstruct the development component of the liberal peace. Thereby the proposed concept of the political ecology of peace is suitable, not just to deconstruct this paradigm, but as a frame to explore the project of indigenous' resistance and peace embedded in ecological conflicts that are rooted on epistemological (Leff 2015), and ontological struggles (Escobar 2016).

In order to discern between the liberal peace and an alternative approach to it, the political ecology of peace serves as a paradigm of conceptualizing indigenous peacebuilding, while deploying a decolonial theory. Motivated by the urge to search for an alternative approach, I will build on the idea that the liberal peace is reproduced by the global coloniality (Escobar 2004).

### Research question

By employing critical ethnography and qualitative modes of enquiry, such as in-depth interviews with indigenous leaders and expert interviews with academics and indigenous rights defenders, I attempt to elucidate

How can the indigenous vision of peacebuilding in Colombia advance towards proposing alternative models of development which could have the potential to build the foundations for a territorial peacebuilding?

### Structure

The overall structure of the study takes the form of six chapters. Chapter one begins by highlighting the need of approaching the phenomena of peacebuilding through the political ecology lenses, while also looking at how the decolonial theory and the deconstructive approach are appropriate to shed light on the arguments. Chapter two deals with the research methodology, methods, ethical considerations, positionality and limitations on the methodology. Chapter three gives an overview of the recent history of the Colombian armed conflict from a critical ethnography perspective. Chapter four focuses on Indigenous resistance as the main tool for building peace. Chapter five concerns indigenous

peacebuilding in contrast with the liberal peace as an umbrella for the peacebuilding paradigm. Herein, I will provide a deconstructive analysis of the development discourse. Besides, it touches the territorial peacebuilding in Colombia and last but not least, sketches indigenous peacebuilding. Chapter six analyses the results of interviews focusing on key themes. Lastly, conclusions address the reflections of the study and answer the research question.

## **1. Theoretical and methodological approach**

In this chapter, I will draw on decolonial theory under the umbrella of political ecology studies. This theoretical framework is very much suitable as it shows how ostracism and the extermination of indigenous people in Colombia continue as a result of the longstanding history of coloniality which began with the discovery of the Americas in 1492. Nevertheless, for 500 years this coloniality has been shaping indigenous people's narratives on peacebuilding as a result of an endless resistance. Besides, I am aware that this study encompasses philosophical debates that aim to produce "warranted knowledge" (Graham 2005: 9). Thus, applying deconstruction as a methodological approach, this research aims to question the liberal peace -peacebuilding paradigm-.

### **The umbrella of Political ecology**

I advance my investigation through political ecology's lenses, which gives me a means to critically look at the complexity of the phenomena of peacebuilding in Colombia from an interdisciplinary perspective. This is because political ecology, as a broad field of study, tackles uneven power relations caused by humanity's transformation of nature prompting ecological conflicts (Leff 2015:45). These asymmetric relations have given rise to the process of "de-territorialization and re-territorialization" which in the case of Colombia, constitute, on one hand, the very core of the Colombian transition to peace, and on the other hand, aeons of indigenous people's resistance to build peace and reclaim their ancestral lands.

Political ecology of peace seeks to fill a knowledge gap within the field of political ecology

studies. It aims to constitute a paradigm of understanding indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia. The political ecology of peace emerges from the other side of the universal narrative of peacebuilding. With the proposed concept, I aim to underscore how the roots of the very injustices faced by indigenous people in Colombia, are in the case of indigenous cultures of the Andean region, shaped by a “millenary resistance” i.e. this concept coined by some of the indigenous participants in the research means that resistance is endless, as timeless as love is for mother earth. Such millenary resistance towards subjugation, domination and likewise natural resources’ exploitation goes beyond the colonization of Colombia in 1501. Instead, it has been underpinned by epistemological and ontological struggles (Leff 2015; Escobar 2016) which reveal different ways to perceive nature and care for mother earth. The dominant struggle that understands it by means of development and the indigenous one that perceives it as a dimension of their livelihood. These struggles have been and continue to be the root cause of Colombian ingrained violence as I will underscore in Chapter three. Furthermore, the political ecology perspective ought not to just underscore the causes of violence against indigenous peoples and the exploitation of their ancestral lands under the Colombian neoliberal regime exacerbated by global capitalism (Batterbury 2015:27,28). But, it should be a tool towards conceptualizing indigenous peacebuilding too.

Political ecology is the backbone that supports theories and methods (Batterbury in Blaikie, 2015:28) of my study. It is also an “endless conversation”, neither a theory nor a method, but instead a “flexible analytical perspective” as stated by Bryant (2015:16,19).

### The decolonial theory

Drawing on political ecology, a decolonial critique will be deployed to shed light on my deconstructive arguments, likewise to convey the participants’ message in this research. A decolonial stance is very much suitable in my investigation as it suggests that modernity is an unfinished project that began with the discovery of the Americas in 1492, and from which a racial partition of the world created the colonial conditions for Europe to dominate. Herein I will attempt to frame the liberal peace –peacebuilding paradigm- under the guise of the global coloniality concept (Escobar 2004). Besides, analysing the history of indigenous resistance in Colombia through the lenses of the colonial power concept coined by Anibal Quijano, I will

underpin that in the Hispanic colonies, race gave birth to global capitalism based on a racial division of labour whereby the Indians were saved from total extermination as long as they became the labour force, which enabled the colonial power of the crown to dominate while exploiting them (Quijano 2000:536). This strategy has been naturalised since then, and it prevails nowadays in the colonial world. I will argue that coloniality has enabled the liberal peace, likewise as noted by Maldonado-Torres, has facilitated and naturalised the paradigm of war, intrinsically linking with the main ensigns of western modernity: Conquest and colonialism by means of racial division (2008:4-5).

### Methodological approach

I have chosen the method of deconstruction proposed by Jacques Derrida as it goes hand in hand with the theoretical framework. As a post-structuralist<sup>7</sup>, Derrida critiques modernity by seeing knowledge and language as problematic given they are part of a constructed illusory world. The modern world thus is framed on categorization and representation of the self and others enabling segregation and division (Hubbard *et al.*, 2002 in Graham 2005:29). Deconstruction exposes that institutions, traditions, beliefs, values are not fixed ideas. On the contrary, they are in permanent flux, they don't possess meaning, because the meaning is open to discussion and enquiry (Derrida 1997:31, 32). Deconstruction, therefore, provides new meanings that go beyond the boundaries of Western language and knowledge.

Drawing on the work of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1990) who has translated and commented on some of Derrida's writings, deconstruction is seen as constant examination in order to produce truth. It never aims to disclose mistakes, instead investigating whether a narrative is constructed means that something is left out "When an end is defined, other ends are rejected". Thus, working on the other possibilities is what makes deconstruction useful. However, Spivak commenting on Derrida, stresses that he was neither for nor against imperialism or Enlightenment, because these structures have enabled him, thus giving the

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<sup>7</sup> The post-structuralist is a group of thinkers -Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and others- who embodied a post-modern project in Paris (1968). They opened up the door towards questioning premises on knowledge, progress and humanity that otherwise had been taken for granted. They envisioned that truth ought to be dismantled, de-constructed (Spivak 1990:18).

potential for the “ethical and the non-ethical” (19,46,135, 147,148).

In light of this, I contend that the phenomenon of liberal peace that gives rise to the peacebuilding paradigm requires a philosophical discussion that discloses the colonial relation of subjugation and resistance prevailing in Colombia. Thereupon, deconstruction likewise decolonial theories are vital according to Leff (2015) to underscore that Western narratives have not been valid for the entire world, inasmuch they universalized “difference and otherness” (49). In this fashion, the liberal peace -peacebuilding paradigm- embedded in Western discourses of progress, development, security, democracy, politics and social justice is a constructed narrative. When a narrative is constructed or defined, according to Derrida, other narratives emerge.

## **2. Research Methodology**

In order to address the problematic dimension of peacebuilding in Colombia and help me to elucidate the exploratory questions, a qualitative research approach under the umbrella of critical ethnography has been deployed. My ethnographic experience is based on 5 years of work alongside indigenous people who are victims of the armed conflict in Colombia. My research process is framed by the intertwined relation of theory and method, aiming hence, to overcome the “theory-versus-method debate, the dismissal or privileging of one over the other” (Madison 2011:73,85-88).

### **Methods**

Qualitative modes of enquiry have led this study. They are vital when it comes to obtaining “discursive constructions” (Graham 2005, 30) which are embedded in power relations as illustrated in this investigation. Besides, the value of ethnography interviews is that it contributes towards an “emancipatory knowledge and discourses of social justice”. Such knowledge was grounded, as claimed by Madison, on permanent dialogue with others (2011:24,26,33, 82).

Primary data has been collected by deploying in-depth, semi-structured interviews with indigenous activists and expert interviews with academics, indigenous rights defenders and activists of international and national non-governmental organizations.

Secondary data is particularly useful as it provides a geographical, historical and socio-economical context to analyse primary data (Clark 2005: 59). It has been gathered by analysing information from:

- . National Statistics indexes
- . National database on victims
- . International secondary data from the UN system, alike international cooperation organizations such as Norwegian Council etc.
- . Online data: Newspaper, reports by Colombian non-governmental organizations, mainstream magazines, Indigenous organizations' sites, as well as leftist magazines and government sites.
- . Online maps

I am aware of the main disadvantage of secondary data as a “cultural product” (Ibid :69) that reveals the mindset of the people within the organizations which gather it. However, a wide range of data has been arranged to display different stances.

### Interview process

Nine interviews were conducted in total. Four with indigenous leaders in Colombia. Two, with academics via skype in Colombia and the USA, four more with indigenous rights defenders in Colombia and the UK, and a transgender ecologist. Thus, gender equity within the research is shown.

### Key informants and sampling

Strategic sampling was based on key vital informants from whom I had the opportunity to work with while defending indigenous people's rights. I got in touch directly with indigenous activists who belong to tribes whereby I undertook ethnography work during 2014-2015 in Colombia. Coincidentally, I encountered that some of them were dealing with the

implementation of the peace process at the national level, and were part of the indigenous commission in the Havana negotiations. Likewise, I tried to contact base communities' members who were not involved in such endeavours, but, who were land and indigenous rights defenders. The first step was phoning them or emailing them with a translation of the project's introduction. I asked them if they were interested in participating in my research. Some of them never replied – particularly those who were in base communities-. Of the ones who responded some of them didn't have the time or never agreed to a further meeting.

Furthermore, in order to keep the focus of my study narrow, the prospect of just interviewing indigenous people was considered. However, given the complexity of the topic and the insecurity of travel in Colombia to meet them, I decided to broaden the knowledge on the theme, by interviewing academics and activists who had been involved with the defence of indigenous rights. I think that this approach has enhanced my study, rather than divided it.

While doing research, I came across scholars and indigenous rights defenders whose work has been focused on indigenous people who are victims of the Colombian armed conflict, specifically those whose territories had been encroached by agribusiness or the mining industry. When approaching them, I made sure that aims of the research likewise key concepts were clear. (Valentine 2005:118). Issues such as anonymity and confidentiality were also discussed.

### Structure of the interviews

Interviews lasted between one and two hours. The process of interviewing took a conversational dialogue adapting to experiences and views of the participants (Valentine 2005:111). As the nature of the topic is very sensitive, I agree with Graham (2005:30) that in-depth interviews are more suitable when the subject of research is from an ethnic group. This is because a questionnaire, for instance, wouldn't reflect valuable experiences akin to the many nuances of the topic at hand (Valentine 2005:110). Thus, I combined the three ethnography interview forms 1. oral history, 2. personal narrative and 3. topical interview, which according to Madison (2011:82,83), can never be understood in isolation as they overlap with each other.

Regarding interviews with indigenous leaders, prior to the interview day, simple guiding questions were sent (Madison 2011) related to key exploratory themes (See appendix 1).

On the other hand, respecting interviews with scholars and indigenous rights defenders, the same key themes were kept. However, I undertook a different approach with each interviewee, given their own particular experience or knowledge on the matter.

### Health and safety

I have tried to be aware of the implications of the phenomena studied on my personal safety and the participants (Martin & Flowerdew 2005:3). My experience of more than eight years meeting marginalized people who are victims of the havoc of war in Colombia has been a vital tool when it comes to recognizing potential hazards together with measures to avoid or mitigate them (Ibid).

Avoiding putting the interviewees in danger was cautiously assured, inasmuch as asking whether they prefer to be anonymous or not was repeatedly communicated. However, informed consent was acquired from almost everyone I interviewed. Of course, they were always able to withdraw from the research at any time. Besides, the locations of interviews were chosen by mutual agreement.

### Ethical considerations

The very thing of doing research involves ethical implications. I always ask myself what are the consequences of making judgments about power relations embedded in dominant narratives, when I am a product of them. And, who am I to represent the voices of others, to decode and construct them? When such epistemological and ethical queries (Kesby et al 2005:168) concerning human nature arise, it comes to my mind the compelling idea of acting honestly in order to unveil the causes of human wretchedness.

The ethics of my research hence has constituted a beacon to illuminate the path towards disclosing the injustice faced by those who are “under constant threat of civilization, modernity, or even progress” (Madison 2011: 256,264). Such is the endeavour of a critical

ethnographer who is compelled to act morally when it enters the domain of Others who have given it the power to preserve their voices. However, how we can preserve the voices of those who believe in our project, without putting their life and integrity at risk in post-conflict environments such as Colombia? This is feasibly the most fundamental question framing my research. Ergo I must act in a responsible manner in order to convey cautiously a message from those who trusted me, rather than use them by means of producing data (Kesby et al 2005:168). As Madison observes, we do not “use human beings as a means to an end, we instead are bound to enter their life with the ethical purpose to do good, while carefully thinking out the political, social and cultural consequences of the information conveyed (Ibid: 246, 262, 312).

### Positionality

Being reflexive (Valentine 2005:113) upon one’s position as a researcher is of course challenging. It means dissecting oneself in order to deem one’s own liability with regards to the aims of the research (Madison 2011:30) and the people involved in it.

During the research process, I noticed that my background, beliefs, experiences, similarly my political and ideological stance might have framed my analysis (Bourke 2014). Nonetheless, I have not taken for granted my ethnography positionality to go beyond my own subjectivity. As my position is shaped by my interpretation and representation of Others, I agree with Madison that “We are not simply subjects, but we are subjects in dialogue with the Other” (Ibid.35).

I felt in a privileged position as a Colombian who knows the socio-political context of research. I, however, question this position ontologically and epistemologically: Do I know enough to embark on this research? How can another culture perceive my knowledge of them? How to avoid my own subjectivity being a misrepresentation of Others? Then, I counted on the many identities one could develop in the research process that comes to shape the perspective of the world like one’s own biases (Kezar, 2002 in Bourke 2014).

While collecting qualitative data, I noticed that my identity flipped over depending on the participant. For example, when interviewing academics and activists, I felt downplayed by their knowledge, struggling thus to disseminate their voices when coding data. Conversely, while interviewing indigenous leaders, another identity took over my personality. I felt

sometimes misunderstood. As if I was about to intervene in order to reroute the topic, but their positionality, of course, allowed them to lead the interview. Yet, I recalled moments of empathy and engagement towards my position on questioning hegemonic narratives with the purpose of disclosing social injustice (Habermas 1971; Fine 1994 in Madison 2011:27,28). That is why some of the indigenous were very pleased to contribute with knowledge exchanges while enhancing the “intercultural dialogue”. Being meditative of these power dynamics which negotiate and shape the interview process (Merriam et al 2012.413-416) aids to overcome the subjectivity/objectivity debate while allowing the voices of the participants to be heard.

Moreover, my position within the research is the reflection of my moral and ethical accountability to produce warranted knowledge. Thus, it’s always open to an evaluation and scrutiny.

### Limitations of the methodology

This study was limited by the absence of doing field work in Colombia due to the risky context. In order to keep the study narrow, I was aiming to do research on one of the three indigenous tribes described in Chapter five as examples of alternative approaches to peacebuilding, although fieldwork was carried out in the past with them, it was not regarding peacebuilding. Having this difficulty, I moved towards plan B interviewing indigenous leaders to acquire perceptions and experiences on the theme. Then, the second limitation arose due to the small sample size, which is an uncontrolled factor, and indeed unfortunate as it didn’t allow me to include the voices of members of base communities. Thirdly, not having a homogeneous sample can be seen as a source of weakness in this study. Yet, I mentioned that it was a strategy to enrich the research rather than to fragment it. Thus, I have attempted to demonstrate this strategy in the findings of the study.

Another major limitation of this study is concerning the nature of writing in a foreign language. The act of mediating through language (Smith 1996) makes the process of interpretation and representation problematic. This is particularly seen in the communication of concepts. For instance, peacebuilding (Construcción de paz), liberal peace (paz liberal)

deconstruction (desconstruir), are indeed very equivocal concepts among the indigenous participants, which in some cases led towards losses in translation.

In spite of its limitations, the study certainly adds to our understanding of the many nuances of the peacebuilding paradigm, and how alternatives to it, such as the indigenous approach, ought to be explored, as another vision of peace is needed in a very conflictive world. Certainly, this would be a fruitful area for further work in the field of political ecology.

### **3. Background**

What follows is an account of the Colombian internal armed conflict which has been the longest-running civil war in the western world. It began with the period named “La violencia”. However, as the many intricate features of the Colombian 52 years of civil war are beyond the scope of this research, it is worth underscoring that the roots of the Colombian armed conflict are related to land and state control, embodied clearly by exploitation of natural resources, similarly the distorted way by which oligarchies have been ruling the country.

According to IDMC an accumulation of 7,246,000 people who have been internally displaced in Colombia. It also reveals that just in 2016, the year when the PA was signed, displacement continued to increase with an additional 300,000 people being added to the tally. According to the Norwegian Refugee Council –NRC- more than 70% of the displaced people in 2016 were indigenous people (2017).

Molano (2015), argues that la violencia grew out of control over land and state’s power, both triggered by the increase of the price of coffee and the uncontrollable wealth of the United States (US) after the First World War. Thereby, agrarian conflicts in coffee regions were due to colonial legacies that forced peasants to work under distressing conditions and invasions of their lands. In the 1930s, this situation coupled with the emergence of socialist ideologies and the triumph of the Liberal party, enabled the peasants’ organizations to struggle against land control and inequality. Agrarian struggles occurred across the country under the influence of liberal ideologies’ that contended with the power of the Conservative party aligned with the

Catholic Church (See also Sanchez et al 2013:111). Thus, traditional parties in Colombia - Liberal and Conservative- by means of maintaining state's control, deployed utter violence mostly in the rural areas, and against agrarian movements, inasmuch as the exacerbation of it was between 1946 to 1958, the period named "la violencia".

The emergence of communist guerrillas in Colombia was influenced by the Cuban revolution and prompted by the murder of the Liberal candidate for presidential elections, Jorge Eliecer Gaitan in 1949. But the guerrillas were consolidated until the 1960s as a result of the establishment of "Frente nacional" whereby Liberal and Conservatives shared the state's power, while leaving out the communist party.

Furthermore, land control by Colombian elites by means of expanding the agrarian frontier after the failure of the agrarian reform enabled capital accumulation (Richani 2007:406) in terms of monocrops of banana and palm oil. Agricultural modernization in rural Colombia or "capitalist rationalization" as stated by Booth (1974), brought about by socio-economic development disseminated local agricultural systems into markets with changes of crops and land tenure. These contributed largely to the current social fragmentation, as well as the escalation of violence in Colombia (665,670,672), see also (Richani 2007:405).

The complex heterogeneous nature of the Colombian armed conflict unveils as Sanchez et al stress (Ibid:21,22), that land control is not just the root of the Colombian civil war, but it's the vehicle of its prolongation and exacerbation.

Indigenous people and their ancestral territories have been at the core of the armed conflict. Struggles and resistance against dispossession, confinement and illegal use of their lands by not just armed actors -illegal groups, military forces and drug traffickers- but by multinational corporations (MNC), have contributed dramatically to the extermination of indigenous communities across the country (Ibid).

*"This is all about violence rooted in a way to conceive land, to see the world and to understand the relation between humans and nature. This is to say, antagonist narratives that clash in the way to perceive land. One sees it as a commodity which enables development, and the other, as a mother that enables livelihood in its spiritual, social and cultural dimension" (My translation) (Ibid).*

Colombia underwent a vital transformation in the 80s as it transited from an agrarian country

towards an industrialized one, triggering social conflicts due to different conceptions of development. Thereupon, Gray argues that this period overlaps with the rise of natural resource exploitation (2008:78), a situation that hence served as an opportunity to expand while exacerbating the conflict for the different actors involved in it. The country shifted from being a coffee producer to become coca and oil producer. Thus, due to the exploitation of natural resources such as coal, oil, emeralds alike the intensification of agribusiness of banana, palm oil, sugar cane and extensive cattle, conditions were created for territorial disputes, dispossession, forced displacement and abandonment of large quantities of agrarian lands.

However, it was in the critical 90s, where a new Political Constitution emerged to map out a way to envisage peace. The resulting so-called Ecological Constitution proclaimed Colombia as multicultural, while embracing neoliberal doctrines, as other countries in Latin America did. At this point, neoliberalism came to inject foreign capital into the conflict during the economic liberalisation.

Notably, the 1991 Political Constitution recognised territorial rights to ethnic communities – indigenous people & black communities-, but the actors involved in the conflict utilised this legitimacy in pursuance of economic interest on their lands. Thus, and in spite of that recognition, mining projects, agribusiness, illegal crops and so on, are still prevailing on ethnic minorities' ancestral lands. Hence, exploitation of natural resources, particularly coal and oil are seen as a boost for war, as a way to make profits by the actors involved in the armed conflict (Sanchez et al 2013:188). This could be an example of the so-called “war commodities” that fuels violence (Ross 2004, Snyder 2003 cited in Gray 2008:78).

The Colombian dependence on its extractive economies is considered by the government as the only way to achieve development by establishing “asymmetric relations of exchange ... leading to accumulation of resources in the centers and often to environmental deterioration in their peripheries” (Hornborg 2011:47).

On the grounds of that, I suggest that capital accumulation by means of environmental depletion and human rights abuses are two sides of the same coin. Along the same lines, Bustos and Jaramillo (2016) have asserted that the armed conflict has left a footmark on Colombian ecosystems due to fumigations of illegal crops, the bombing of oil pipelines, chemical pollution caused by mining and so on. A great deal of damage has been done to the

country's natural resources during the armed conflict, yet the true nature of the loss of biodiversity and ecological damage hasn't been studied accurately, as investigations were blocked for more than five decades (Smith 2016). However, what is most worrying is that while peacebuilding has begun, deforestation has increased by 44% between 2015 & 2106 (Semana 2017). This equates to a loss of 178,597 hectares of rainforest (El Espectador 2017). Deforestation is seen more drastically in the regions previously occupied by FARC (Goenaga 2017) and the Amazon region (39%). According to the Colombian Ministry of Environmental Issues, this peak of deforestation is caused by land control (45%), illegal crops (22%), infrastructure (10%), burning of forests (8%), extensive cattle (8%) and mining (7%) (Semana 2017).

#### **4. Indigenous people history of resistance**

In the following pages, firstly I will provide an examination of indigenous people's history of resistance in Colombia through the lenses of the decolonial critique, inasmuch as peacebuilding according to the indigenous participants in this research, is framed by a millenary resistance. Secondly, I will underline how resistance has been and continues to be at the core of the conflict and post-conflict Colombia.

To discuss indigenous resistance in Colombia, I will focus my analysis on the conquering of the Americas. But, before exploring briefly the colonization of Nueva Granada-today Colombia- it's essential to mention that there have been very few studies conducted on the pre-hispanic groups that inhabited it before colonization took place, thus, all the information is related to those indigenous who were taxpayers to the Spanish crown. Thus, this is seen by Uribe (1964), as a very obscure part of Colombian history, as it does not register the total amount of indigenous people living in the colonial period. In the same vein, Melo's studies on the matter, that albeit are based on reconstructions of the Austrian anthropologist and archaeologist Reichel-Dolmatoff, are a key piece of ethnohistory, as it traces the development of human societies in precolombian times. Melo affirms (1996) that humans arrived in Colombian territory between 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Their ancestors crossed the Bering Strait from the north millennia before going through the Panama Isthmus. Although very little is known about their cultures, they appear to be hunters and gatherers.

Indigenous people in Colombia are classified into three linguistic families: Caribe, Chibcha and Arawak, yet many groups are still out of this categorization. As the lack of information still prevails, many questions arise in terms of the population size before the conquistadores arrived, as well as the development of their cultures.

The arrival of the conquistadores to Colombian territory was between 1499 and 1560. The first period of Spanish domination between 1501 and 1535 occurred in the Atlantic coast, where indigenous groups resisted violently, thus populations were destroyed by the conquistadores. Additionally, due to contact with Europeans, much of the indigenous population was wiped out as a result of illness, epidemics, and forced labour, see also (Uribe 1964:264). Between 1535 and 1560 colonization was expanded towards the south and west of the country with the destruction of a great deal of the original populations. Due to the lack of information, it's difficult to decipher the grade of destruction and violence that took place in the colonization period. But, what is certain was that it considerably reduced the number of indigenous people. However, it's recalled that across the country, indigenous battled firmly against the domination, to the extent that the Spanish crown subjected them legally as slaves, while also strengthening the politics of war and violence against them. The politics of extermination and slavery that took place in Colombia in the colonization period was followed by direct exploitation of nature by means of indigenous forced labour in gold mining, and large-scale agriculture primarily as a result of "la encomienda" and "la mita". These conditions were imposed on children and women alike. When they disobeyed or denied the Spanish domination, they were enslaved or killed. Due to this fact, many communities preferred to struggle until death or committed collective suicide. Few communities survived, yet, they were dispersed towards deep forests and high mountains (Melo 1996: 31-90).

Due to the complexity of carrying on with the politics of violence against indigenous, the crown decided to deem them as vassals. Indigenous were treated as being in the lowest level of the political and social domain of the Spanish crown. They worked subordinated economically to the colonial power on their own lands in order to produce an economic surplus to enhance the crown's wealth, and through this contributed towards the rise of capitalism. (Ibid:127). Similarly, Anibal Quijano in his seminal work *Coloniality of Power* states that with the conquest of the Americas the modern-capitalist-world began. By embodying the idea of race as a "mental category of modernity", it enabled the conquistadores to think of themselves as superior to those who were seen as biologically

different, thus, inferior. (2000:534). But not just a new mental category arose from the arrival of the Europeans. According to Grosfoguel (2013:82), a “new modern/colonial identity” was created by mistakenly name the populations encountered as “Indian”. This is of course, because Columbus thought he had arrived in India. For Grosfoguel such a mistake has enabled since that, Eurocentric discriminatory discourses and practices that in the first place, questioned the humanity of the populations in the Americas as they were considered soulless. Such practices explain the Spanish racial domination and extermination that took place in Colombia.

Another manifestation of this racial domination occurred through economic subjugation framed by an organized process called “la encomienda” or entrustment, which also played a role in the assimilation of indigenous to the Catholic faith as well as to integrate them into the Spanish armies. The encomienda allowed the conquistador to receive taxes from indigenous work, as well as a large quantity of their lands. Another institution of domination was “la mita” or mining work. It contributed to the indigenous’ downfall as it displaced men from their family nucleus thus, social, spiritual and cultural disintegration took place as a consequence (Uribe1964:275). Likewise, Quijano argues that was neither belligerent actions nor epidemics that exterminated indigenous populations in the first period of colonization in the Americas, but instead, confined them to serfdom. This is to say that they “were used as disposable manual labor and forced to work until death” (Ibid: 536,538). The reason being that, domination and exploitation needed to be regulated by the crown to facilitate the integration of the indigenous workforce to the international division of labour (Melo 1996: 127,128), whereby slavery/commodity production/wages, were regulated in order to generate value for the world market, thus contributing to the emerging model of power and control of work for the first time in history (Quijano 2000:535). Many laws were enacted by means of control and exploitation of indigenous in the Americas - New laws- (1542) and furthermore the Indians law (1680)-. However, the conquistadores deemed that these laws were impossible to fulfil, as to do so, it was necessary to destroy the colonies (Ibid: 140). Hence, it was this *ego conquiro* –I conquer- therefore I think (Dussel:2003 2,3) that enables the expansion of European colonialism resulting in the naturalization of the colonial link between Europe and other nations (Quijano 2000:535). Inasmuch as this relation still prevails, it has also facilitated and naturalized as noted by Maldonado-Torres, the paradigm of war (2008:4-5).

Here I have attempted to summarize the history of colonization of Colombia, as it’s pivotal to understand the colonial subjugation that has shaped the history of indigenous resistance.

However, considering the length of this study, I am turning now to succinctly examining the birth of the indigenous movement in Colombia which has embodied a political and social force towards building peace.

### Consolidating resistance

Resisting is not endurance. It is, however, a call to demolish values considered otherwise absolute truths. Those values that have taught us to endure everything, can no longer be called resistance. In this sense, I would like to bring to the fore the voice of Francia Marquez<sup>8</sup> who invites us to understand resistance as the collective struggle of historically discriminated subaltern populations. Resistance instead deems to transform the territorial relation imposed by capital models of development which benefits very few, at the cost of the rest of humanity. “Resistance is hence, an ethical/political commitment towards building a “common home” for everyone based on solidarity rather than competence. Resistance is a terrain for emancipation whereby life and freedom are no longer subject to domination” (My translation).

According to Ulloa (2007:293) in Colombia, indigenous territorial resistance to recover lands began in 1781 with the recognition of their collective territories by the colonial government. Although by the end of 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> centuries they were considered citizens, social and racist practices continued by means of segregation and exploitation of their territories. Thus, Law 89 (1890) was decreed with the purpose of “civilizing the uncivilized ones” (My translation), and to regulate their territories as reserves.

But it was in 1971 through the expedition of the Barbados declaration, that indigenous peoples of the Americas asserted that the continental problems faced by them were due to the colonial relation of domination prevailing in the Americas. This is in line with the external condition of global coloniality enabling imperial powers to rule the majority of countries in Latin America. From here, indigenous leadership in Colombia marked a period whereby they

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<sup>8</sup> Afro Colombian descendent, human rights and environmental rights activist from Cauca region in Colombia. She led the mobilization of women protectors of life and earth from the south towards the centre of Colombia. She also achieved to pull out illegal groups of her ancestral lands. Recently she won the Goldman Environment Prize 2018.

managed to place their political agenda in terms of land recovered, territorial expansion, control of natural resources, cultural identity, political autonomy and so on.

The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century defined a new role for indigenous peoples not just in Colombia, but in Latin America. They became political and social actors as their struggles were tied to the processes of democratization, globalization and neoliberalization (Gross 2000 in Ulloa 2007:295). This combined with a vast body of norms ruling indigenous people's rights, where the most important is Convention 169 from the International Labor Organization (ILO), have aided indigenous resistance. However, regional governability and Colombian society neglect the history of disparities faced by them, thus, discrimination and indifference still reign, as was so declared by the CCC (2009).

### Current situation: The havoc of the armed conflict

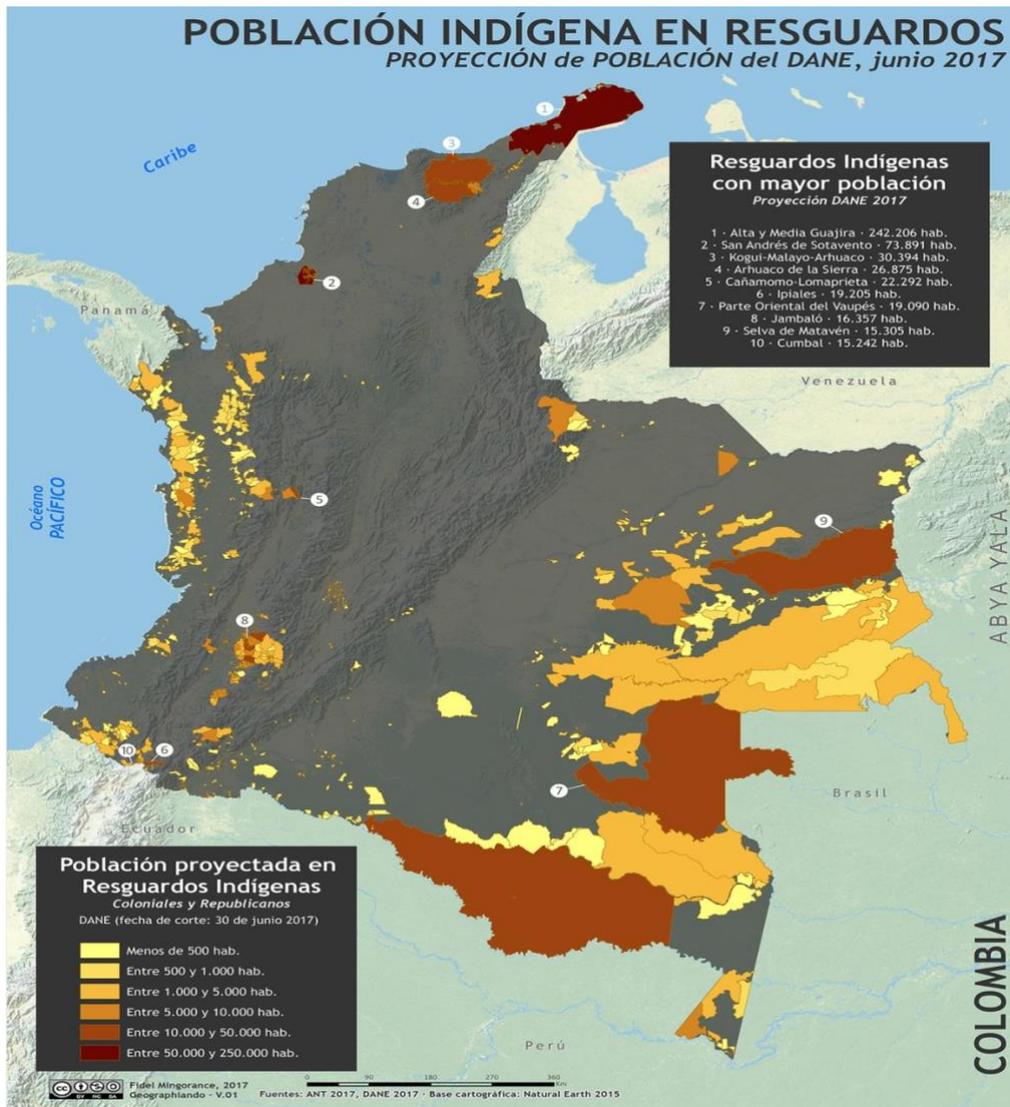
According to the most recent Colombian census (National Department of Statistics, 2005), indigenous in Colombia represent a population of 1,378,884 people, established in 710 legally titled reserves (Resguardos) that occupy 29.8% of Colombia's territory (Health Ministry & Social Protection 2010). However, 27% of the indigenous population, equivalent to 445,084 people, are not settled in an ancestral territory. That is to say, they do not possess land, either because they have been forcibly-displaced by different actors of Colombia's internal armed conflict, or as a result of the longstanding colonization of their territories by large landowners and MNC by means of economic and political territorial control (Unicef 2003)<sup>9</sup>.

For a better comprehension of indigenous lands, the following map shows the location of their territories:

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<sup>9</sup> Indigenous territories are legally inalienable, imprescriptible and non-attachable. Yet, in spite of that, expansion of narco-landowner that has been supported by paramilitary violence (UNICEF 2003), has continued thoroughly, even in the postconflict period.

Map 1.



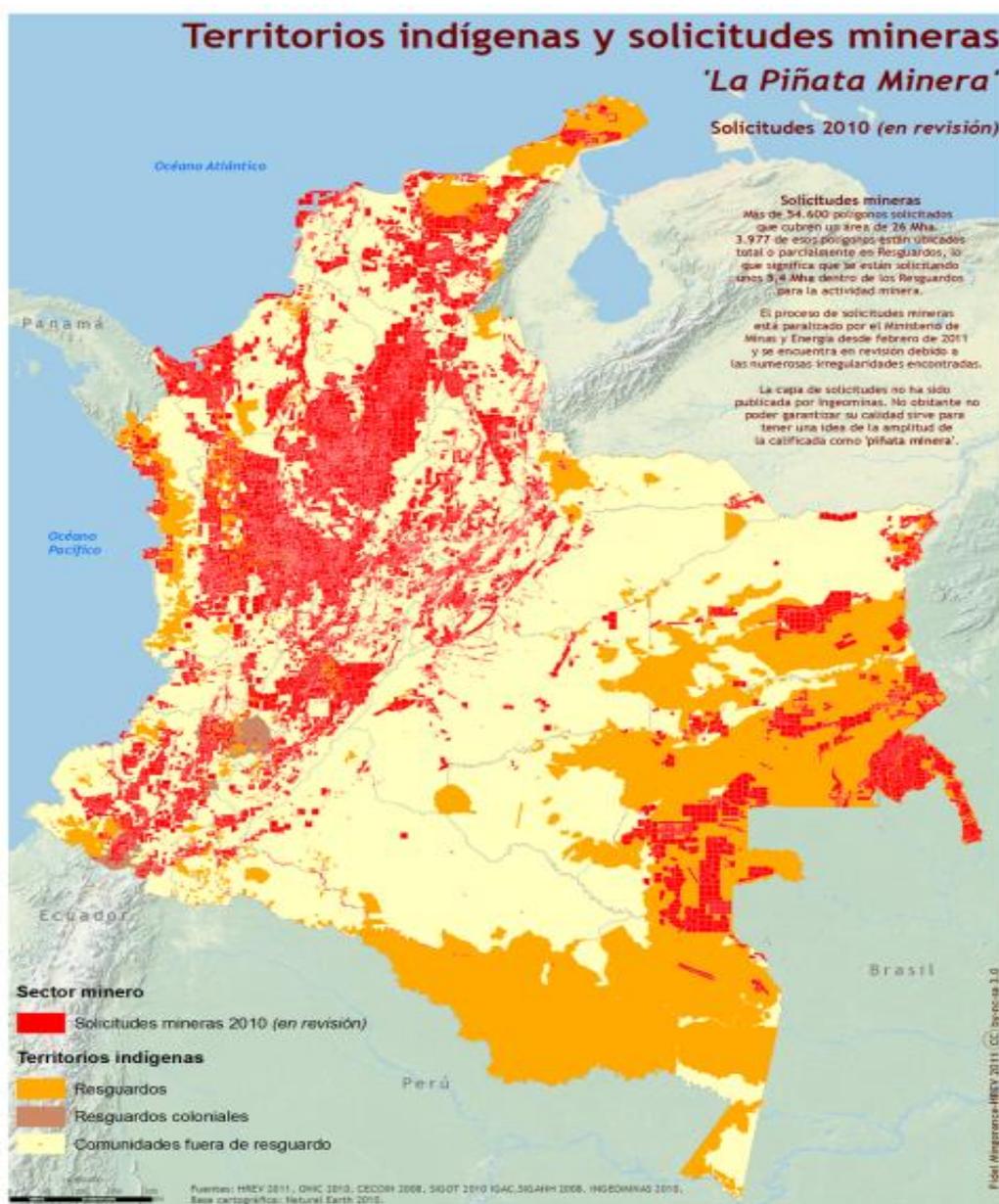
The map reveals that indigenous territories are located in the periphery of the country, whereby natural resources, extreme poverty, and structural violence combined with state abandonment have served as a vehicle to propel the armed conflict. Although numerous studies have attempted to explain the relationship between natural resources and civil wars (see for example Keen 1998, Collier & Hoeffler 1998, Reno 1995, 1998, Berdal & Malone 2000), and Klare 2001, in Ross 2011:337), this relation remains obscured in terms of its initiation and length (Ibid:352). However, there is a knowledge gap concerning the link among natural resources-war-indigenous territories, hereby the Colombian case could serve as a platform to analyse that link. Given in Colombia violence on indigenous territories by means of land control and exploitation of natural resources, has enabled indiscriminate colonization, illegal crops and land control as an economic and political strategy of the

government (Ibid). This strategy has triggered their physical and cultural survival as declared by the CCC (2009). From the 102 indigenous tribes who inhabit Colombia, as highlighted by ONIC, 64 are at risk of disappearance.

To put it succinctly, the Colombian extractive model of development according to the National Development Plan 2014-2018 (Plan Nacional de Desarrollo -PND-) has put mining ahead of the environment (Garay 2015:2), and of course ahead of indigenous rights too. This embodies a perverse process of de-agriculturalization and passive outsourcing contributing towards further social exclusion (Garay 2003). Likewise, Thomson argues that there is a nexus between development and civil wars, thus, Colombia portrays a clear example whereby “capitalist development can itself be violent alike produce poverty” (2011:322).

It is beyond doubt that due to this model of development, MNC find Colombia attractive for investing in infrastructure projects, mining, and fossil fuel exploitation (UNICEF 2003) (See also Suarez-Krabbe 2012, Escobar 1995). Generally, these projects are built in the most biodiverse regions of the country, such as the Amazon, Pacific, Orinoco, and Atlantic coast where indigenous reserves are located. The overlap of mining and indigenous reserves is shown in the following map:

Map 2.

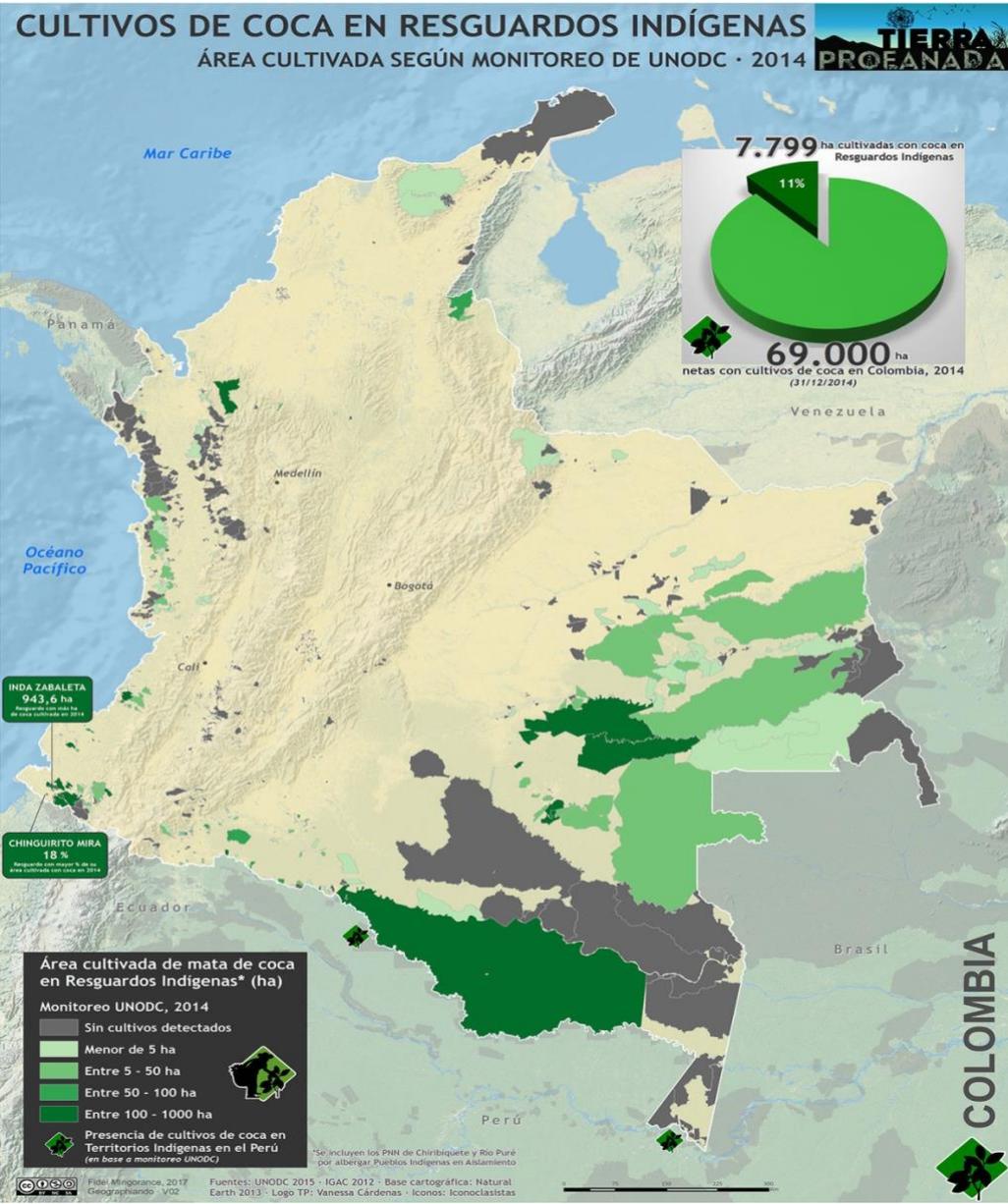


The map displays that by 2010, mining titles occupied an extension of 4,839,149 ha. Some of them are situated partially or totally on 267,623 ha of indigenous reserves. Meanwhile, regarding mining tenders open for concession, they are as much as 6 times of the affected mining area equivalent to 26 million ha of Colombian territory and 5,4 million ha of indigenous reserves. (Mingorance 2011).

Another aspect to underscore regarding land control on indigenous reserves is the production of illegal crops. The map below shows that by 2014 of 69,000 ha of coca was cultivated in Colombia, 7,799 ha equivalent to 11% were on indigenous reserves. Current data from UNODC (2017:14,55), highlights that despite the PA, production of coca has increased by

52% from 96,000 ha by 2015 to 146,000 ha by 2016. The same trend is seen in indigenous reserves, whereby the increase in comparison to 2014 has been 49% equivalent to 15,665 ha.

Map 3.



The disproportional damage faced by indigenous in Colombia is manifested according to the CCC (2009) in different dimensions of their collective and individual existence. For instance, indigenous ancestral lands have served as a territory of confrontation between illegal groups and military forces. Thus, they have been a place to build military bases as well as for laying landmines and the fumigation of illegal crops. Furthermore, sacred places and cemeteries have been occupied or wiped out by the armed actors. Destruction of food crops and livelihoods are accompanied by selective killings and death threats, whence entire families

have been fragmented as a consequence of the murder of their members, forced child recruitment, forced displacement, sexual violence and forced prostitution are carried out by the illegal groups, and also the military forces. Moreover, economic actors supported by paramilitary groups have played a role in dispossession and plunder of indigenous collective land in order to expand territorial control by means of economic interests in natural resources.

In summary, this overview has explained resistance as one of the key themes of the study. I also sketched the disproportional impacts of the armed conflict on indigenous lands which have threatened their cultural survival.

## **5. Indigenous peacebuilding vs the liberal peace**

In order to advance the understanding of indigenous peacebuilding, it is vital to dismantle the peacebuilding paradigm which is the emblem of the liberal peace. Mainly because it's framed by the development discourse, which is seen highly problematic. In so doing, I will attempt to deconstruct the development component of the liberal peace, by means of exposing other meanings.

### **Deconstructing development**

Existing research in peace and conflict studies recognises the ambiguous role played by the peacebuilding paradigm in post-conflict societies. This is because it embodies the liberal peace project which conveys a dominant discourse on achieving peace through market democratization, while seeing underdevelopment as the main condition for a conflict to spark (Duffield 2014, Cornish 2014). Thus, scholars such as (Paris, 1996, 2002, 2004, Mac Ginty, 2006, 2008, Richmond 2005, 2007, Amaechi 2017, Duffield 2014 among others) have scrutinized the liability of the "liberal democratic peace or western peace" as it seeks to attain sustainable peace by transforming a state into a market-based democracy (Cornish 2014:18) while imposing western hegemonic ideas of security, development and human rights (Mac Ginty 2008:143).

In the aftermath of the cold war, liberal principles infused the dominant international system to offer solutions to meet the increase in internal conflicts by means of addressing the conditions of underdevelopment. However, as Escobar noticed, the west's vision of development since the 1950s is an attempt to reproduce the North in the South, and as such is a "colonization of reality". This has shaped "The Third world" through a dominant delusion of reality, prompting "massive underdevelopment, impoverishment, exploitation and oppression". Escobar also asserts that the development discourse of the West represents Asia, Africa and Latin America as underdeveloped, thus enabling all sorts of intervention towards addressing conditions of poverty and backwardness that were seen as problematic. Hence, "modernization of poverty" was compelling. Inasmuch it created an apparatus to represent the "Third World" in terms of knowledge, thought, ideas, people, institutions, theories and so on. Such a system of representation in the colonial context has championed the power of the West to dominate over the South (1995:4-24).

According to Duffield (2014), the development discourse came to be as a strategy of conflict resolution at the end of the cold war. It created a condition for the expansion of liberal interventionism in the pursuit of peace while contributing to the UN's radicalism. Nonetheless, the long peace and stability which surrounded this period were obscured by emerging new internal conflicts. Thereby, as I underscored in chapter three, Colombia underwent an exacerbation of violence due to the expansion of illegal groups followed by dispossession, forced displacement and abandonment of lands, while fully embracing neoliberalism. Duffield also argues that the contradictory nature of the liberal peace interventionism has contributed to the political fragmentation, comparable to de-development of countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq. The same picture can be seen from the Balkans to the Middle East, whereby the West becomes a hero for fragile torn-war societies, discarding the attainment of long-lasting peace. Commenting on post-conflict Iraq, Jabri notes that the liberal peace project intervention in this country is deemed to be a project of war. Mostly, as it embodies a colonial racial domination of dispossession, segregating populations with the idea of a developmental human who should emulate the European liberal self (2010:42,45,47).

Furthermore, Duffield observes that incorporating war into the development discourse, not only embodies the latest radicalization, but, a system of global governance which continues to broaden disparities between the North and the South. Drawing on Cooper (1994:1516), I contend that such disparities are engrained in the modern colonial perception of Europe's historical progress that obscured African, Asian, or Latin American history. This is how the

development discourse reinforced boundaries between the “fully rational/liberal societies and those that strive to reach this point” (Jabri 2010:47).

On these grounds, I shall argue that Duffield’s radicalization of development elicits the ecological crisis of the Global South. My argument draws on the political ecology perspective which links this crisis with the development maxim (Bryant & Sinead 1997:26, 27,33, 50). In other words, that the pursuit of economic development which needs to extract an economic surplus to enhance economic and political power by means of exploiting peoples and land, is a result of the surge of the modern state in Europe from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (Hall, 1986 in Bryant & Sinead 1997). However, and more precisely, decolonial scholars (Mignolo 1992, Escobar 2007, Maldonado Torres 2012, Grosfoguel 2007, among others) date back and highlight the emergence of modern state by European expansionary colonialism, with the conquest of the Americas in 1492. Thus, the colonial rule –that today remains in place- of plunder and exploitation produced by that need of development is “environmentally destructive” (Bryant & Sinead 1997I: 56). Examples range from the Colombian Amazon deforestation, the destruction of the Samarco by BHP in Brazil, to the development of pristine Kalimantan in Indonesia, *ad infinitum*.

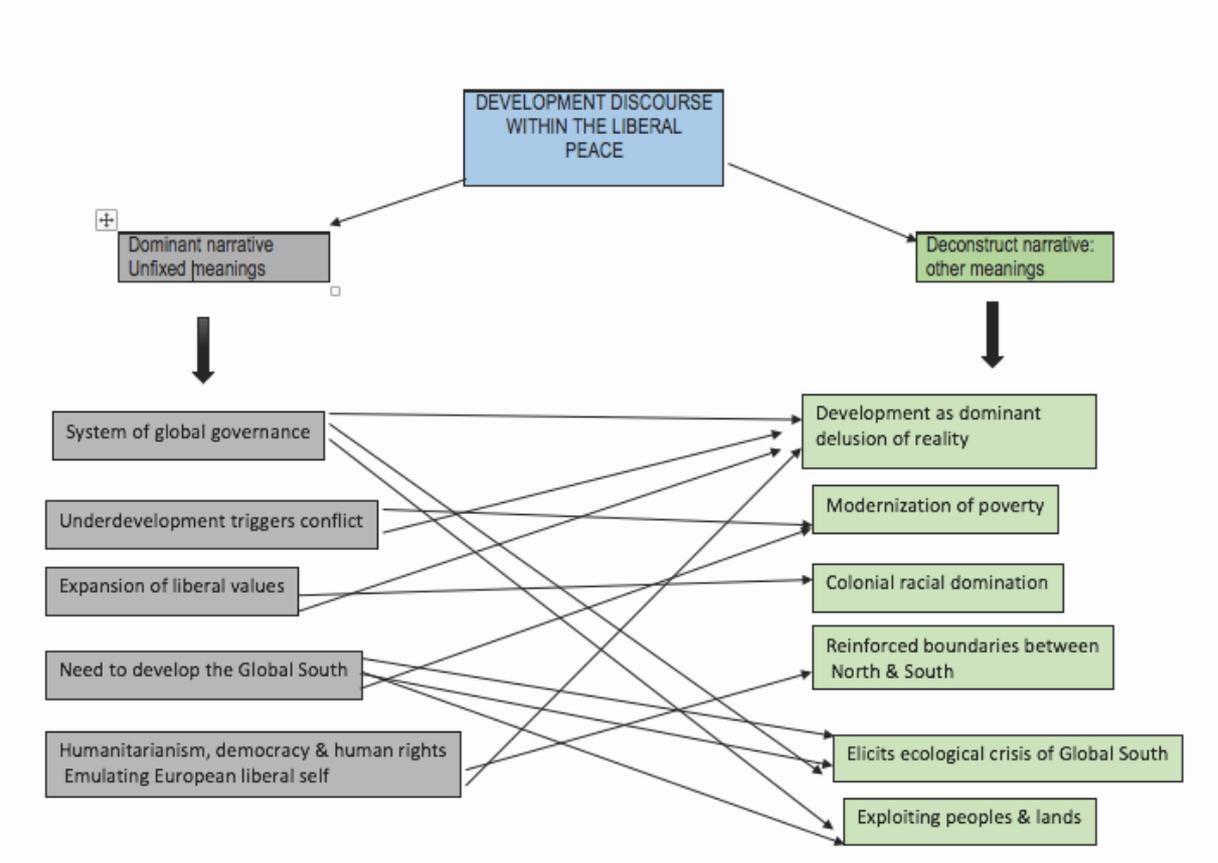
Baring this in mind shows that the development discourse encapsulated by the liberal peace is indeed problematic. This is because it conveys a marked development’s radicalization which sees underdevelopment as dangerous, as it aims to transform torn-war societies with transnational measures of political humanitarianism. This, can be seen through the decolonial lenses as the “naturalization of the paradigm of war” proposed by Maldonado Torres (2008:4-8), whereby the dominant civilizing process of a homogeneous humanity that began with the idea of colonization and race, justifies all sort of interventions in fragile societies in the name of modern development.

Peacebuilding as a dominant narrative appears to be strengthened by the necessity to develop torn-wars societies. Although peacebuilding was first introduced as a concept by Galtung (1976), who saw peace as a structure which is conceived to remove the roots of war. It was not, however, until the end of the cold war that it was incorporated into the UN’s agenda. The UN recognizes that peacebuilding is a complex paradigm involving a variety of actions designed not just to address the causes of violence, but, towards reducing the risk of relapsing into further conflicts. In doing so, it seeks to build up national capacities to achieve sustainable peace and development while fully committing to demilitarization, institutional

reforms, monitoring of human rights, social and economic development and so on. (2010: 1,5,14,47).

So far, I have attempted to deconstruct the developmental discourse of the liberal peace - peacebuilding paradigm- by exploring other meanings thus, underscoring reality. The diagram that follows displays the features of the analysis:

Figure 1.



Territorial peacebuilding in Colombia

Colombia is building peace with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP)<sup>10</sup>. Since 1982 different governments had failed to push through a peace

<sup>10</sup> As mentioned in chapter 3, FARC which creation was inspired by the Cuban revolution is founded as a “military wing of the Communist party” in the violencia epoch to fight the status quo. They were broadly recognized as Marxist-Leninist army of the people. Yet, the US and Colombian government, branded as terrorists (Vulliamy 2015).

agreement with the last Marxist-Leninist guerrillas in the world (Vulliamy 2015). However, the PA that was signed in Havana on the 24 of November 2016 after four years of negotiations, faces an uncertain future. Primarily because it encompasses a set of political reforms and constitutional decisions that haven't been enacted, given the relevance of the phenomena. Thereby the peace process continues to be scrutinized by those who represent antagonist interests and this is likely to be further obscured by 2018 presidential elections.

Although the UN hasn't set a peacebuilding agenda in Colombia – as it has in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia & Central African Republic- it has established a verification mission. According to this Mission, latest report (UN 2017), the cessation of 52 years of war has been a complex process that began with laying down arms and the demobilization of thousands of members of FARC. Yet it still faces many fundamental challenges towards building peace in the regions left by this group. The report reveals an increase of illegal economies and the escalation of violence due to the expansion of right-wing groups exploiting natural resources that otherwise had been under control of FARC. The power vacuum left by FARC in these areas, as well as state's weak presence, have left paramilitary groups in complete control of lands by means of illegal mining, coca cultivation and drug trafficking routes (20,21,22). As a result, forced displacement and dispossession of indigenous people and black communities in peripheral Colombia has taken place.

Territorial peacebuilding is proclaimed by the PA as the axis of building peace, whereby Colombian citizens and marginalized communities can participate. Territorial peacebuilding was conceived in the context of the Havana negotiations as a slogan for addressing poverty and inequality in the marginalized periphery (Pfeiffer 2015). It has also become a discourse for building lasting peace in abandoned regions, primarily where indigenous people are settle. Besides, it aims to set the roots to transform the saga of inequalities and violence prevailing in Colombia.

The Colombian Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (2013) stressed that after the conflict Colombia ought to move to a peacebuilding stage by strengthening the rule of law while meeting its international obligations concerning human rights, security, economic and social development. Thus, territorial peacebuilding encapsulates the development discourse by means of assuring stable and lasting territorial peace while developing rural Colombia.

In this sense, the task of narrowing down the gap between the core and the periphery is enormous, as Colombia has been built on foundations of weak and corrupted institutions controlled by hegemonic elites (Ibid). These institutions as noticed by Robinson (2015:43) have contributed massively to poverty, inequality and violence. Mainly because they embody an economic and political extractive system that reproduce “colonial power structures and they are kept in place by a system of forces and interests”. I shall argue that these interests are the product of a global coloniality (Escobar 2004) present in the Havana negotiations, as they symbolize the international governance and MNC (Large & Tauss 2015) who evidently will benefit the most from building peace in Colombia.

To explain how the peacebuilding paradigm in Colombia can be foreseen in light of the concept of global coloniality, Escobar stresses that modernity has led towards an “oppressive globality” that rules people alike economies under a neoliberal vision. Such vision, I contend, is rooted by the development discourse, inasmuch it seeks to build peace by addressing the roots of violence and inequality, but not the causes of it. Escobar thus, states that the causes of the “social, political and ecological crises of the times” have led towards conflicts for territories and natural resources control with the accumulation of wealth for very few, and apartheid and poverty for the many (2004: 208,214). Similarly, Eslava (2016) argues that the accumulation of wealth by rapacious elites in Colombia who have benefited from the destruction of livelihoods and nature has served foreign interest and agendas too, and it’s represented in a global logic that controls natural resources under the direction of MNC and nation states.

Drawing on Escobar, my argument is that the causes of countless conflicts in the World are rooted deeply by dominant models of the global logic of thought –development, knowledge, language, nature, ideas, culture, power and so on (See also Derrida 1997). For Escobar, wars from Colombia and Central America to Algeria, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East are produced by this global logic, based on a western morality that according to Maldonado Torres (2008) enables modernity as a paradigm of war.

With this in mind, I shall argue that under this global coloniality logic, the developmental discourse within the liberal peace unfolds and prompts, as Escobar noticed:

*“the ‘peaceful expansion’ of the free-market economy with omnipresent violence in a novel regime of economic and military globality—in other words, the global*

*economy comes to be supported by a global organisation of violence and vice versa” (2004: 214)*

## Indigenous alternative approach to peacebuilding

To deconstruct the liberal peace -peacebuilding paradigm-, means to critique the modern structures that have enabled them while exposing hidden narratives such as the indigenous ones. Ergo, in this chapter, I have so far attempted to deconstruct the problematic dimension of the development discourse. Now, moving onto those possibilities that are not part of the modern- constructed -illusory –world which represent others (Hubbard *et al.*, 2002 in Graham 2005:29), I contend that the liberal peace -peacebuilding paradigm- shaped by the development discourse is an unfixed constructed narrative allowing other narratives to occur. Thus, a differential approach to peacebuilding focused on another way to conceive nature and human urges in dystopian times. Such an approach, instead of focusing on developing post-conflict environments, should place the human-nature relation at the core of building peace.

Before exploring such alternatives, it is worth mentioning that different perspectives on peacebuilding, however, are not uncommon. A number of studies have begun to examine the role that nature plays in rebuilding torn-war societies. For example, the concept of peace ecology inspired by “environmental peacemaking” emerged as a paradigm in peace studies, and it seeks to explore the ecological potential of nature in peacebuilding. It focuses on a broader and more holistic way than that provided by Ken Conca with the environmental peacemaking concept. Kyrou suggests that environmental peacemaking is centred on environmental policy impacts, with little analysis of the peace/conflict dimension, while offering tools for environmental problem-solving, peace ecology, explores how the nature-culture relation is a potential tool for building peace (2007:75,79, 80). Although the peace ecology concept is valuable as a lens to analyse the indigenous- vision on peacebuilding, as it acknowledges that culture underpins the idea of peace, as well as the environment, creating roots for the last. It’s also the place whereby different epistemologies coexist in the quest for sustainable survival, I suggest that such a concept isn’t really enough. This is mainly because peace ecology explores nature as a tool for building peace, aiming to aid the transformation of a torn-war society affected by violence and ecological destruction (Ibid 82,84), but it ignores the roots of such violence and ecological destruction out.

With this in mind, I instead argue that the political ecology of peace might offer a broader perspective to understand indigenous visions of peacebuilding, as its likely to disclose that since colonialism, the history of indigenous resistance is shaped epistemological and ontological struggles (Leff 2015; Escobar 2016). I have said in chapter three that such struggles, in the case of Colombia, are one of the causes of the armed conflict, they embody different conceptions of the human-nature relation. One that sees nature by means of development and the other, that sees it as a source of livelihood. Of course, the first is the dominant conception that has served as a vehicle to foster violence in the modern world. In other words, the history of plunder and colonization of indigenous lands that prevails today under the guise of global coloniality is a history of human resistance in pursuit of building peace.

Political ecology of peace can be used as a paradigm to advance the understanding of such resistance that has marked the history of indigenous people in Colombia, at the core of the peace process. This resistance embodies an “emancipatory discourse” (Santos et al 2007) that made it possible for indigenous in Colombia to be incorporated into an ethnic chapter in the PA which recognizes their endeavour towards building sustainable peace and a culturally developed country. It also acknowledged that abandonment, discrimination, exploitation of natural resources on their lands, confinement, and risk of extermination all embodied by the armed conflict, are rooted by the history of colonialism that prevails today. Besides, the ethnic chapter decreed that the rights to land, consultation, cultural identity, own justice self - determination, control of their lands and spiritual practices, ought to be respected in the pursuit of building peace. However, reality portrays a different picture, as indigenous leaders continue to be murdered, and entire communities remain confined and forcibly displaced by ongoing violence in the periphery of the country (El Espectador 2018).

*“We know that this peace is never going to touch us. For Wayuu people, this peace is utopian, a lost delusion in our desert region. While peace is linked to the monopoly of natural resources to enhance wealth for the very few, peace would never come to us. This is a peace on paper, but no materialized in reality” (Zoila Ramirez)<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> Member of Clan Uriana, Wayuu Tribe. Interviewed Jan 2018.

In response to the ongoing oppression, one of the largest indigenous mobilizations called “The Minga for Defending Life, Territory and Peace” (La Minga por la Defensa de la Vida el Territorio y la Paz) took place in Colombia last October. The Minga is a Quechua word that means a meeting (RAE, 2014), it is a pre-Columbian tradition for community work for social purposes. Today it continues to be used by indigenous communities by means of gathering with spiritual, political or cultural and social purposes. The concept of Minga has gained importance in Colombia since the establishment of the indigenous movement in the 70s, but it has been empowered by other grassroots and marginalized communities since 2008 (Murillo 2010). There have been numerous Mingas since then, all of them gathered thousands of indigenous from every region of Colombia for weeks to participate in peaceful mobilizations to resist against state’s neglect. Such resistance does not just “entail struggles against the relegation of mother earth” (Suarez-Krabbe, 2012:337), but are extendable to other sectors of society interested in building another Colombia. Of course, the Minga movement has been highly criticized for having an agenda too broad and ambitious. Yet, the “mingueros” consider the Minga as a declaration of principles, rather than a proposal to be negotiated with the government (Murillo 2010).

In the context of peacebuilding, the Minga for defending life, territory and peace gathered around 100,000 indigenous across the country, who blocked roads and protested in opposition of the many injustices faced by their communities exemplified by the killing of leaders, forced displacement, exploitation of natural resources on their territories, environmental destructions due to mining projects, agribusiness and so on. They claimed the necessity of building peace with inclusiveness and the participation of indigenous people as it’s decreed by the PA and its many laws, ruling acts, similarly international treaties that continue to be just a discourse rather than the realization of the delusion of multiculturalism. Indigenous people in the country continue to struggle towards overcoming such discourses while attempting to build peace according to their cosmology and cultural identity. Thus, deconstructing the discourse of multiculturalism represents a tool for indigenous to build peace using a different logic to the western world. The multicultural discourse embedded in the Colombian constitution has a dark side according to Suarez-Krabbe as it “underscores apartheid, rather than transforming the state” (2012:345). On the contrary, Santos et al (2007) suggest that the emancipatory direction of multiculturalism ought to be rescued. The authors affirm that the nature of multiculturalism is ambiguous indeed, inasmuch it represents a political project to celebrate difference and has been scrutinized by different ideologies alike

currents of thought. Yet, it has a potential version of emancipation rooted in the right to be different. Certainly, multiculturalism in Colombia, on one hand, is reproduced through the logic of the global capitalism, but on the other hand, has enabled indigenous people in Colombia to build “emancipatory cosmopolitan politics” to respond to domination and oppression (xxiv, xxv) whilst building peace.

Various examples of alternative visions of building peace can be found across Colombia. They entail not just a collective struggle in ancestral territories towards protecting nature and reclaiming lands, but a message of survival too. For example, in Kogis’ cosmology, the beginning of existence is related to the notion of “*Aluna*” or “the Mother”. Their ancestral territory is delimited by the black line “*Linea Negra*” {sei-shisha}, which links 59 sites around the Sierra Nevada {the centre of the world} (Ulloa 2011: 85). Herein, they have been undertaking for millennia, payments and rituals to the Mother in order to protect the balance of nature and to prevent ecological disasters. According to indigenous in the Sierra Nevada, these payments warrant the flow of spiritual forces and maintain the balance between the heart of the Sierra and the entire world (CCC 2013:29-31). The black line’s complex meaning is linked to indigenous resistance. Yet, in spite of being recognized as fundamental in order to preserve territory, self-determination and cultural identity by the Colombian government and the CCC (1999, 2013-2014), the black line has been reproduced by the global coloniality in order to develop nature, whilst also being at centre of the Colombian internal armed conflict, as illegal groups and MNC are relentlessly depleting its resources (Suarez 2011, & Ulloa 2011). Likewise, I will argue, that the black line has become an important tool for the indigenous to decolonialize peacebuilding while overcoming colonial structures. A similar approach can be found in Timor-Leste, whereby indigenous peacebuilding visions have the potential to transform violence while maintaining the spiritual world into balance (Close 2017).

When describing the above-mentioned examples, I don’t mean to romanticize indigenous as necessarily peaceful. I, however, agree with Mac Ginty (2008) that in some cases indigenous visions have advanced horizons that have left behind by the “Western peace-making model”. In Africa for example, Amaechi (2017: 4,9, 10, 11, 13) mentions that the liberal peace’s model hasn’t been able to sustain peace, suggesting an alternative approach that doesn’t look at ethnicity as the underlying problem of Africa’s proliferation of wars. But, instead, a

mechanism that understands the socio-cultural background of the people, which could reveal not just socioeconomic disparities due to colonialism, but that torn-apart societies and ethnic disputes can't be redressed by impositions of outside actors and norms that are of course, alien to indigenous imperatives. In such fashion, Africans see conflicts as inevitable phenomena of human nature. Thus, by cultivating individual and collective religiosity a "high level of peace consciousness" can be achieved. When a conflict arises under African cosmology it can be solved by a strong community and religiosity cohesion enabling equality and fairness. Religiosity here lies on the tie relation among the living, the dead ancestors and the supernatural forces.

On the other hand, there are examples whereby indigenous practices of peacebuilding have had the potential to coexist with development interventions and sustainable projects for example. Yet, Mac Ginty recognizes that the implications of inclusiveness and participation of indigenous people in peace projects under dominant narratives of development, security and human rights are problematic indeed. This is because the potential for co-opting local leaders into the Western structures is likely to occur. Hence, such participation instead of promoting peace environments, led to fragmentations of families and communities (Ibid 148,149). He also argues that in Canada, indigenous peacemaking has been appropriated by neo-colonial interests in order to raise "aboriginalism" as a political discourse "of silent surrender to an inherently unjust relation at the root of the colonial state itself" (Alfred & Corntassel 2005: 598 in Mac Ginty 2008:151). Similarly, Ansloos (2017 65,67, 72, 73) claims that First Nations' efforts on building peace embody the so-called 'peacemakers myth' whereby reconciliation is framed by neo-colonial forces very much present in the Canadian context. He thus observes that indigenous peacebuilding in Canada tends to be caught up by colonial power structures of assimilation. Hence, decolonizing the "colonial violence of individualism" while deconstructing the colonizer identity might allow indigenous in Canada to see themselves not as inferior and oppressed but as equals.

Another history is told by the Inga people of Colombia, who have led a peaceful process to overcome more than 10 years of armed conflict on their ancestral lands. The Wuasikama – warriors of mother earth- project entailed the recovery of 22,283 hectares of ancestral land (Valencia 2015) from poppy cultivation by illegal groups and community members. The Inga endured more than 10 years of violence exemplified by murders of their leaders, forced recruitment of children, forced displacement, land control, military base occupations,

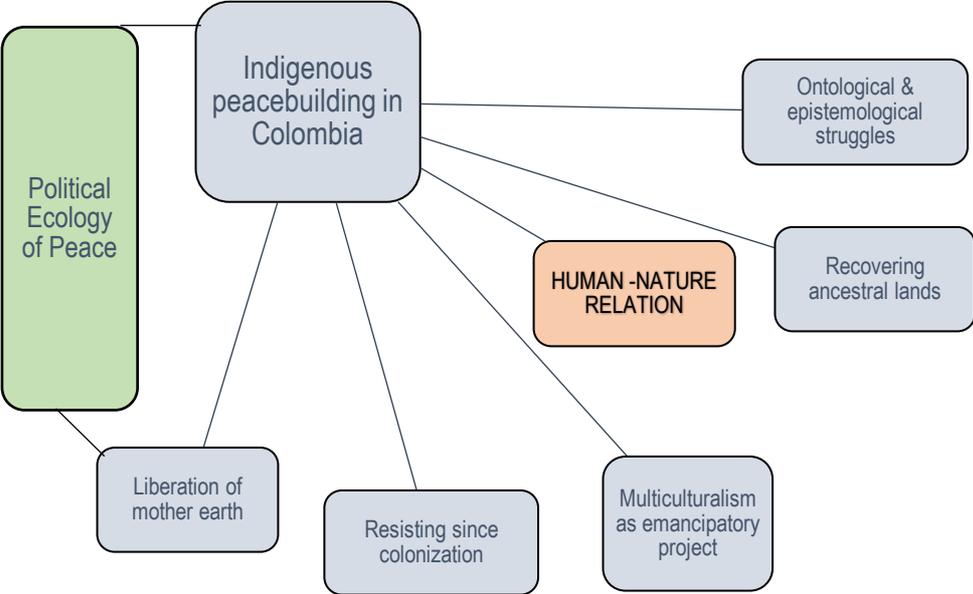
destruction of livelihood, forced disappearances and so on. Their territory bore far-reaching environmental destruction which resulted from glyphosate fumigations by the government. According to Hernando Chindoy, -the leader who led his community towards the path of peace- on one hand, these actions resulted in communities' disruption, but on the other hand, a profound transformation to overcome violence and illegal crops, by a strong spiritual community cohesion occurred. Today instead of poppy plants they grow organic coffee.

Numerous stories of building peace across the world are fostered by indigenous resistance. In Northeast India (NEI) for example, due to the overreaching impact of British colonialism, the large population of indigenous people in India labelled as Schedule Tribes (ST), have been struggling against the states' colonial power and the forces of development and assimilation. (Serto Leban, & Mhonyamo Lotha 2017: 118, 123, 125) the history of the people of NEI has been shaped by violence since Indian's independence in 1947. While woman's empowerment has led towards policy changes concerning women rights, violence still prevails in every state in the region. Although many efforts have been made to address it, militarization, development and exploitation of natural resources continue to be the cause of violence, poverty and gender inequity.

Furthermore, the Nasa people in Cauca Colombia have decreed the "liberation for Mother Earth" since 2014. In 2017 the process gathered indigenous movements of Latin America to battle together against capitalistic structures embodied by the agribusiness of sugar cane, mining companies, and paramilitary groups that represent the dark arm of such structures. All of this with government's acquiescence. Since the loss of their ancestral lands, the Nasa have been one of the most influential communities in consolidating the indigenous movement in Colombia (Hristov 2005). Their endeavour towards liberating mother earth while recovering ancestral lands has been labelled by the government and the agro-industry as terrorist activity (Wetnessforpeace 2015). Thus, unstoppable violence has been entrenched in their territories (Alzate 2018) due to the thirst for resources which sees their land targeted for exploitation and extraction through monocrops, gold mining and illegal crops (Watts 2017). The Nasa people conceive the Colombian extractivist model of development as a virus on the earth. Hence, beyond recovering the earth, their quest is for liberating it from being enslaved. They argue that the economic dominant system of development has distorted the earth's primordial purpose. This is to say that firstly, earth as a mother, is the giver of livelihood (My translation) thus, protection and liberation ought to be carried out (Camprubi 2017).

The following graphic summarizes the deconstructive analysis using the political ecology of peace concept as an umbrella:

Figure 2.



**6.Findings and Analysis**

In order to understand the phenomena at hand in this study, I have adopted a conceptual framework from the literature reviewed. In this chapter, I want to explore the relationship between such concepts and the themes that resulted from the interviews. Thus, the findings are grouped as follows:

*Resistance at the hand of building peace.*

Prior studies have noted the importance of indigenous resistance in building peace (Mac Ginty 2008:140). Inasmuch they have been incorporated by liberal peace discourses of development, and as a platform to advance not just in the UN system of human rights but, far

beyond. Nevertheless, the concept of millenary resistance<sup>12</sup> presented here, is far more complex, because it encompasses an endless struggle to protect mother earth as claimed by

Alberto Timuña<sup>13</sup> (Mizak Tribe):

*“Historically we have struggled permanently towards building peace from on our own cultural identity, and the way we relate to mother earth. Our millenary struggle thus, is not different than mother earth’s struggle”*

Such a struggle, as Escobar writes, is ontological. He observes that indigenous people advance onto ontological struggles in order to defend territories and preserve life against the ontological occupation of their territories led by a dominant logic (2016:20). In so doing, communities affirm the right to be different while resistance -and re-existence- occur (Leff 2015:44). The ontological dimension of such struggles is concerned with different ways to relate to nature. The universal one that occupies territories in the name of development, and the one that conceives the earth as mother, as noticed by

Hernando Chindoy<sup>14</sup> (Inga Tribe):

*“For the Inga tribe, the earth is our mother, the sun is our father. We are a family in the universe. We alone are not the ones who feel, suffer or cry, grow up, die and transform. But rather that the earth has this cycle of existence too (...) The majority of westerners are unable to listen to nature. We on the contrary, can talk to the tree, the river, the mountain. We ask permission to take what we need, not the surplus. We must understand this, as the only way to build peace”*

Similarly, Santos et al (2007: xx) describe the ontological dimension of this struggle as the boundary that links indigenous people with their territories whereby rivers, forest, ancestors and plants are constructing material and spiritual life (Asher & Ojeda 2009:299). Thus, resistance against a different worldview which threatens their cosmology is indeed a struggle

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<sup>12</sup> Indigenous in the Andean region of Colombia claim that their struggle to preserve mother earth is never going to end, thus millenary resistance means that as long as they here, such struggle will prevail (Diaz 2012).

<sup>13</sup> Member of the ethnic commission of monitoring the victims and restitution law, as well as member of the ethnic territorial and peace commission in Havana negotiations. Interviewed Jan 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Leader of the Inga Tribe, Aponte Reserve, Interviewed Jan 2018.

to preserve every form of life.

The political ecology of peace is crucial here to sketch how indigenous' "territories of resistance" (Alimonda 2015) drive our understanding of culture and power relations embedded by the duality of "colonizer/colonized, Western/ non-Western, and domination/resistance" (Cooper 1994:1517). I would add human/nature too. The need for transcending such dualisms is proclaimed by indigenous traditions who cannot envision humanity apart from the earth. "Every living being exists because all others exist" (Escobar 2016:27). To put it more precisely:

*"Our vision of peace is beyond the universal model of peace. To survive as humans our mother earth must survive too. We use the concept Pichinduarame daily, which means live in harmony with nature. Herein, we build peace constantly with the earth"* (Alberto Timuña)

However, global economic interests such as those that frame the liberal peace, continue to mark this binary world. These are the same interests that keep feeding Colombian violence, as argued elsewhere. Yet, resistance against such interests since colonization, and under today's global coloniality logic has evolved, while shaping indigenous visions on peacebuilding:

*"Our peace has been shaped by our history of millenary resistance This historical process of résistance has been the same for all the indigenous peoples of the world. This is due to global economic interests in indigenous territories -water, minerals, oil, oxygen-. This is not new, since colonization we have been at risk of extermination, physically and culturally, resulting not just in territorial subjugation, but an ideological one"* (Aida Quilcue)

To understand how cultural extermination and ideological subjugation takes place in the colonial world, one ought to recognise how history evolves and unfolds out of the colonial past as underscored by

Avi Chomsky<sup>15</sup>:

*"The global system is rooted in colonial, cultural and ideological structures of colonialism. Colonial relation implements itself at global and local levels,*

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<sup>15</sup> Professor of history and the Coordinator of Latin American, Latino and Caribbean Studies at Salem State University in Massachusetts. Interviewed April 2017 via Skype.

*displacing subsistent agricultural peoples in the interest of extractive production using the land, reducing peoples to labourers. The current state of colonialism has evolved. Displacing indigenous as surplus populations all over the world. The colonial attitude and ideas of civilization and barbarism continue to infect the mind of the colonizer. Three characteristics of colonialism related to cultural destruction:*

- *Dividing communities by seeking allies in the implementation of the colonizer's plans. In the colonial context, this division takes on a new nature, because they enable certain communities' members to gain privilege in this new colonial order by turning into the implementers of the colonial order.*
- *The culture of colonialism brings ideas of what is superior and inferior, brings products, thrusts people into thinking that the colonizer culture is superior. People start to adopt these ideas that contribute to destruction of indigenous cultures.*
- *Implement deliberate policies to destroy indigenous cultures”*

I will argue that such territorial and ideological subjugation continue to be the cause of racializing others, thus facilitating the paradigm of war, while feeding global coloniality. Given the structures of the liberal peace are engrained in the global colonial logic, as outlined in Chapter five, it's possible to argue that such structures might facilitate indigenous cultural destruction. This is evident when Avi Chomsky attests to the situation of cultural disintegration in Wayuu communities in Colombia, due to the implementation of the colonizer's plans in the so-called sustainable programmes of the Cerrejon coal mine.

## Rethinking development

This study has not just provided a critical analysis of the problematic notion of development, given its aims to aid peace in torn-war countries. But it is a discourse that has allowed impoverishment and fosters violence in the world. Likewise, participants in the research have seen that the universal development model is one of the main obstacles to building a

sustainable peace in Colombia:

*“We know that this peace is never going to touch us. For Wayuu people, this peace is a utopian ideal, a lost delusion in our desert region. While peace is linked to the development of natural resources to enhance wealth for the very few, peace will never come to us.” (Zoila Ramirez)*

*“The current universal model of development is putting at risk not just indigenous people of the world alike nature, but the existence of humanity. Humans are so occupied by consuming that they don’t notice that water and land have been taken out”. (Alberto Timuña)*

*“Indigenous people in Colombia can propose their own vision of peace. This, however, implies a debate including different models of development. (Nanci Coca)<sup>16</sup>*

Rethinking and contesting development would be a vital tool for indigenous peacebuilding vision to consolidate “territorial peacebuilding.” As I mentioned in chapter five, territorial peacebuilding is the emblem of the Colombian Government to narrow down the gap between the rural and the urban Colombia, by means of transforming the saga of inequalities. It also would be the place whereby politics of difference can occur to propose another country.

*“Territorial peacebuilding will enable many discussions to propose a vision of region and development. Thereupon different ideologies to deal with development models will create spaces for indigenous visions of peace.” (Carlos)<sup>17</sup>*

However, whether another vision of development can be successful as a tool for building peace, or that it might be absorbed by the dominant one, or even that both can coexist, would be a necessary issue to address. Yet, what seems to be even more challenging is changing the mindset of those from whom the current dominant model is conveyed:

*“The dominant model is fed by regulatory structures alike competitive logics nourished by a culturally constrained mindset. Thus, the impossibility to understand diversity as fundamental towards achieving prosperity and social*

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<sup>16</sup> Indigenous rights defender in Nariño Colombia. Interviewed Jan 2018, by phone.

<sup>17</sup> Professor of anthropology, Andes University Bogotá Colombia. Interviewed Jan 2018

*justice nourishes the elitist corrupted political model ruling Colombia” (Brigitte Baptiste)<sup>18</sup>*

Conclusively, it can be argued that radicalization of development has been and it will be abolishing indigenous traditional systems of livelihood while dismissing ancestral practices of a noncapital economy that has been based on sustainable management of nature (Escobar 2008). However, I agree with Bryant and Sinead (1997:159) on not romanticising indigenous practices as models of sustainability. Rather, indigenous relations with the environment can be seen as a source of survival for food, medicine and shelter.

*Our ancestral practices have been forgotten because some indigenous who deal with money from the revenues of exploitation of natural resources are co-opted by the logic of the monopoly (Soila Ramirez)*

In Soila’s example, regarding Wayuu communities affected by one of the largest coal mines in the world equally owned by BHP Billiton, Anglo American and Glencore, collective identity<sup>19</sup> has been disrupted due to what Nixon names “modernity’s infrastructural invasions” (2011:42). In this fashion, articulated processes of kinship whereby culture, work, religion, death and life were constantly created, have been and will continue to disappear. For some communities, assimilation into western society would be more compelling.

*“We will continue to prompt a non-violent dialogue through a collective construction of our own visions. However, we are still encroached by the global economic interests of the neoliberal world. Every time we continue to be more confined. It’s a highly difficult process in the middle of contradictions because members of our communities have forgotten our visions, or the dominant model has made them forget it. Thus, is important that society understands our resistance and our way of building peace” (Alberto Timuña).*

According to the participant’s view, it can be argued that not simply deconstructing development, but rethinking it, would provide the roots for achieving a sustainable lasting

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<sup>18</sup> Chief of institute Alexander von Humboldt, Bogotá Colombia. Interviewed Jan 2018

<sup>19</sup> Collective identities result in articulated process that connect them under certain contexts, that are not “eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power” (Hall, 1990, cited in Dove & Carpenter; eds, 2006:341).

peace. However, the concept of sustainability embedded in Colombian public policies is problematic:

*“The concept of sustainability is challenging, certainly in Colombia, as it’s based on ambiguous ideas of preserving nature. This is to say, that in the Colombian development plan, prosperity like development and social justice will be attained in the context of extractive economies by implementing the so-called mining locomotive ( locomotora minera). The sole idea of the locomotive means wolfing down the earth to extract its livelihood. This locomotive power is very much ignited on indigenous ancestral lands with the exploitation of gold, oil and coal. Extracting these minerals have depleted the environment due to loss of biodiversity, scarcity of water sources and environmental pollution” (Nanci Coca).*

*“The government ought to decide how human rights, peace, sustainability with a development model based on extractive economies would be combined” (Carlos).*

The PA emphasises that peacebuilding will be achieved by creating socio-environmental sustainable territories. The aim is thus, to develop infrastructure, protect forests as well as water resources and biodiversity while creating solidarity-economies that can compete in a globalized context (PA 6-30) In this regard, the UN (2014) has underscored that the protection of the environment is the great paradox of the peace process. Disregarding its priority in order to implement sustainable models of development could lead to the destruction of Colombian natural heritage and failure of the peace that is yearned for. This is mainly because in Colombia socio-environmental sustainable territories are conceived by the exploitation of non-renewable resources, monocrops such as agro-biofuels and so forth. “all designed to underpin and/or revive economic growth in ‘developed’ countries” (Leff 2015:49). Such alternative approaches to building peace that can rethink sustainable development are hence compelling. Rethinking means that sustainability can no longer be seen in economic terms. But, instead, as a response to the need of ecosystems (Escobar 2006:130) whereby humans are at one with the earth, as it is for indigenous people.

In sum, it can be argued that indigenous' visions of development are another tool to deconstruct the liberal peace, given they understand development as a situated process of knowledge, history, culture, livelihood and exploitation (Escobar 2008: 176,178).

### Minga as emancipatory cosmopolitan politics?

These two concepts have been sketched in Chapter five. They are crucial to rescuing the emancipatory meaning of multiculturalism. Hence, it's worth exploring whether there is a link or not between them, according to what Indigenous participants have stated.

*“Minga is a peace manifestation. For the Nasa tribe, it's not just a mobilization but is part of daily life. We do Minga when walking and talking. This is how Minga is another way of resistance” (Aida Quilcue)*

*“The concept of Minga for the Mizak tribe is a collective work for a common benefit. We do Minga for political, spiritual and cultural meanings, but also to mobilize against oppression” (Alberto Timuña).*

*“The Minga concept has transcended borders of knowledge. For the Inga, Minga means an action to undertake in order to protect the earth. Minga symbolizes a collective sharing of knowledge whereby indigenous people can encounter again through the word” (Hernando Chindoy).*

The Minga concept is not just useful for understanding indigenous resistance, but indigenous knowledge too. Looking at Minga as emancipatory politics is valid as it embodies, as stated by Santos et al (2007: xxv) a response to domination and oppression brought about by global capitalism, that mobilizes the forces of collective actors. And on the other hand, because it's a form of knowledge production. These two aspects have been underscored by the participants. Likewise, both are very much present in the Minga for defending life, territory and peace outlined in Chapter five. However, arguing that Minga is like resistance, as it's a form of mobilization against domination and oppression, is misguided. Instead, it can be argued that

different levels whereby Minga unfolds, represent cultural identity and another way to live in peace. Inasmuch as it reflects spirituality and kinship nourished by a sense of cohesion and belongingness with nature.

*“Minga has been so vital in order to build peace, as it enables us to have a dialogue and believe in the given word. By living in harmony, we understand diversity whilst difference is proclaimed” (Hernando Chindo)*

*“Minga has different levels and it has been placed at the core of building peace in Colombia” (Alberto Timuña)*

Nonetheless, Minga can also be distorted by negative experiences faced by communities such as violence that grew out of the armed conflict. This is the case of some indigenous in the south of Colombia who no longer can conceive Minga as they used to.

*“The Minga concept has lost meaning in communities in the Nariño region, because it was utilized negatively by illegal groups by means of punishment of indigenous, or to force them to work under precarious circumstances” (Nancy Coca).*

## Understanding cultural diversity, enabling peace

Indigenous participants conveyed that spirituality has illuminated the path towards building peace historically. Spirituality is a manifestation of cultural diversity and it unfolds differently for each tribe. For the tribes in the Sierra Nevada for example, it is rooted in the concept of the black line (Chapter 5), likewise for the Ingas is Wuasikama. But spirituality is also a dimension of indigenous knowledge carrying a message of peace:

*“Peacebuilding is based on indigenous knowledge. Such knowledge despite facing times of crisis, has advanced in the universal wire of life beyond language. It gravitates in the unknown dimension of spirituality. In this sense, language and universal knowledge are the main challenges to confront in order for us to build*

peace. For example, when different indigenous tribes who talk different languages meet to understand their realities, despite having profound crises and being different, we have the possibility to understand one and all. But, when western society despite speaking the same language meet, they cannot understand themselves... (My emphasis)

*...This is because through spirituality we understand each other without words., Spirituality is our essence, as its the soul of the earth” (Hernando Chindoy)*

The inability of western narratives to understand difference is rooted in modern ideas of knowledge and the human being. Such ideas ought to be deconstructed as their meaning is unfixed, hence, open to interrogation. An example is given by Walter Mignolo (2002) who argues that discourses of modernity that have left out indigenous knowledge, have not been and can no longer be valid for the entire planet. In the same vein, Escobar (2007:184) writes that modernity is a hegemonic universalization of knowledge which enables domination of others who don't fit in such a cannon.

*“It must be acknowledged, that we all have the capacity to live with difference. The problem is that western society has imposed only one way of being. Thinking this way has resulted in undermining others, hence fostering violence in the world”*  
(Hernando Chindoy)

As noticed by Hernando Chindoy in the previous quote, universal knowledge and language are the main challenges to face when it comes to building peace. Thus, turning back towards Derrida, who also sees both as problematic given they construct the modern world by classifying and representing others. The necessity to dismantle them is hence compelling. But, not just as an indigenous quest, but as human endeavour too:

*“Challenges to become peacemakers are beyond our tribe. It's an endeavour of the human race” (Alberto Timuña)*

## Conclusions:

The project was undertaken to explore the potential of the Colombian post-conflict scenario in order for indigenous people to propose an alternative approach to peacebuilding that is not framed by the liberal peace. Mainly because this one is focused on the radicalization of development as the only way to address roots of violence and foreseen peace in war-torn countries. As presented in this study, the discourse of development appears to be problematic, as in the Colombian context it is one of the factors that catalysed 52 years of armed conflict. Thus, such discourse which framed the territorial peacebuilding in Colombian continues to be up for discussion, as it encompasses an extractive model that on one hand, foster violence and on the other hand, deplete nature, hence threaten indigenous survival too.

As the spine of the investigation, the political ecology of peace was proposed, as the most suitable paradigm for understanding indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia. This is because the political ecology perspective can touch upon all the issues surrounding the phenomena. For example, that the history of indigenous resistance against exploitation and subjugation since colonization has entailed ontological and epistemological struggles for defending mother earth.

A decolonial theory under the umbrella of the political ecology perspective was employed. Not just to shed light on the arguments, but as an analytical tool to deconstruct the development component of the liberal peace. In doing so, the deconstructive analysis displayed on one hand, that the development discourse of the liberal peace as a system of global governance that aims to develop torn war countries in pursuit of liberal values, is a dominant narrative. Thus, its components are open to interrogation. The deconstructive analysis attempted to reveal reality, by showing narratives that could emerge otherwise. For instance, that such development is a delusion of reality, a colonial racial domination that in pursuit of modernization of poverty has triggered the ecological crisis of the Global South. Likewise, it has broadened the gap between the North and the South. Last but not least, the deconstructive analysis exposed other possibilities which are left out by a dominant narrative. This is to say indigenous peacebuilding which instead of being focused on development, puts the human-nature relation at the core of building peace.

The outcomes of this study show that indigenous approach to peacebuilding in Colombia is far more complex than expected. Its multidimensional nature encompasses every single aspect of their collective identity, which cannot be conceived apart from history and dependence on nature.

Another interesting finding that comes across is related to some factors that could potentially underplay indigenous peacebuilding. This is to say, the dominant model of development, similarly universal knowledge and language too. These factors are produced by modern narratives based on economic logic to relate to nature. Whereas the findings affirm that indigenous peacebuilding is based on actions to preserve the earth, global economic interests are on the contrary far beyond this conception.

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that cultural identity, likewise, spirituality, have led the trail towards building peace. However, it's also seen that both are under threat by the same factors that challenge indigenous peacebuilding.

Focusing on sustainable lasting peace and challenges to indigenous peacebuilding as linking themes, I was able to answer the research question. The findings suggest hence, that indigenous visions on peacebuilding in Colombia appear to be very much related to each tribe's political organizational process of resistance and cultural identity which is upheld by spiritual practices in pursuit of defending the earth. Despite that, the current model of development which reigns Colombia, and of course the one which the liberal peace model is focused on, can potentially undermine indigenous peacebuilding as mentioned before. Likewise, it can threaten indigenous survival too; the potential for indigenous peacebuilding to advance towards alternative models of development that can build solid roots for the territorial peacebuilding in Colombia is enormous. In this sense, the findings are endorsed not just by the deconstructive analysis, but by examples of indigenous peacebuilding that in the case of Colombia are represented by emancipatory actions clearly portrayed by the indigenous movement. For example, the Minga for life peace and territory or the liberation for Mother Earth, are actions that have influenced the national political agenda at the core of the structures of the liberal peace. Mainly with the incorporation of the ethnic chapter in the PA. As long as processes of such resistance and mobilization can continue to exist, there is hope for alternative models of development to be proposed, at least within the territorial

peacebuilding. Another clear example whereby an alternative model of development can build roots for a territorial peacebuilding is the Inga's Wuasikama project. Yet, as the purpose of indigenous peacebuilding is not to address the roots of violence by imposing their own vision, as it is for the liberal peace, the feasibility for alternative models of development within territorial peacebuilding is certainly a challenging debate yet to be seen. However, this study has underpinned that indigenous peacebuilding is based on cultural identity, spirituality and resistance. And as such, for those indigenous tribes who already have been facing processes of cultural fragmentation, community division and de-territorialization due to the armed conflict, the prospect to propose another vision of peacebuilding, of course, otherwise development is far from being reached.

This study lays the groundwork for future research into one of the themes sketched here as a tool for indigenous to build peace. However, I am aware that the generalisability of these results is subject to certain limitations, as it tackles many problematic topics –development-peacebuilding-resistance-indigenous people- postconflict- that are too far reaching to address in more detail due to the scope of this research. Thus, this essay cannot provide a more robust analysis of the nuances involved in the complexity at hand. But, I assert that this exploratory study contributes to expanding the field of political study, while serving as a platform for indigenous people, peacemakers and policy-makers in Colombia, to advance alternatives of territorial peacebuilding based on a more holistic approach to the human-nature relation.

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Map 2. Territorios indígenas y solicitudes mineras [https://geoactivismo.org/ti\\_solmin10/](https://geoactivismo.org/ti_solmin10/)

Map 3. Cultivos de coca en resguardos indígenas  
[http://cdn.gestorsutil.com/OTRAMERICA\\_web/360/undefined/images/thumbs/6107\\_680x680\\_scaled\\_0679224001412292719.png](http://cdn.gestorsutil.com/OTRAMERICA_web/360/undefined/images/thumbs/6107_680x680_scaled_0679224001412292719.png)

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## Appendix 1 Guiding questions

1. What does mean sustainable peace for your tribe?
2. When becoming peacemakers which are the main challenges that your community is faced with in the Colombian post conflict?
3. How can indigenous people in Colombia push forward their vision of the human-nature relation in order to build peace?
4. To what extent can the Minga be a tool for building peace in Colombia?
5. How can indigenous people contribute to build solid foundations of the territorial peacebuilding?

## Appendix 2 Transcriptions

1. Aida Quilcue, member of Nasa tribe and human rights and peace adviser of the Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC).

For the 102 tribes of Colombia, logically that the peace signed in Havana is not the peace we all believe in. Our peace conversely, has been shaped by our history of millenary resistance and framed by process of organization, political achievements, own justice system all of them according to each tribe's cultural identity. Thus, our conception of peace is intrinsically link with the care of mother earth.

The challenges faced by indigenous in Colombia to become peacemakers come from millennia. Since colonization, we are at risk of extermination physis and culturally due to not just territorial subjugation, but and ideological one. Historically we have been discriminated systematically even though in the current peacebuilding context. Baring this in mind, this historic process of résistance has shaped our vision on peacebuilding.

This historical process of résistance has been the same for all the indigenous peoples of the world. This is due to global economic interest on indigenous territories -water, minerals, oil, oxygen-. What changes from each tribe in the world is the many different ways of resistance.

What indigenous peoples of the Americas and of the world ought to do, is seek for strategic alliances to battle together against economic interests on our territories.

The Minga is a peace manifestation. For the Nasa tribe, it's not just a mobilization, but is part of a daily life. We do Minga when walking, talking. This is how, Minga is another way of resistance.

The neo liberal peace is a peace seen just by means of ending of the conflict with FARC. What we are going to do to build peace is not the question. Instead is what we have done to build a millenary peace it's what counts. We must continue to resist, specially within those sectors of society who still seen in us as just folklore. We have influenced the political agenda of the country in order to defend our territories from economic global interests

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2. Edgar Alberto Timuña Resguardo Gambia, Misak Tribe, member of the ethnic commission of monitoring the victims and restitution law, as well as member of the ethnic territorial and peace commission in Havana negotiations.

For the Misak tribe sustainable peace cannot be seen from outside of our territorial millenary resistance. The history of indigenous people of Colombia, hence is framed by each tribe vision of peace according to our own justice system and cultural identity.

Historically we have struggle permanently on building peace from on our own cultural identity, and the way we relate to mother earth. Our millenary struggle thus, is not different than the mother earth struggle. This is exemplified in recovering our ancestral lands since colonial times to republican times. This is an historical process that has been rooted in our cultures by our elders ( Mayores) resulted in an organizational process of recovering land and culture. Through the establishment of a political movement that gained strength with the indigenous movement in the 70s. At that time, the many indigenous tribes of the country that due to the context of war hadn't met before, decided to gather in order to empowered a more organized resistance to recover ancestral lands, culture, autonomy and own justice system. All of this, in pursuit of achieving peace for the entire country. The link between peace and territory is fundamental, as there is not peace without land.

Our peace vision is framed by our origin history. We are the sons of the dream and water. We were created by two lagoons – Minba (female), and Piendamú (male)-. They rescued the first Misak people and educated them to understand the power of nature.

Daily we use the concept Pichinduarame which means live in harmony with nature, from there we build peace permeably with the earth. We use this concept when working on the land. We must respect it by given back what she has given us. For Misak people everything has spirit, reason why everything that lives on the earth has the same rights we have, they are like other human beings. According to our elder, oral tradition is vital to frame our relationship with the world and care for nature alike ourselves.

Peacebuilding departure from our mother and father interpretation of our dreams by the stove (fogón). We have taught not forget our history. Family is the fundamental scenario to build peace and culture. We also rely on our authorities who have guided our actions to recover ancestral lands. Our vision of peace is beyond the universal model of peace. To survive as humans our mother earth must survive too.

Peace for us is Pichinduarame: Live in harmony with a clean spirit.

Challenges to become peacemakers are beyond our tribe. It's an endeavour of human race. We ought to respect our mother earth's rights that are equal than our fundamental rights. If we know how to preserve nature we will preserve humans too. We depend for our existence on the existence of mother earth and all its components. Thus, peacebuilding must begin with repairing damages committed against the mother earth.

Despite the peace accord in Colombia, struggles for land will continue, as well as the violation of our fundamental rights. Yet, we will continue to prompt a non-violent dialogue through a collective construction of our own visions. However, we still encroached by the global economic interests of the neoliberal world. Every time we continue to be more confined. It's a highly difficult process in the middle of contradictions, because members of our communities have forgotten our visions, or the dominant model has made them to forget it. Thus, it is important that society understand our resistance and our way of building peace.

The concept of Minga for us is a collective work for a common benefit. We do Minga for political, spiritual and cultural meanings, but also to mobilize against oppression. The Minga has different levels and it has been placed at the core of building peace in Colombia. The current universal model of development is putting at risk not just indigenous people of the world alike nature, but the existence of humanity. Humans are occupied on consuming they have not notice that water and land have been taking out.

We have the will to coexist with other practices since our identity and cosmovisions can be preserved. Coexist is understand each other in order to transform and build a better world. We know unfortunately, that the dominant model won't give up. We must advance with the whole society not governments and MNC, but the people of the world to build the world we deserve by preserving nature.

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### 3. Zoila Ramirez, Clan Uriana, Wayuu Tribe

Peace for Wayuu is alike to equity. Peace cannot be achieved through monopoly of our natural resources. The core of the Wayuu misfortune has been historically the exploitation of natural resources in our ancestral lands. Example of this is Cerrejon mine which has caused force displacement of families and clans. But it has also triggered, malnutrition and death of indigenous children in our region. Besides, Wayuu woman have been exposed disproportionately to this exploitation exacerbated by force displacement. As Wayuu woman, we live marginalized in the periphery of the country, where the effects of peace process are never seen. We have our understanding of making peace which is not the same peace talk by the news or the government. We know that this peace is never going to touch us. For Wayuu people, this peace is a utopian, a lost delusion in our desert region. While peace is linked to the monopoly of natural resources to enhance wealth for the very few, peace would never come to us. This a peace on the paper, but no materialized in reality.

The main challenge of our tribe to be peacemaker is to continue to be present despite the exclusion. Peace is not just the end of the conflict with FARC. Peace also for us is linked to participation and inclusiveness.

Another challenge is that our ancestral practices have been forgotten because some

indigenous leaders that deal with money from the revenues from the exploitation of natural resources are cop-ted by the logic of the monopoly.

Our vision of peace is upheld on our collective consciousness beyond economic interests. We build peace every day from the core of our family to the heart of our clan. Our vision to peace is framed by an oral practice rooted in our ancestral knowledge by the words of Putipu (palabrero) the person who gives words. He not just resolves conflicts between clans, but he is a real peacemaker.

Another factor is that without territory there is not peace. The major problem of our tribe is not just isolation, but exploitation of its natural resources. We have been historically dispossessed and force displaced

#### 4. Hernando Chindoy leader of Inga Tribe

Our tribe understand the earth as a part of our family. Thus, sustainable peace if we can say that is sustainable is framed in the understanding that we are not alone, as well as we are not the ones that feel, suffer or cry, grow up die and transform. But rather that the earth has this cycle of existence too. The earth is our mother, alike the sun is our father and the moon our auntie. We are a family in the universe. If we want to advance to harmony we ought to acknowledge that as we have rights the earth have rights too.

We have to advance to write earth with capital latter. Thereupon indigenous tribes unfold their knowledge which is hidden, but prevails in history. Western civilization ought to understand that our knowledge of sacred plants is at risk, but also poses a vital hope for humanity. Thus, peacebuilding is based on indigenous knowledge. Such knowledge despite to have faced times of crisis in order to advance in the universal wire of life that go beyond language, gravitates in the unknown dimension of the spirituality. In this sense, language and universal knowledge are the main challenges to confront in order to build peace. For example, when different indigenous tribes who talk different language meet to understand their realities, despite to have profound crisis and being different, we have the possibility to understand one and all. But, when western society despite of talking the same language meet, they cannot understand themselves. This is also exemplified in the lack of western society to listen nature. We on the contrary, can talk to the tree, the river, the mountain, we ask permission to take what we need, not the surplus. We must understand this as the only way to build peace.

The Minga concept has transcended borders of knowledge. For the Inga, Minga means an action to undertake in order to protect the earth. Minga symbolizes a collective sharing of knowledge whereby indigenous people can encounter again trough the word. Its hence so vital in order to build peace, as it enable us to dialogue and believe in the given word to live in harmony trough understand diversity while proclaiming difference.

Language has a code which is transmitted trough the history generation to generation. These codes have served as vehicle to carry violence in the world – violence against woman, children, nature- The only way to heal these codes is understanding its impacts along the history of humanity.

For us Wuasikama embodies a code that carries a message to humanity. The message is to be guardians of the earth.

For Inga people, spirituality has been the force to build peace in the middle of the conflict. This is because through spirituality we understand ourselves without words. Thus, spirituality as is our essence, alike is the soul of the earth.

Wuasikama teaches to seek in history what allow us to live in difference. This a message for humanity of how indigenous peacebuilding can be a meeting point with the universal vision of peace.

It must be acknowledged, that we all have the capacity to leave from the difference. The problem is that western society has imposed us its one only way of being. Thinking this way has resulted in undermining others, hence foster violence in the world.

#### 5. Brigitte Baptiste, chief of institute Alexander von Humboldt

In Colombia biodiversity, its just a rhetorical discourse. It hasn't been incorporated in public policies as a fundamental factor to build peace at the local, regional or national level, mainly because there is no such thing as institutional coordination. Even lack of coordination between base communities is seen on that respect. In this sense, mining, infrastructure projects and the agrarian reform, all included in the peace accord as fundamental to build peace, are fed by regulatory structures alike competitive logics nourished by a culturally constraint mind set. Thus, the impossibility to understand diversity as fundamental towards achieving prosperity and social justice, enables the elitist corrupted political model ruling Colombia. Such elite is not even modern, is feudal, given it is rooted in dogmatic values to maintain social control, authority and repression.

I envisage a system whereby we all can participate in building peace under ethics of sustainability based on the identification of collective thresholds of wellbeing. Thereupon real opportunities for minority groups ought to be the sustainment of a more equal state.

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#### 6. Nancy Coca, Indigenous rights defender

The main challenges faced by indigenous people to consolidate peacebuilding is to end of the conflict in their ancestral territories, as this is the only path to materialize peace according to what the ethnic chapter has decreed. The concept of sustainability is challenging indeed in Colombia, as it's based on ambiguous ideas of preserving nature. This is to say, that in the Colombian development plan, prosperity alike development and social justice will be attained in the context of extractive economies by implementing the so called mining locomotive ( locomotora minera). The sole idea of locomotive means wolf down the earth to extract its livelihood. This locomotive power is very much ignited on indigenous ancestral lands with the exploitation of gold, oil and coal. Extracting these minerals have depleted the environment due to lots of biodiversity, drought of water sources and environmental pollution.

Another challenge faced is the loss of cultural identity due to the globalized context. Thereupon, youth indigenous are committing suicide as they cannot cope with social pressure.

This is exacerbated by demobilization of indigenous who were members of FARC, as they are constantly at risk of being executed by other illegal groups.

The Minga concept has lost meaning in communities in the Nariño region. Because it was utilized negatively by the illegal groups by means of punishment indigenous, or force them to work under precarious circumstances.

Indigenous people in Colombia can propose their own vision of peace. This however implies a debate towards different models of development.

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## 7. Aviva Chomsky March 27 -3 2017

History does repeat itself but continues. Global system is rooted in a colonial, cultural, ideological structures of colonialism. History evolves and unfolds; relationships and ideas grow out of the colonial past. The last 500 years of colonialism Europeans taken lands from the indigenous of American to extract resources for benefits and the improvements of standards of living for Europeans. Colonial relation implements itself at global and local levels. The local elites who are descended from Europeans implement it at the local. The process of colonialism displacing subsistent agricultural peoples in the interest of extractive production using the land reducing peoples to labours. The current state of colonial has evolved. Displacing indigenous as surplus populations all over the world. The colonial attitude and the ideas of civilization and barbarism that continue to infect the minds of the mine management and the institutions. Three characteristics of colonialism that have to do with cultural destruction:

1. Dividing communities by seeking allies in the implementation of the colonizer plans. In the colonial context, this division take on a new nature, because they enable for certain communities' members to gain privilege in this new colonial order by turning into the implementers of the colonial order.
2. The culture of colonialism brings ideas of what is superior and inferior, brings products, Burst people into thinking that the colonizer culture is superior. People start to adopt this ideas that contribute to destruction of indigenous cultures.
3. Implement deliver policies to destroy indigenous cultures

The concept of prior consultation is inherently problematic, because indigenous communities are negotiating in weak conditions in a global order. The lack of options for communities is evident. There is not possibility for them to act otherwise.

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## 8. Richard Solly

Why countries like Colombia with such history of violence still attractive for multinational corporations? Weak regulatory regime enables the colonial power of MNC in Colombia?

Is not only Colombia, the level of armed conflict in Colombia has been greater than the level of other conflicts in countries of Latinamerica in recent decades. Colombia is not the only

country suffering from foreign mining investment, this is going on all over the world. Is not the only country where violence is caused or is exacerbated by that investment. MNC don't decide where the minerals are put. Even if it's a conflictive country. If we don't go there someone worse go there. Because they going to do much better job that a Chinese mining company for example. They want private security and army to be there

Colonial authority sin USA and Canada still land from indigenous and force them to be entrepreneurs when they don't want. In Colombia Cerrejon stole legally land from indigenous people. Restoring the land cannot mean restoring pre-human habitations with fake vegetation. The legacy of this sort mining is to leave and area denude of human being.

#### 9. Carlos, lecture of anthropology Andes University

The discussion of the model of development in the local context. Has to be with the understanding of development alike the future of the country. The root of Colombian armed conflict is related to natural resources control as all the wars of the world. What is behind and remain in Colombia beyond overcoming the conflict with FARC is drugtrafficking, illegal mining and the expansion of the agrarian frontier (colonization). From indigenous people views this peacebuilding is partial. The territorial peacebuilding will enable many discussions to propose a vision of region and development. Thereupon different ideologies to deal with development models in region will create spaces for another vision of development. Each party will advance their own vision with regards to the exploitation of territories due to tourism, logging, mining, infrastructure projects, fossil fuel and so on. Thus on one hand, weak environmental licenses will enable those interests to proceed, an on the other hand, indigenous people using the right of prior and informed consultation will struggle to block this. The conflict prevails in the indigenous territories with more drug trafficking, and illegal mining. Human rights abuses will remain off course, not at the scale of the past. Struggles due to different stance on the territorial development model will persist, particulars on ethnic groups territories. The environment will be the most affected off course with regards to implementing this model local model of development. The 2018 elections will may underplay the enactment of the territorial peacebuilding. If there is no change in local economy and politics, more illegality is going to emerged. Thereupon indigenous groups are relevant in this context because of their leadership. However, model of development is going to be always different. The government ought to decide how is going to combined human rights, peace, sustainability with a development model based on extractive economies. Territorial inclusiveness will imply to change the economic model, as well guarantee peace in their territories. Creation of territorial indigenous authorities is a key aspect with regards to manage their own budget. What inclusiveness peacebuilding can bring is important to understand. Thus, one thing is talking about Nasa communities or the Tribes of Sierra Nevada, another thing is talking about tribes in the amazon or the Orinoco where extractives economies alike ostracisms is triggering their cultural survival

