

Lund University
Department of Political Science
Graduate School
Master of Science in Global Studies

SIMV07
Spring 2020
Supervisor: Annika Björkdahl
Major: Political Science



LUND
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**Feeling Ontologically Insecure: The Anti- “Gender Ideology” Discourse in Colombia’s
Second Half of 2016**

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Abstract

Anti-genderism and anti- “gender ideology” discourses have been taken place in various parts around the world including Latin America and Europe. Political parties and social and religious movements have been mobilising against “gender ideology” in elections and protests defending the traditional family model. This thesis investigates such discourses from an ontological (in)security lenses by conducting Discourse Historical Approach (DHA). In a case study focusing on the second half of 2016 in Colombia, social media, official statements and bulletins of Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez, Alejandro Ordóñez –conservative politicians– and the Episcopal Conference of Colombia –a Catholic Church institution– are analysed in order to unveil the power relations behind the anti- “gender ideology” discourse. This discourse is based on a positive representation of the “self” and a negative representation of the “other”. The analysis will reveal that all four selected actors used the anti- “gender ideology” discourse as a strategy to securitise their subjectivity.

Key words: gender ideology, anti-genderism, ontological security theory, Discourse Historical Approach, discursive strategies, social media.

Words: 20.941

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor Annika Björkdahl for her kind constant feedback and support. Gracias a mi mamá y a mi papá. Sin ustedes nada sería posible.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose, Aim and Research Question	3
1.2 Limitations.....	4
1.3 Positionality	4
1.4 General Overview	5
2. Socio-political Context	6
2.1 Background.....	6
2.2 Sergio Urrego’s Case.....	7
2.3 Ministry of education's documents and the 10 th of August protests.....	8
2.4 Peace Agreement	10
2.5 Peace Referendum and “No” vote Campaign.....	12
2.6 New and revised Peace Agreement	13
3. Literature Review	15
3.1 Ontological (In)security.....	15
3.2 Anti-genderism and Anti- “gender ideology” Discourses	18
4. Theoretical Framework	24
4.1 Ontological (In)security.....	24
4.1.1 (In)security as a Thick Signifier	25
4.1.2 The Abject-other and the Securitisation of Subjectivity	26
4.2 A Gendered Perspective to Analyse Ontological (In)security.....	28
5. Method.....	32
5.1 Case Study Research	32
5.2 Generalizability	33
5.3 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)	34
5.4 Empirical data.....	37
6. Analysis.....	41
6.1 Nomination and Predication	42
6.1.1 Social actors.....	42
6.1.2 Phenomena, Actions, Objects, and Events	47
6.2 Argumentation	54

7. Conclusions.....	61
8. References.....	64
9. Empirical Material	72
Appendix 1: Marco Fidel Ramírez’s Facebook posts.....	84

List of tables

Table 1. Number of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Official Webpage's texts.....	40
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1. Introduction

In the past few years, the term "gender ideology" has been used as a concept to reshape conservative political dialogue in the Americas and Europe. One of the turning points in elections in France, Costa Rica, and Brazil has been the presidential candidate's account of gender roles (Butler, 2020, p.2). In Latin America, protests for the family and anti- "gender ideology" movements have been taking place in Colombia (Esguerra, 2017; Rodríguez, 2017; Serrano, 2017, among others), Costa Rica (Arguedas-Ramírez, 2018), Ecuador (El Comercio, 2018), Mexico (Vela, 2017) and Peru (Meneses, 2019).

Since 2012, several European countries such as Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and Slovakia have seen the rise of right-wing political and social movements against the perceived threat of, depending on the context, "gender ideology" or "genderism" (Kóvats, 2018, p. 529). This phenomenon in which people defend the traditional family values, where female and male roles are established, have thus been taking place in many places around the globe.

Individuals who perceive this "gender ideology" as a threat, fear that because of the public debate of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQI+ henceforth) rights, reproductive rights, gay marriage, feminism and every other social or progressive political movement that promotes gender equality. Therefore, gender equality is taken as a "diabolical ideology" by these critics because they see gender diversity as an imposition, particularly on the children and the divinely mandated natural distinction between the sexes (Butler, 2020).

As "gender ideology" and anti-genderism are socially constructed concepts, it is essential to define them before going any further. On the one hand, "gender ideology" as a term is closely connected to debates within the Catholic Church (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 8). Various scholars (see, for instance: Buss, 1998, 2004; Case, 2011, 2016) have traced the notion of "gender ideology" to debates at the Vatican and the elaboration of a counter-strategy after the 1994 United Nations (U.N.) conference on Population and Development in Cairo and the

1995 Beijing conference on women (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 9). This notion took shape in the mid-nineties as a response to the recognition of reproductive and sexual rights in the U.N. rights system (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 9).

The Catholic Church portrayed the Cairo and Beijing conferences results as a defeat, as it feared that sexual and reproductive rights would allow the recognition of abortion, female roles, motherhood, and LGBTQI+ rights (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 9). The discourse on "gender ideology" took root in John Paul II's theologies of the women and body, which insists on the difference of the sexes (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 9).

Its furore began when the Pope's family council, then directed by Joseph Ratzinger, warned that gender scholars and theorists were questioning the notion that Christian social roles derive from biological sex (Butler, 2020, p. 3). As Pope Benedict XVI, Joseph Ratzinger stated in 2012 that such "ideologies deny the 'pre-ordained duality of man and woman,' and thus deny 'the family' as 'a reality established by creation'" (Butler, 2020, p. 4). Pope Francis, with the support of various Rome Congregations, has reaffirmed this discourse (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017, p. 11).

On the other hand, anti-genderism can be defined as a current version of anti-feminism¹ observed in many countries around the world, having emerged since the mid-2000s (Wehrle, 2019, p. 6). The term is directed against "gender" and fights the critical questioning of the binary gender model (Wehrle, 2019, p. 6). In this context, gender is understood "as a single 'ideology' that refutes the reality of sexual difference and seeks to appropriate the divine power of creation for those who wish to create their genders. Personal choice is understood to have taken the place of divine creativity" (Butler, 2020, p. 2).

This thesis is concerned in the Colombian context as an anti-genderism case study and will focus on the anti- "gender ideology" discourse. The choice of using quotation marks when writing "gender ideology" has to do with the non-academic and negative connotation the concept has.

¹ Attitudes and actions directed against feminism and its accomplishments. In: Wehrle, 2019.

1.1 Purpose, Aim and Research Question

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the anti-genderism phenomenon through the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia. Using the method of Discourse Historical Analysis (DHA), it examines the discursive strategies employed when talking about "gender ideology" to understand how the linguistic representation of "the self" varies concerning the representation of "the other." Additionally, by applying a DHA methodological approach, this document will study the nature of the arguments and claims of truth employed in the anti- "gender ideology" discourse. Seeking to understand where those arguments originate, it makes use of the ontological (in)security theory as a theoretical framework to interpret both the representations of the "self" and "the other" and the arguments.

Therefore, this thesis aims to investigate anti-genderism through the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia and to do it through ontological (in)security lenses. It seeks to fill a gap within the literature by focusing on gender as a dimension of ontological (in)security and investigating how key actors adopt ontological security-seeking strategies to reinforce a consistent self. Thus, the thesis will answer the following research question:

How can the Colombian anti- "gender ideology" discourse be understood in terms of ontological security?

To narrow the investigation, focus on the discourses around anti- "gender ideology" in Colombia of four key political and religious actors, namely the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the Organisation of American States (OAS) and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez takes place. Hence, a case study will be conducted in the second half of 2016 in Colombia's context while generating generalizable theoretical and methodological tools. The following sub-research question will guide the case study:

How was the anti- "gender ideology" discourse constructed by Colombian conservative politicians and the Catholic Church in the second half of 2016?

1.2 Limitations

As a case study, the thesis, the analysis, and its findings need to be read within the context specific Colombian case and is not generalizable to any form of anti-genderism or anti-"gender ideology" discourse. Furthermore, this thesis is naturally limited through its scope. Consequently, its results cannot explain the discursive construction of the whole anti-"gender ideology" discourse in Colombia as it focuses on three conservative politicians and the Catholic Church in a specific period. Moreover, the focus is on social media posts, official statements, and bulletins found in official webpages. Therefore, while it would be interesting to analyse printed media and conduct interviews, these are not included in this document.

1.3 Positionality

It is significant to reflect on my positionality and its significant role in the interest and choices that I have made when conducting this thesis. My background has made it possible for me to be in the position where I am today and has influenced the developments of my personal choices as a feminist and a researcher within a critical stand. As a Colombian woman, the year 2016 had a particular impact on the way I perceived the country and my context. Concerned by the protests for the family in August and the peace referendum results in October, I grew interested in the backlashes² to feminism, anti-genderism, and the discourse around anti- "gender ideology".

Being a Colombian armed conflict researcher myself, the no-vote success in the peace referendum forced me to improve my critical thinking when trying to understand and analyse the Colombian context. Finally, and after all, as a woman – a privileged one living and studying in Sweden – I am personally affected by anti-genderism and the anti- “gender ideology” discourse.

² Anti-feminism and anti-genderism are often understood as a conservative "backlash" against the development and success of the women's and LGBTQI+ rights movement. In Kováts, 2017, p. 182.

1.4 General Overview

This thesis has seven main chapters, with the introduction as the first. The second chapter presents the socio-political context of Colombia in 2016 by focusing on five primary events that will assist in realising the presence of gender backlash in the country built around the anti- "gender ideology" discourse. Next, the third chapter of this thesis reviews the existing literature on the ontological (in)security theory, on anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses aiming to define the literature gap it seeks to fill. The theoretical framework is seen in chapter four, where a gendered perspective develops with regards to the ontological (in)security theory and presents the analytical tools that will guide the analysis, findings, and interpretation. In the method section, chapter five, a case study is outlined, operationalises the method of DHA, and motivates the choice of empirical material. Furthermore, chapter six will analyse and present the three DHA discursive strategies that most frequently occurred in the empirical material, namely nomination, predication, and argumentation. Finally, in the seventh chapter, the conclusions summarise the findings of the analysis and suggest pathways for future investigations.

2. Socio-political Context

In this chapter, I present the socio-political context of the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia in the second half of 2016; how it started, how it linked to the Final Agreement between the FARC-EP guerrilla and former president Juan Manuel Santos' government (Peace Agreement henceforth), and the peace referendum campaign. The following context is critical for understanding the analysis presented in Chapter 6.

2.1 Background

In Colombia, during a relatively short period of time (approximately 10 years³), abortion was decriminalised (2006), same-sex marriage was recognised and accepted (2011), and LGBTQI+ individuals were given the right adopt (2015) (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 136). Moreover, the family, as a legal category, has extended its definition beyond the traditional concept. The new typologies include not only same-sex couples but also families that were created because of "de facto" situations (Acevedo-Correa, et al., 2017, p. 60). The significant egalitarian legal change includes the ability for transgender individuals to modify their name and sex in their national identification document without the intervention of the judicial power (2015) (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 136).

Also, in 2011, the Colombian Congress issued two laws that guarantee the rights of populations that have been historically discriminated against and gave superior constitutional protection: Law 1448 of 2011 or the Victims and Land Restitution Law, and Law 1482 or Anti-discrimination Law (Colombia Diversa, n.d.-b, p.1). Both laws included LGBTQI+ individuals under the scope of protection when recognising the category of sexual orientation in the definition of armed conflict victim and the following criminal definitions: "discrimination and racist acts" and "harassment because of race, religion, political ideology or national, ethnic or cultural origin" (Colombia Diversa, n.d.-b, p.1).

³ From 2006 until 2016.

Most of these egalitarian advances (the decriminalisation of abortion, the same-sex marriage, and the right LGBTQI+ couples have to adopt) were possible because of the jurisprudential line of the Constitutional Court that, giving the Colombian Congress refusal to legislate about these issues, it has become an important source of law to women and LGBTQI+ people (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 136). However, these legal changes did not translate into social transformations in the country. The recognition of rights was also an articulating axis within conservative and religious (Catholic, Evangelical and Christian) sectors that united against it (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 136). The following sections describe the gender backlash in Colombia. Mainly, how the anti- "gender ideology" discourse started in Colombia as a response to these legal changes and advances, and what were the main socio-political events that articulated the discourse.

2.2 Sergio Urrego's Case

Sergio Urrego, a young gay man in 11th grade in Bogotá, took his own life in August 2014 after receiving constant acts of discrimination based on the school director's and employees' prejudices against his sexual orientation (Colombia Diversa, n.d.-a). Because of this, Sergio's mom, Alba Lucía Reyes, contacted the civil organization Colombia Diversa⁴ To present an "acción de tutela" (a Colombian constitutional action for the protection of fundamental rights) to demand the fundamental rights' protection that was violated by Sergio's school and public institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Bogotá's Secretary of Education, the Attorney General's Office, among others (Colombia Diversa, n.d.-a).

In 2015, in the sentence T-478, the Colombian Constitutional Court protected Sergio's rights to personal intimacy and good name, equality and no discrimination, free development of personality, education, a guarantee of underage's rights and to due process (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Colombia, 2015). In the sentence, the Constitutional Court ordered the Ministry of Education, among other things, to revise, thoroughly, Colombian schools' handbooks to "determine that these respect students' sexual orientation and gender identity, and to implement new alternatives to strengthen the promotion of human, sexual and

⁴ Civil organization that promotes and defends LGBTQI+ people's rights in Colombia.

reproductive students' rights that allow the respect of diversity and a pacific solution of conflicts [...]" (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Colombia, 2015, p. 86).

A series of fake news was spread around the Ministry of Education's documents. The anti-"gender ideology" debate in Colombia started gaining space in its political agenda and massive protests for the family in various cities around the country.

2.3 Ministry of education's documents and the 10th of August protests

In August 2016, the spread of the fake news that a Belgium homoerotic comic called "In Bed with David and Jonathan" was the way the Ministry of Education was revising the schools' handbooks took place in all Colombian media (Serrano, 2015, p. 154; Posada, 2019, p. 80). The rumour was that a booklet with explicit homosexual images, the ones in the Belgium comic, was being distributed by the Ministry of Education as part of the Ministry's response to the Constitutional Court's 2015 sentence regarding the case of Sergio Urrego (Serrano, 2015, p. 154).

Gina Parody⁵, then minister of education and openly gay woman, said the alleged booklet was not part of the Ministry's guidelines and that "people took Belgium porn and booklets from Chile and Argentina to mislead the parents (...)" (El Espectador, 2016). Moreover, the former minister said that this was a tricky part of "political machinery that wants Colombia to be divided, even public servants from the Procurator's Office distributed those images on social media" (El Espectador, 2016). Parody, as an individual, was harassed by different society sectors' because she openly said she was romantically involved with the ex-ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Cecilia Álvarez Correa (Esguerra, 2016, p. 8).

At the same time, and as a response to the Constitutional Court's order (Constitutional Court, 2015), two official documents intended to revise the schools' coexistence handbooks were created. The first one, created by the Ministry of Education, the UNFPA, UNICEF and the

⁵ Parody resigned as a minister in October 2016. However, since September, Parody was on leave without pay as former president Santos designated her to be one of the government leaders of the "yes" vote in the peace referendum. Retrieved from: <https://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-16718818>.

UNDP, was about schools' environments free of discrimination and sexual orientations and non-hegemonic gender identities at schools.

Among other things, this first document differentiated sex (as biological characteristics) from gender (as a social construct) and asked things such as: "what are and how to understand sexual orientations and gender identities at schools?" (Ministry of Education, et al., 2016, pp. 14-23). The second document was created by the Ministry of Education and Colombia Diversa and had guiding questions about non-hegemonic gender identities at schools (Serrano, 2017, p. 154).

The then Colombia's General Procurator and active member of the Opus Dei, Alejandro Ordóñez⁶, and various politicians that were also visible members of Evangelical and Christian Churches such as Ángela Hernández⁷. Additionally, Marco Fidel Ramírez⁸ argued that those Ministry documents were a part of "homosexual colonization" to benefit LGBTQI+ people (El Espectador, 2016). As a response, different groups of parents, organisations, and churches (Christian, Evangelical and Pentecostal, and Catholic) called for a big protest in the country against these documents and the imposition of gender ideology (Serrano, 2017, p.154; Esguerra 2017, p. 8). Thus, the political opposition to "gender ideology" was also a religious one.

Ángela Hernández was one of the leaders of these protests, and the Episcopal Conference of Colombian, a catholic church institution that reunites Colombian bishops, also played an important role supporting and promoting the protests (Serrano, 2017, p. 154). Álvaro Uribe

⁶ He was Colombia's General Procurator from January 2009 until September 2016 –he was reelected in 2012. In September 2016, a State Council's decision annulated his reelection and removed him from office. After this event, Ordóñez was one of the "no" referendum campaign leaders. In June 2017, he launched his pre-presidential candidacy, and after not being elected, the current Colombian president (the winner of those primary elections), Iván Duque, designated him as Colombia's ambassador to the Organisation of American States (OAS). Ordóñez is also an active leader of the Opus Dei. Retrieved from: <https://lasillavacia.com/quienesquien/perfilquien/alejandro-ordonez>.

⁷ Pentecostal church member and current regional representative of the department of Santander. Hernández was also one of the visible leaders of the "no" referendum campaign and, in 2019, launched her candidacy for Santander's governor but was not elected.

⁸ Former Bogota's councilman, Christian pastor, one of the visible politicians in the "no" vote in the peace referendum campaign and known as the "Family's Councilman".

Vélez⁹, current senator leader of the no-vote in the peace referendum campaign, and the Centro Democrático political party¹⁰ also supported the event (Marcos, 2016).

On the 10th of August, thousands of Colombians protested in different Colombian cities (El Tiempo, 2016). The protesters demanded the government to take action in the "imposition of the gender ideology" in schools. Moreover, hate-message signs against Gina Parody and overall LGBTQI+ people were visible (Esguerra, 2017, p. 8). The next day, the then president of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, in a televised official statement, said that he held a meeting with Catholic Church representatives such as the Apostolic Nuncio, and that neither the government nor the Ministry was promoting the "so-called gender ideology" (Serrano, 2017, p. 155; Esguerra, 2017, p. 10).

As a consequence, the former president ordered that the documents be withdrawn, and the then minister Gina Parody was called to a political control session in Colombian Congress (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 138). At the session, senator Álvaro Uribe Vélez argued that the "booklet" was not only an offense to "nature and family," but it was a form of "child abuse" by the Colombian state (Rodríguez, 2017, p. 138).

2.4 Peace Agreement

The debate about the "imposition" of "gender ideology" in Colombian schools took place in the middle of the peace referendum campaign. On the 24th of August 2016¹¹ after more than three years of negotiations in Havana, Cuba, former president Juan Manuel Santos, and former FARC's-E.P. guerrilla commander, Rodrigo Londoño Echeverry, signed the Peace Agreement that ended more than 50 years of hostilities between Colombian armed forces and

¹¹ He was Colombia's president from 2002 to 2010. After pursuing the third period as president, the Constitutional Court declared it unconstitutional. Uribe was elected as a senator in 2014 and was re-elected in 2018. He is presently the leader of the Centro Democrático political party.

¹¹ Party leader of the opposition to former president's Juan Manuel Santos government and the no-vote in the peace referendum campaign. Official current government party. After Santos' presidential period ended in 2018, Iván Duque, a member of the party, was elected as president of Colombia.

¹¹ There was a second signature of the Final Agreement in November 2016 after the referendum results and the revision of the document.

the oldest guerrilla in Latin America (Benavides and Borda, 2019, p.8). The Peace Agreement has five main "points" or contents: (i) comprehensive rural development; (ii) open to democracy to build peace and political participation; (iii) end of violence; (iv) illicit drugs solution; and (v) protection of victim's rights (Benavides and Borda, 2019, p. 8).

During the peace negotiations, a Sub-commission on Gender was created. It had the purpose of including the voices of women and LGBTQI+ individuals and review the agreement from a gender perspective (Salvesen and Nylander, 2017, p. 3). The gender focus of the Peace Agreement intended to recognize that legal and illegal armed groups had specific forms of violence against people with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, as well as against women (Esguerra, 2017, p. 24).

On the one hand, according to the National Centre for Historical Memory¹² (2015, p. 18), the Colombian armed conflict has eroded the possibilities of romantic and fraternal relationships of those who challenge the heterosexual status quo, because to some individuals, building those relationships has meant torture and death.

On the other hand, the violence women have suffered as a result of the conflict has perpetuated gender roles, consolidating a collective image of women as passive victims making them invisible both for right's demand and for the processes of peacebuilding and social fabric preservation (Vargas and Pérez, 2018, p. 396). However, portraying women, just as victims is a contradiction. In many Colombian regions, male human rights leaders have been murdered, or civil organizations have disappeared. Therefore, women's movements have been in charge of preserving Colombian social fabric and creating various strategies and solutions to peacebuilding in the middle of the conflict (Vargas and Pérez, 2018, p. 396).

¹² Colombian institution attached to the Administrative Department for Social Prosperity, according to Decree-Laws 4155 and 4158 of 2011, in compliance with Law 1448 of 2011. The institution has the purpose of recuperating, conserving, compiling, and analyzing all data (oral testimonies or other sources) regarding human rights violations throughout Colombian armed conflict. Retrieved from: <http://centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/contexto/>.

Hence, when the peace negotiations started, various women's social movements in Colombia got together to demand participation within the negotiations (Vargas and Pérez, 2018, p. 398). As a result, the Sub-commission on Gender held different meetings in the peace negotiations with women's organizations and LGBTQI+ representatives to highlight the situation of women and LGBTQI+ individuals within the armed conflict framework (Vargas and Pérez, 2018, p. 398).

Salvesen and Nylander (2017, p. 4) argue that the Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and FARC-EP guerrilla was "by far the most inclusive. Not only did it give deserved attention to the rights of women and the UNSCR 1325 agenda, but it also included the rights of members of the LGBTQI+ community".

2.5 Peace Referendum and “No” vote Campaign

The Colombian referendum was initiated by former president Juan Manuel Santos to legitimise the Peace Agreement. This election was also an attempt to legitimise both the president and his agenda as Santos' declining popularity harmed the support for the peace process (Dávalos, et al., 2018, p. 103). At the time of the referendum in October 2016, former president Santos' approval had fallen to a low of 29% (Dávalos, et al., 2018, p. 103).

The Centro Democrático party, in the head of Álvaro Uribe Vélez, was the party leader of the “no” campaign. The former General Procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez; and the regional representative Ángela Hernández and former Bogotá's councilman Marco Fidel Ramírez were also visible leaders of that campaign (Esguerra, 2017, p. 18; Beltrán and Creely, 2018).

On the 2nd of October 2016, Colombian voters went to the polls for a referendum on the final Peace Agreement. Despite projections of a "yes" vote wins, a slim majority (50.2%) rejected the peace deal with FARC-EP guerrilla (Dávalos et al., 2018, p. 101). According to various scholars, among others, like Serrano (2017), Basset (2018), Esguerra (2017), Gómez-Suárez (2017, p. 7), Posada (2019), Salvensen and Nylander (2017) and Viveros and Rodríguez (2017) the “gender ideology” debate was linked to the Peace Agreement through its gender

focus and it was presented as fostering values that went against family and tradition in Colombia (Salvensen and Nylander, 2017, p. 4):

Partly because of this progressive language, a narrow majority rejected the agreement in a plebiscite. Voices from the former Colombian procurator, charismatic evangelic churches, and parts of the Catholic Church had criticized the Peace Agreement for promoting a 'gender ideology'.

2.6 New and revised Peace Agreement

After the referendum results, various religious pastors and political representatives of Christian and Evangelic churches went to Havana, Cuba, and to the presidential palace to discuss the "gender ideology" in the Final Peace Agreement (González, M.F., 2017, p. 124). Alejandro Ordóñez held a meeting with the former Colombian president, where he presented how the "gender ideology" was embedded within the Peace Agreement (El Tiempo, 2016a). At that meeting, President Juan Manuel Santos committed to producing a new document "free of gender ideology" (El Tiempo, 2016a).

On the 24th of November, 2016, a new and revised Peace Agreement was signed. This new document included some of the changes the "no" campaign leaders proposed after the referendum results. Among other things, "modifications were made to guarantee the so-called gender ideology is not present -it never was- not even in a suggested way" (Cosoy, 2016), President Santos said.

Consequently, and as an example of these changes, the word "gender" that was mentioned 113 times in the first agreement is now mentioned 54 times in the new one; the concept "gender focus" went from being mentioned 21 times in the first agreement to 16 in the second one, and the concept "sexual orientation" that was mentioned eight times in the first agreement has no mentions in the second one (González, 2017, p. 124). This "purge" of "gender ideology" from the Peace Agreement had to do with not only conceptual details but also the political intention to change its social transformation proposal. As I will argue in the

analysis and discussion chapter, the Peace Agreement's gender focus increased the ontological insecurity of various political and religious Colombian actors. Women and LGBTQI+ individuals who claimed space within an established patriarchal social order were then considered as a threat.

Finally, on the 30th of November, 2016, the Colombian Congress approved the revised Peace Agreement. In October 2017, Colombia's Constitutional Court¹³ issued a decision indicating, among others, that the contents of the Peace Agreement corresponding to norms of international humanitarian law, fundamental rights, and international humanitarian law will be parameters of interpretation and reference of the validity of laws to develop the revised final agreement.

¹³ Decision C-630. October 11, 2017.

3. Literature Review

In this chapter, I present previous research that has analysed ontological security and the "gender ideology" phenomenon. Corresponding to the focus of this thesis, I also present findings on the anti- "gender ideology" and anti-genderism discourse in Colombia more specifically.

3.1 Ontological (In)security

The ontological security theory has its origins in psychoanalysis, sociology, and political psychology. Psychoanalysis work by Laing "Self and Others" (1960) and sociological work by Giddens "Modernity and Self-Identity" (1991) are the bases of the theory. In his interpretation of Laing's work, Giddens argues that modern social life is characterized by processes of the reorganization of time and space together with the "expansion of disembedding mechanisms" (Giddens, 1991, p. 2), mechanisms which reward social relations free from the hold of specific local scenarios.

Hence, modernity¹⁴ brings up significant changes in the external social environment of the individual. Nevertheless, people carry on their personal lives as they used to, managing as best they can with these new social transformations around them (Giddens, 1991, p. 12). Living in a world produced by high modernity has the feeling of running an endless marathon. Processes of change occur not only in continuous and profound ways but change also does not follow social expectations or human control (Giddens, 1991, p. 28).

Here, the anticipation that the social and natural environments "would increasingly be subject to rational ordering" has not proven valid (Giddens, 1991, p. 28). Hence, to accept "risk as risk" is to acknowledge that no aspects of our activities follow a predestined course, and all are open to contingent happenings. The self becomes altered and has to be explored and constructed as part of an automatic process: "abstract systems become centrally involved not only in the institutional order of modernity but also in the formation and continuity of the

¹⁴ For modernity, Giddens refers to the institutions and modes of behaviour established in post-feudal Europe, but which in the twentieth century increasingly have become world-historical in their impact (Giddens, 1991, p. 15). However, scholars such as Kinnvall (2006) and Barker (1999) had pointed out how Giddens leaves entirely unexamined what is the meaning of "non-Western" in this modernised world.

self" (Giddens, 1991, 33). Giddens argues that to be able to "go on," the individual has to be able to tell a reasonably consistent story about where it came from and where it is going.

According to Giddens (1991, pp. 39-40), maintaining habits and routines is crucial against threatening anxieties. The establishing of basic trust is the condition of the elaboration of self-identity. Obtaining such trust is thus necessary for a person to maintain a sense of psychological well-being and avoid existential anxiety' (Giddens, 1991, pp. 38-39). Moreover, self-identity "is something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual" (Giddens, 1991, p. 53).

Ontological security, then, relies on basic trust, a "trust in the existential anchorings of reality" established as the condition of the elaboration of self-identity just as much as it is of the identity of other persons and objects (Giddens, 1991, pp. 38-41). Being ontological secure is to possess, on the practical consciousness and the unconscious level, "answers" to fundamental existential questions that all human life in some way addresses (Giddens, 1991, p. 47).

As stated in Giddens work (Giddens, 1991, pp. 36–42), this basic trust develops in early childhood; in establishing routines and habits in its relationship with their caretaker, the infant learns to confide in the reliability of other persons as well as in its environment, and to repudiate other objects as "not me." Basic trust enables individuals to go about in their day-to-day life by providing a "protective cocoon" which allows them to ignore potential threats to their physical or psychological security and, thus, act (Giddens, 1991, pp. 36–42.). When assumptions about the "coherence, continuity, and dependability" of the world are challenged, anxiety might be triggered since basic trust is lost (Giddens, 1991, p. 66).

Anxiety, within this analytical framework, has to be understood concerning the overall security system one individual develops, rather than a single situation, and it has to be distinguished from fear (Giddens, 1991, p. 43). Fear is a response to a specific threat and, consequently, has a definite object. On the contrary, anxiety is a generalized state of emotions of the individual and derives from the capacity for the individual to think ahead, anticipate

future possibilities about present action (Giddens, 1991, pp. 43-47). Tradition, then, creates a sense of the “firmness of things”; “the world as it is because it is as it should be” and, in an external environment full of changes, the person is preoccupied with the apprehension of possible risks to her existence (Giddens, 1991, pp. 48-53).

Giddens’ (1991) notion of modernity and ontological security has been a source of reference to various scholars. Routines, as the purpose of providing individuals with ways of knowing the world and, therefore, how to act in it, have been further studied by Mitzen (2006) and Rumelili (2015), among others. According to Mitzen (2006), “individuals like to feel they have agency and become attached to practices that make them feel agentic” (p. 347). Hence, because routinized social relations stabilize our identities, individuals become attached to the “self-conceptions their routines support, regardless of their content” (Mitzen, 2006, p. 347).

Furthermore, Mitzen (2006) and Steele (2008) have focused on ontological security and the state. Like individuals, states are concerned with maintaining a consistent notion of self to increase their ontological security through routinized relations to other groups (Mitzen, 2006, p. 352). Authors like Kinnvall (2004, 2006, 2017), among others¹⁵, have focused less on state relations and more on how individuals and groups accept living in an insecure world and the ways in looking for one's ontological security “has played out with significant others” (Kinnvall, 2018, p. 530).

Kinnvall argues that a globalised world is one where people feel intensified levels of insecurity as “the life they once led is being contested and changed at the same time” (2004, p. 742). Since globalisation challenges definitions of who we are and where we come from, individuals feel vulnerable and experience existential anxiety and, at the same time, are trying to reaffirm “a threatened self-identity” (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 742). As a consequence, at the individual level, ontological security is a security of being, “a sense of confidence and trust that the world is what it appears to be” (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 30).

¹⁵Croft and Vaughan-Williams (2017); Krolkowski (2008).

However, Kinnvall's drawing on Giddens of ontological security as a security of being is then criticised by the same author, as "it relies on a particular notion of subjectivity that rests on individual reflexivity and broad assumptions that social agents are in command of some implicit knowledge and self-understanding regardless of their social and political context" (Kinnvall, 2018, p. 530). Kinnvall then proposes a change of focus from ontological security as security of being to ontological security as a process that is in constant progress. This shift of focus to a Lacanian notion of subjectivity aims to "understand emotions as social, cultural, and political constructs that bind subjects to identities, collectives, and particular narratives" (Solomon, 2017, cited in Kinnvall, 2018, p. 531). It is, then, a process of becoming rather than a process of being (Kinnvall et al., 2018, p. 253).

Finally, Browning and Joenniemi (2017) also take a critical stand on the development of the theory. The authors argue that established I.R. accounts of ontological security have tended to conflate the self with identity reducing ontological security to a question of identity preservation (Browning and Joenniemi, 2017, p. 32). Hence, they propose that identity(/ies) "are better viewed as crucial elements in the self's attempts at achieving it" (Browning and Joenniemi, 2017, p. 32); instead of combining self and identity, the self should be viewed as analytically distinct from "the identities it reaches for in order to secure a sense of being in the world" (Browning and Joenniemi, 2017, p. 32). Therefore, the authors propose, the focus should be on ontological security as a question of adaptability to cope with change through engagement in reflexive processes.

3.2 Anti-genderism and Anti- "gender ideology" Discourses

There are four groups of work about "gender ideology" produced in academia in the last few years. The first one is about anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" movements in Europe as comparative analysis. The second group of work studies the phenomenon in local contexts as, mostly, European case studies. However, within this group, there are also investigations about anti-genderism in countries in the Global South.

The third group of work that examines anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses are studies about the Colombian case. Since this thesis is concerned with this particular

context, special mention and description of the literature produced in the country will take place. In this group, one can find two different lines of investigation: the first one that studies the anti-"gender ideology" discourse and debate as a specific phenomenon within the 2016 context, and the second one that investigates the reasons for the no-vote winning campaign in the peace referendum, where "gender ideology" was one of them. Finally, there is one text produced by Butler (2020) that investigates the "gender ideology" in a broader sense without studying any particular case.

Firstly, texts about European anti-gender movements often analyse the continent's shift to the right and examine a gender backlash. In 2015 the Heinrich Böll Foundation published a series of texts of various contributors that analyse the backlash of gender in Central and Eastern Europe. The concept of backlash refers to perceived setbacks and deteriorations in the relations between (and among) men and women (Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2015). Among others, the cases of women's rights activists in Armenia (Nikoghsyan, 2015), women empowerment against discrimination in Georgia (Arganashvilli, 2015), strategies to overcome the gender backlash in Hungary (Juhász, 2015) and the argumentative strategies against gender equality in Slovakia (Maďarová, 2015) were investigated.

In 2015, the Foundation for European Progressive Studies published a report edited by Kováts and Põim on the position of conservative and far-right parties in anti-gender mobilizations in France, Germany, and Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The findings of this report illustrate how gender works as a symbolic glue between different conservative and right-wing positions and movements. Moreover, the findings illustrate how "gender ideology" has become a metaphor for the insecurity and unfairness produced by the current socioeconomic order.

The book "Gender and Far-Right Politics in Europe" edited by Köttig et al. (2017) provides a systematic examination of the connection between the far right and the discourse on gender in different European nation-states. The authors that contributed to this publication analysed right-wing extremist tendencies in Europe from the specific perspective of gender. Among other things, the book looks at networks, organisational forms, and specific strategies of

female right-wing extremists and their ideologies. Notably, and in her contribution to this volume, Kováts (2017, p. 185) concludes that the emergence of anti-gender movements is a symptom and a result of "deeper socioeconomic, political and cultural crises of liberal democracy."

Similarly, Kuhar and Paternotte (2017) edited a book that presents multiple analyses and examples of mobilizations against gender equality or sexual citizenship across Europe. Kuhar and Paternotte (2017, p. 5) thus conceptualize gender as an "ideological matrix of a set of abhorred ethical and social reforms, namely secular and reproductive rights, same-sex marriage and adoption, new reproductive technologies, sex education, protection against gender violence and others." They argue that anti-gender mobilizations constitute a globally circulating movement. Furthermore, the "gender ideology" concept worked as a keyword around a common theoretical framework constructed (Paternotte and Kuhar, 2017a, pp. 2-5). Among others, views and analysis from Austria (Mayer and Sauer, 2017), Belgium (Bracke et al., 2017), Ireland (McAuliffe and Kennedy, 2017), and Poland (Graff and Korolczuk, 2017) are presented.

Kuhar and Zobec wrote about the anti-gender movement in Europe and the educational process in public schools in 2017. The authors based their study on the mass protests across the continent against marriage equality, reproductive rights, and sexual education under the "gender theory" concept. Furthermore, they analysed how this "gender theory" has allegedly been targeted at schools in the educational process, such that children are being sexualized and brainwashed (Kuhar and Zobec, 2017).

Finally, within this first group of texts, in an article, Paternotte and Kuhar (2018) examined the development of campaigns against "gender ideology" in Europe and how it has led to the emergence of a specific family of mobilizations they categorized as anti-gender campaigns. The authors argue that anti-genderism and right-wing populism should not be equated with each other but understood as a separate phenomenon to analyse how they interact and mutually develop (Paternotte and Kuhar, 2018, pp. 12-13).

Secondly, the group of texts which provide insightful examples about how the anti-gender campaigns or "gender ideology" threats have been developing in specific countries, are, mostly, European studies. Mayer, Ajanovic, and Sauer (2014) studied the Austrian scenario; Cornejo-Valle and Pichardo (2017) analysed the Spanish case and Harsin (2018) the French case, and Lavizzari and Prearo (2018) the Italian context. Finally, Wehrle (2019), in her master's thesis, investigated far-wing populist forces in Germany from an ontological security perspective by conducting a frame analysis. Regarding the Global South, Gutiérrez (2018), in an interview with scholar Sonia Correa, examined the Brazilian context, and Meneses (2019) studied the Peruvian case.

The first line of investigations in the third group of literature refers mainly to the Colombian case and the anti- "gender ideology" debate at the end of 2016. Posada (2019) reflected, from a queer perspective, on the emergence of "gender ideology" in Colombia in the referendum context and on Sergio Urrego's case. The author investigated how "gender ideology" operated and how it was used in the "no" campaign to unite different conservative sectors against the gendered perspective of the Peace Agreement using the concept of frameworks developed by Butler (1990).

Reyes and Bejarano (2019) wrote a document for a Political Science Summit presentation where they explored the discursive construction and the impact of "gender ideology" in the peace process and its implementation of public policies with a gender focus in the peacebuilding phase. One of the findings of the author's analysis is that the social conditions that allowed the establishment of the anti- "gender ideology" in Colombia highlight the difficulties Colombian political elite has to acknowledge the importance of a gender focus in-state public policies (Reyes and Bejarano, 2019, p. 16). Moreover, the authors (2019, p. 16) argue that the anti- "gender ideology" discourse proves the importance of a gender focus that challenge the hegemonic common sense.

Viveros and Rodríguez (2017) wrote an introduction to the special issue dedicated to the anti- "gender ideology" discourse as a result of an educational event around the subject in November 2016, at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. In the special issue, Rodríguez

(2017), Serrano (2017), Esguerra (2017), Rivera (2017) and Viveros (2017) adapted their presentations in the event into academic papers that explore the tensions between views and expressions about the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia.

The reflections of these authors on the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia intended to contribute to the political and academic dialogue about the subject in the Colombian, the regional and global context. The authors propose that to talk about the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia is to understand it as an open phenomenon and continuously changing. Therefore, their reflections on the subject aim to have a perspective that goes beyond some circumstantial events.

In 2017 O. González studied the sexual diversity in the peace agreement. The author states that the opposition did not try to manipulate the outcome by bringing in the gender debate to the campaign. Instead, O. González (2017) argues, the gender debate is a structural variable in Colombia that will increase its importance in the political agenda. Finally, in 2018, Beltrán and Creely explored the role of the Pentecostal Evangelical movement in the success of the "no" campaign in the referendum. The authors discussed the reasons that motivated large sectors of the Evangelical electorate to oppose the peace agreement, focusing on the "gender ideology" argument.

In the second line of investigation within this group, authors such as Basset (2018), Gómez-Suárez (2017), and M.F. González (2017) studied the reasons for the no-vote success in the peace referendum. The authors argued that, among others, "gender ideology" was one of the main reasons for that success. Other reasons for the "no" success, the authors claim, were that popular urban and intermediate cities sectors did not feel represented by the peace discourse (Basset, 2018); and the fear and alleged risk of the imposition of a similar Venezuelan political and economic regime in Colombia¹⁶ (M.F. González, 2017).

¹⁶ This is called "Castrochavismo" in Spanish. The word is part of the union of the last names of Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez. It refers to Cuba and Venezuela and their economic and political order. Hence, more than a concept it is considered to be an ideology: "castrochavismo has a local and international dimension which allows for the extrapolation of both elements and diagnosis about the political, social and historical Venezuelan reality to a bigger interpretation." Retrieved from: <https://uniandes.edu.co/es/noticias/en-el-campus/castrochavismo-mitos-y-realidades>.

The fourth and final group is not an actual group. Butler (2020) studied "gender ideology" in a more general way. The author suggests that the historical formulation of neoliberalism and financialization is not the cause of the anti- "gender ideology" movement but as part of a complex scene of increased conflict where nationalism, racism, and militarism ally with the anti- "gender ideology" propaganda.

This thesis contributes to the existing literature by analysing the current manifestations of anti- "gender ideology" and anti-genderism in Colombia, specifically in the narratives of three conservative politicians and the Catholic Church in the second half of 2016. The innovation of my approach lies in the application of ontological security theory and a DHA methodological approximation. Both are conceptualized in the following sections; Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, respectively.

4. Theoretical Framework

The following pages present the process of developing ontological insecurities using the concepts of (in)security as a thick signifier, the abject-other, and the securitization of subjectivity based on the ontological security theory. The use of this theory to explore how politicians, the catholic church and public servant's narratives in the Colombian 2016 peace referendum have been part of public discourse, and how gender became a threat, allows for a more structural and psychosocial understanding of security.

Hierarchical gender structures have a close link to religion as ideas of family, and societal values are inherently related to gender (Wehrle, 2019, p. 19). Globalisation, as a gendered space in which new forms of femininities exists, can create disruption and threat to disrupt the hierarchical organization of society (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 95). Consequently, the focus on (in)security understood as an inherent component of power relations in gendered spaces, adds additional analytical tools to the development of the ontological security theory.

4.1 Ontological (In)security

This thesis' theoretical framework builds on Kinnvall's notion of identity as a process of becoming (2006, p. 44). Even though actors are searching for one stable identity, this does not mean that such fixed identities exist. On the contrary, identity is permanently negotiated and in flux and is not a "pre-given collection of properties that we possess or have" (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 44), or a core-self. It is instead a project that is discursively produced and reproduced in relationships with others, a dialogical self-narrative (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 31).

The resources an individual has for the construction of its identity, then depend on its situational power and cultural context (Kinnvall, 2006, pp. 30–31). This means that social categorization and power relations are essential aspects of self-identity; it matters whether we are female, male, black, rich, or poor (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 31). However, as Kinnvall, Manners, and Mitzen (2018) put it, the emotional aspects of feeling insecure can be threatening, and the imagination of homogeneous identities "can be immensely powerful" (p. 253).

4.1.1 (In)security as a Thick Signifier

I will use Huysmans' (1998) "thick signifier" approach, later developed by Kinnvall (2004, 2006), to analyse security. Interpreting security as a thick signifier provides an understanding of how the category "security" articulates a particular way of organizing forms of life. Moreover, the purpose of this approach is to clarify what security does and how it determines social interactions; to unveil power relations through which security discourses are developed, i.e., how individuals define themselves concerning others based on their structural basis of power (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 745; 2006, p. 35).

Kinnvall (2004, p. 745) argues that these power relations reflect the division and inequality between those involved and affected by the discourse. Security as a thick signifier thus places "an individual or a group inside the wider discursive and institutional continuities within which they are embedded" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 745).

Following Kinnvall (2004, p. 742), as individuals feel vulnerable and experience anxiety, they wish to reaffirm a threatened self-identity, and any collective identity that can provide security is then a "potential pole of attraction." Nationalism and religion are two poles of attraction or "identity signifiers" that can provide answers to those in need (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 742):

Nationalism and religion supply incredibly powerful stories and beliefs because of their ability to convey a picture of security, stability, and simple answers. They do this by being portrayed as resting on solid ground, as being true, thus creating a sense that the world is what it appears to be.

Ontological insecurity thus undermines trust and creates a "setting conducive to manipulating this distrust by political actors who act to re-channel this anxiety into specific and habituated fears" (Rumelili, 2015, p. 2). Here, political and religious actors become essential in the quest for ontological security to construct a group's identity in relation to others (Rumelili, 2015, p. 3).

The spread of democratic values (i.e., norms of equality and egalitarianism) have tended to delegitimize previous hierarchical structures in many societies around the world. Old behaviours have eroded as traditional power relations have become democratised (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 743). As a consequence, old ways of getting and understand things are eliminated, which usually leaves behind uncertainty, and the structures that bound together the community are also eliminated, leaving a disintegrative effect behind (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 743).

However, and as Kinnvall (2004, p. 743) points out, it is important to state that even though this new social order can be categorized as a problematic aspect of democratization: "traditional structures have often served to justify unequal relationships based on inheritance, gender, class, caste, or other unequal power hierarchies, and the breakdown of these structures can have liberating and challenging effects" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 743).

At an individual level, ontological security is provided by the belief that the story (the discourse) being told is a good one, and rests on solid ground. Hence, those who produce the discourse also have the power to make it "true" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 746). This is evident when one group holds more privileges and resources than the other, and when it uses the language of difference to gain power against others (van Dijk, 1997 – quoted in Kinnvall, 2004, p. 746).

Hence, comprehending why feelings of fear, loathing and hatred "creep into 'our' perceptions of 'them,' and how these feelings act as common denominators in times of uncertainty" becomes relevant when talking about ontological (in)security (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 751). This process is understood as Securitising subjectivity in relation to a subject other. Securitising subjectivity means, in simple terms, to search for one stable identity (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 37).

4.1.2 The Abject-other and the Securitisation of Subjectivity

The comparison between “others” and “us” allows to reinforce the notion of primordial identity and reflects a tendency to think more in terms of categorical identities than in

complex notions of social relations (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 36). Seeing people in negative or positive terms has to do with the belief that some categories are more essential than others. Kinnvall (2006, 2006, p. 48) claims that the work by Turner et al. (1987), on the self-categorization theory, conceptualizes self at different levels of abstraction. In comparison, the author argues that the work by Tajfel (1970, 1982), in social identity and self-categorization theory, states that individuals tend to favour their group in relation to other groups -the minimal group paradigm- leaving a binary distinction between personal and social identity. Although there is a conceptual difference between these two approaches, both identity theories are in line with the concept of "othering" as a strategy of identity-formation.

The other here, which is part of the unconscious self, is an abject; nor an object or a subject. It is something rejected by the self—the idea of an abject-other¹⁷ This thesis is relevant because it focuses on how damaging self-emotions are publicly expressed as a way to securitise subjectivity, reduce anxiety, and increase ontological security by projecting "our fears and negative emotions onto another person group, an abject" (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 53). Abjection is caused when identity or systems of order are disturbed. Globalisation, democratisation, and traditional structures being changed become a source of abjection (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 53).

The abject becomes an important element of collective identity formation when the familiar stranger is suddenly recognised as a threat (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 53). To assure that the self is essentially different from the other, the other then needs to be systematically debased; it has to be demonised (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 54). Securitising subjectivity becomes a differentiation of whom I am as compared to who I am not.

Hate and the process of demonising the other become the link between the present, the future and the past, as it works as a social chain for next generations as a particular event or trauma becomes part of the group's sense of self (Kinnvall, 2006, p. 54). Demonising the other creates a discourse of exclusion; the other is not only a stranger but an enemy. This is an attempt to securitise subjectivity in times of uncertainty. Within this process, essentialisation

¹⁷ Developed by Julia Kristeva. See Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection (1982).

of self and others - reducing them to several cultural characteristics- becomes important (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 755).

National and religious identities become answers to the need for securitised subjectivity within the changing world. Institutionalised religion provides order from the chaos and uncertainty in the world. By providing answers to questions concerning the existence, the external world, human life and the existence of "the other," religion creates a notion of "truth" and, consequently, provides a foundation for intolerance against those who oppose those beliefs (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 759).

Here, race and gender are essential elements in the construction of nationalist and religious discourses. The "them" and "us" differentiation are posed in terms of cultural-religious characteristics; "they" become incompatible with "our" culture or nation: "the assumption is, of course, that people inhabit only one nation and only one religion, that they are members of only one race, one gender, and one sexual orientation" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 761). Hence, those who do not subscribe to a standard belief system challenge the very foundation of a group. In securitising subjectivity, a critical political process where the stabilization of objects of fear and the replacement of the existential anxieties onto gender as a concrete threat can be managed, attacked, and endured (Rumelili, 2015, p.14).

4.2 A Gendered Perspective to Analyse Ontological (In)security

By using ontological (in)security as a reference theory, I want to go beyond what scholars like Kinnvall, Mitzen, and Rumelili have already rigorously studied. Kinnvall (2017) and Wehrle (2019) have argued that much of the ontological security literature ignores gender's gender dimension. As a response, Kinnvall (2017), for example, applies a gender approach to the governing of sexual and gender-based violence in India. Moreover, and apart from Wehrle's (2019) work in anti-genderism in right-wing populism, there is, to my knowledge, no publication explicitly discussing anti-genderism as a strategy for the securitization of subjectivity.

One of the reasons for the suitability of ontological (in)security theory to the analysis of anti-genderism and anti-"gender ideology" discourses is that hierarchical gender structures have a close link to family metaphors as a significant part of religious discourse (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 762). According to Kinnvall (2004, p. 762), this is often expressed as a matter of controlling the body, particularly sexual control. Among Christian and Islamic fundamentalists, the family is portrayed as the core social institution, and women play the role of maintainers of religion and tradition. Women represent the "timeless quality of status quo, of tradition, in the name of religion" (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 762).

Another reason for the suitability of ontological (in)security theory for this thesis is that to break from the identity of family, woman and wife, can cause anxiety. Mitzen (2006, p. 347) argues that because routinized social relations can help stabilize our identities, individuals become attached to the self-conceptions their routines support. Moreover, routines depend on others responding to predictably, which individuals cannot control (Mitzen, 2006, p. 347). Hence, feminism and egalitarian advances can trigger ontological insecurity (Wehrle, 2019, p. 19).

Gender has become a "symbolic glue" right-wing parties, and movements around the world have used to unite separate contested issues attributed to the progressive agenda under one umbrella term. Thus, the concept of "gender ideology" has become a metaphor for the insecurity and unfairness produced by the current socio-economic order in many "illiberal populist forces" (Grzebalska, et al. 2015, p. 34).

According to Butler (2020, p. 7), the effort to fortify the traditional heteronormative family through moral and religious mandates "seeks to sop queer alternatives to the family, single mothers, assisted reproductive technology to those out of wedlock, trans rights" because they challenge a nation's identity. By gendering space, according to presumptions about masculinity, femininity, and privilege, the power hierarchies organizing the social system are preserved (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 95). Therefore, changed gender relations produce feelings of ontological insecurity, particularly with those who feel their privileges are being threatened

or who are attached to the previous ordering of society based on gender roles and a masculinity-femininity dichotomy (Wehrle, 2019, p. 20).

The new social and egalitarian order is portrayed as a sign of the destruction of culture, sexual difference, or religious authority (Butler, 2020, p. 8); many society's formerly hierarchical structures are being put into question and delegitimized. When old patterns of behaviour become undermined as traditional power relations become democratised, old ways of getting things done are eliminated, and the previous structures bound a community together (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 743). This can create socially dislocating and disorienting effects on individuals, creating ontological insecurity (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 743).

Some members of society might feel that the elimination of traditional gender roles threatens their self-identity by questioning their position in the world (Wehrle, 2019, p. 20). Others might feel that with the increasing egalitarian relations, the last pillars of moral fixity fall away, threatening to provoke anxiety and chaos (Wehrle, 2019, p. 20).

In relation to this, Kinnvall (2017) argues that globalisation should be viewed as a gendered space where new forms of global femininities threatens to disrupt the hierarchical organization of society (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 95). Consequently, "othering" is a strategy for Securitising subjectivity as in identifying the other, we identify ourselves (Wehrle, 2019, p. 18). This anxiety and ontological insecurity produced by gender can be contained through the construction of long-standing systems of meaning and morality, including the construction of self-identity and self-distinction (Rumelili, 2015, p. 14). As Yuval-Davis (1997, p. 47) has noted, "any culturally perceived sign could become a boundary signifier to divide the world into 'us' and 'them'".

Finally, when the "us" vs "them" dichotomy exists, an attempt to increase ontological security through discourses of exclusion is created. In this dichotomy, we try to make sense of our position in the world by making claims to a unique identity (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 97). Here, in order to sacralise the self, the other is systematically debased and dehumanised. Once the

other is deprived of humanity, keeping the boundaries between self and others is justified regardless of the means (Kinnvall, 2004, pp. 753–754).

To sum up, this theoretical framework aims to explain insecurity from a structural approach –using the concept of "thick signifier"– to unveil the power relations embedded in the anti-"gender ideology" discourse in Colombia's second half of 2016. Moreover, the goal is to understand how gender triggered ontological insecurities and how conservative politicians and the Catholic church used the anti- "gender ideology" and anti-genderism discourse to securitise their subjectivity by seeing the other as an abject.

5. Method

In this chapter, I lay out the methodological framework of this thesis. Firstly, I discuss why a case study approach suits the best to analyse anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" in Colombia. I then present the generalizability of this thesis. Thirdly, I present a theory on Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), as part of the Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), and the framework of analysis best suited for this study. Lastly, I present the empirical material that is studied in the analysis section.

5.1 Case Study Research

Aiming to develop the ontological (in)security theory and contribute to the existing literature on anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses, this thesis looks at conservative politicians and religious institutions', more precisely the Catholic Church, discourses in the second half of 2016 in Colombia as a case of anti-genderism.

In the case studies, the researcher focuses on only one specific instance of the phenomenon studied in order to study it in depth (Swanborn, 2010, p. 3). Each instance is studied in its specific context, and the focus is on the relationships between variables and how they change over time (Swanborn, 2010, p. 3). Furthermore, case studies are suitable when trying to answer descriptive questions on how a particular process occurs (Stake, 1998, p. 86). Hence, this method allows the answer to the research question and sub-research question of this thesis: How can the Colombian anti- "gender ideology" discourse be understood in terms of ontological security? Moreover, how was the anti- "gender ideology" discourse constructed by Colombian conservative politicians and the Catholic Church in the second half of 2016?

Selecting a case to study as a research method requires that at least two factors are addressed: first, about the ability of the case to illustrate the problem being studied and second about the feasibility to access relevant information (Silverman 2005, p. 125). On the one hand, the problem object of this thesis is the anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses, particularly in Colombia's second semester of 2016. As various authors (for case studies around Europe see: Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017) have argued, these discourses contest gender equality and LGBTQI+ rights. Multiple mobilizations around the subject have been taking

place in various parts around the world, such as Europe and Latin America (Butler, 2020). On the other hand, and since I will focus on discourse presented in media, access to relevant information is feasible (see empirical data section below).

Finally, within the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA), Reisigl and Wodak's (2016, p. 34) propose an "ideal-typical" discourse-historical analysis that should contain an eight-step program¹⁸ However, this list is best realised in a large-scale interdisciplinary project "with sufficient resources in the form of time, personnel, and money". As the authors argue, it is both useful and legitimate to conduct smaller studies and make clear choices when planning research (select few genres, for example). In the case of a PhD thesis, Reisigl and Wodak (2016, p. 34) state that it is appropriate to conduct a few case studies and restrict the range of the data collection. Since this is a master thesis and there are not enough time and/or money resources, a single case study as a research strategy is then suitable as I will focus on five¹⁹ out of the eight steps.

5.2 Generalizability

Within research methods literature, it is a frequent criticism of case study research that the results are not widely applicable (Ebneyamini and Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018, p. 4). Kirk and Miller (1986) state that for reliability to be calculated in a case study, the researcher must document her procedure; how the data is collected and analysed. Here, the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from the qualitative investigation have to do more with information richness of the selected cases and the researcher's analytical capabilities than with sample size (Patton, 1999, in Ebneyamini and Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018, p. 4).

Anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses have been taking place in many countries around the world. This thesis and the selected case of the Colombian 2016 peace referendum are not representative of the larger population of anti- "gender ideology"

¹⁸ (i) Activation and consultation of preceding theoretical knowledge; (ii) systematic collection of data and context information; (iii) selection and preparation of data; (iv) specification of the research question/s; (v) qualitative pilot analysis; (vi) detailed case studies; (vii) formulation of a critique; (viii) and practical application of analytical results.

¹⁹ Steps i, ii, iii, iv and vi.

discourses. Therefore, the results of this case study are not generalizable, and they need to be read in the context of the case. However, this thesis's theoretical and methodological instruments can apply to other cases or studies.

5.3 Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)

Ontological security scholars have continuously stressed the importance of the understanding of discourses and narratives in order to perform a complex reading on identity. For instance, Kinnvall (2006, p. 37) argues that, at the individual level, such a complex reading analyses how structures and discourses position people into self and others and "how such positioning is likely to reinforce the psychological and emotional need for securitising subjectivity". Moreover, Rumelili (2015, p. 56) points out that individuals secure themselves as beings, mainly by the discourses and practices that differentiate them from "others".

On the national level, scholars like Agius (2017, p. 112; Steele, 2008, p. 3) have claimed that national identities are produced and reproduced through language and other semiotic systems. These systems are understood as discourses or systems of representation, which repeat and reproduce the subject over time; thus, the social construction of self-identity takes place through discourse.

In the ontological security literature, narratives and discourses are very similar. In this sense, Andrews, Kinnvall, and Monroe (2015, p. 142) argue that even though a narrative approach is very close to a discourse one, most people differentiate the two by "arguing that narratives contain discourses and discursive practices." Hence, a discursive frame is a deeply structured and partial symbolic body that we use to make sense of the world (Andrews, et al., 2015, p. 142). For instance, the authors argue, the concepts of "the West" and "Europe" can be seen as historical narratives instead of physical territories as they reflect certain discursive power structures (Andrews, et al., 2015, p. 142).

On the other hand, neo-racism, anti-immigration sentiments, and anti-feminism have been studied from an ontological (in)security lenses (Kinnvall, 2006, pp. 43-47). Kinnvall, for instance, argues that heteronormative, masculine, and neo-racist discourses are not grounded

in biology but anthropology and that they are disguised in political discourse as being merely a matter of cultural differences. Gender is then an important dimension for understanding the discourses, norms and narratives that underlie patriarchal relations and becomes a crucial position to examine a critical analysis of how ontological (in)security works in practice (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 91).

Therefore, DHA is employed in this thesis as a methodological approach to identify the power relations contained in discourses, more specifically in media texts and genres by conservative politicians and religious institutions in Colombia in the second half of 2016. DHA is a CDS²⁰ approach that is concerned with the ways in which linguistic and other semiotic practices “mediate and reproduce ideologies in a range of social institutions” (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 25). Language in DHA is not powerful on its own, it is a means to gain and maintain power via the use that powerful people make of it, and an expression of power relations (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 26).

In this thesis, discourse is understood from a DHA perspective (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 27) as: “a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of social action (...) related to a macro-topic (...) and linked to argumentation about validity claims”. A field of action in DHA refers to a segment of social reality that constitutes a frame of a discourse (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 28). For instance, a field of action could be "formation of public attitudes, opinions and will" and within it, the political genres would be interviews, press releases, radio or T.V. speeches, comments, articles, etc.

From a DHA approach, a discourse is different from a text as the latter is part of discourses. Moreover, texts make speech act durable over time and objectify linguistic actions (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 28). Texts can be assigned to genres²¹ (e.g., the anti- "gender ideology"

²⁰ Van Dijk (2013) argues that being critical is more a state of mind and an attitude than an explicit method for the description of the structures or strategies of text and talk. Thus, there is no "a" method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), but many. That's why it is better to use the term Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) for theories, methods, and critical discourse analysis.

²¹ Socially conventionalized type and pattern of communication that fulfills a specific social purpose in a specific social context (e.g., speeches or lectures, online comments about newspaper articles, T.V. debates, and so forth). In: Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 27.

discourse is realized through a range of genres and texts such as social media posts or official statements and bulletins).

One of the aims of this CDS approach is to deconstruct the hegemony of specific discourses by examining the ideologies²² that perpetuates dominance. In DHA, ideology is a one-sided perspective, a worldview composed of related mental representations, convictions, opinions, attitudes, and evaluations shared by members of a specific social group (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, pp. 24-26). Power, on the other hand, relates to an asymmetric relationship among social actors who have different positions or who belong to different groups (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 26), and it is legitimized or delegitimized in discourses. Moreover, critique refers to the assessment, from a normative perspective, of persons, objects, actions, among others.

There are three main reasons for the suitability of the DHA as a methodological approach in this thesis. Firstly, according to Wodak and Meyer (2016, p. 18), when the study is inductively oriented and aims to discover new insights through in-depth case studies, a DHA approach is better suited for a research strategy. In contrast to a general deductive study, which is more suitable for use, for instance, van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach or Farichlough's dialectical relational approach.

Secondly, DHA's analytical categories become useful for the analysis of self and other representations. Most of the studies that have used this approach have analysed identity politics, racism, discrimination, especially sexism and ethnicity (Mahfouz, 2018, p. 249). Hence, analysing the discourse on anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" from this approach allows for the implementation of critical methodological tools to conduct an in-depth case study. Finally, Reisigl and Wodak (2016, p. 38) propose a systematic collection of data and contextual information to avoid the "randomness" of data selection and to make the analysis transparent so that it has traceability and any reader can understand the detailed, in-depth textual analysis.

²² Here, the term ideology differs from the "gender ideology" concept, as the latter is the discourse I am studying in this thesis.

Reisigl and Wodak's (2016, p. 33) discursive strategies²³ (see below) will serve as a general framework for the analysis of this thesis. These strategies will allow for an in-depth study of the empirical data to examine how the anti- "gender ideology" discourse was constructed in the second half of 2016 in Colombia. Due to space and time restrictions, this thesis is confined to only three out of five strategies, most salient as they occurred most frequently in the analysis, namely nomination, predication, and argumentation.

1. Nomination: the discursive construction of social actors, objects, events, processes, phenomena, and actions using nouns, verbs, metaphors, and others.
2. Predication: discursive characterization using adjectives, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, and allusions.
3. Argumentation: justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness using fallacies and topics²⁴.
4. Perspectivization: positioning speaker's or writer's point of view using direct and indirect speech, quotation marks, metaphors and prosody.
5. Intensification or mitigation: modifying illocutionary force using diminutive or augmentations, tag questions, vague expressions, and indirect speech acts.

5.4 Empirical data

Even though printed mainstream media is still an important medium of communication, recently there has been a shift leading to a significant amount of human communication being transferred to the online realm (Mahfouz, 2018, p. 248). As Khosravini and Unger (2016, p. 213) state, just as CDS scholars would not endorse an analytical approach that strictly separates the data from their context, neither should they treat "offline" and "online" as separate and independent from one another. Hence, I will focus on information available online to do the analysis. Furthermore, I will use Reisigl and Wodak's (2016, p. 38) criteria for a systematic data collection:

²³ Strategy refers to "a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discourse practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim" In: Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 44.

²⁴ As parts of argumentation, they connect the argument(s) with the conclusion, the claim. They justify the transition from the argument(s) to the conclusion. In: Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 35.

- Specific political units (region, nation-state, international union).
- Specific periods relating to important discursive events, which are connected with the issue in question.
- Specific social and special political actors.
- Specific discourse.
- Specific fields of political action.
- Specific semiotic media and genre.

Since this thesis aims to examine how the “gender ideology” discourse in Colombia was constructed by conservative politicians and the catholic church in the media, the ‘specific political units’ were narrowed down to media sources that were produced in Colombia. The 'specific period relating to important discursive events' is during July and August 2016 when established politicians, public servants, and religious leaders put the "gender ideology" debate on the Colombian political agenda (Serrano, 2017; Esguerra, 2017; Posada, 2019; Reyes and Bejarano, 2019).

It was in August 2016 that the political debate around the “gender ideology” became relevant in Colombia due to the protests in the country against the "Free of discrimination school environments" document created through a collaboration between the Colombian Ministry of Education, the UNFPA, the UNDP and UNICEF. These protests, which took place the 10th of August, were referred to as a defence of the family and as being against the imposition of the "gender ideology" in the schools. The 2nd of October 2016, the peace referendum was held, and in November, a new peace agreement was finally signed (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed context). Consequently, this time frame allows me to monitor one month before and one month after the public debate about "gender ideology" was occupying most of the Colombian political agenda.

The ‘specific social and political actor(s)’ for this investigation are: (i) the Catholic Church represented by the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; (ii) Ángela Hernández, regional representative; (iii) Marco Fidel Ramírez, former Bogotá’s councilman; and (iv) Alejandro

Ordóñez, former Colombia's General Procurator and current Colombian ambassador to the OAS.

The reason for choosing four relevant actors is to render a dynamic picture of how the anti-"gender ideology" was discursively constructed in the texts. Moreover, since DHA recognises the importance of power and power relations in language, and in CDS there is a particular interest in the groups and organisations (and their leaders) that directly and indirectly control political discourse (van Dijk, 2016), it is plausible to focus on the language use of those in power, rather than in individuals or NGOs, for example.

Following the criteria mentioned above, I selected²⁵ Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as part of the social media genre (social networking tools), and official statements and bulletins in the case of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and the Procurator's Office. The data comprised both oral and written texts. The query term -in Spanish- "gender ideology" (ideología de género) was used to access relevant texts in all genres.

Only texts written or spoken by the selected political and religious actors were chosen. For instance, no "re-posts" were taken into account (e.g., a publication commenting on somebody else's post or somebody else's video), and neither news regarding "gender ideology." Furthermore, in the case of YouTube, only videos in which the exact publication date was visible were selected, and on Facebook only "original" posts were selected (e.g., no Twitter or webpage posts in a Facebook post).

As seen from the table below, 39 texts from Facebook, 52 from Twitter, 15 from YouTube, and 16 from official webpages were selected. This chosen material is only available in Spanish. I coded the texts and only translated the phrases that I directly quote to English.

²⁵ I did not select Instagram as a genre because I will focus on words more than on images.

Table 1. Number of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Official Webpage's texts

Social and political actor/Genre	Social media			Official statements/bulletins
	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube	Official webpage
Episcopal Conference of Colombia	1	0	1	14
Ángela Hernández	30	6	1	--
Marco Fidel Ramírez	7	45	3	--
Alejandro Ordóñez	1	1	10	2

The imbalance in the information (i.e. Marco Fidel Ramírez with 55 texts or Ángela Hernández with 37 vs. 16 texts of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and 14 texts from Alejandro Ordóñez) has one main explanation: the nature of the genre. Given that Facebook and Twitter are both social network tools, the length and the quantity of the texts vary. For instance, out of the 45 Marco Fidel Ramírez's twitter texts, 18 replied to other individuals; and out of the 30 Ángela Hernández's Facebook texts, 21 briefly mentioned the participation of different Colombian municipalities in the 10th of August protests (e.g. “Bucaramanga is protesting against the gender ideology”).

These texts are concise as they do not exceed a paragraph (and in the case of Twitter 280 characters). Moreover, both Facebook and Twitter allow for multiple short posts related to one particular subject (i.e. the 21 posts about the 10th of August protests). In comparison, official statements, bulletins and YouTube videos (in the case of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and Alejandro Ordóñez and the Procurator’s Office) are often longer, including much more than 280 characters as they are, on average, one or two pages long or between five and 10 minutes long in the case of videos.

6. Analysis

In this chapter, the findings of the DHA are presented and discussed. The nomination, predication and argumentation strategies found in the selected actors' discourses are analysed through the lens of ontological (in)security theory²⁶. For this thesis, these strategies are used since they were found to be the most applicable to the data in question, as they occurred most frequently in the analysis.

This analysis is embedded in the interpretation of (in)security as a thick signifier within the ontological (in)security theoretical framework. By adopting this approach, the analysis will help determine two main things. Firstly, to unveil power relations through which security discourses develop. More specifically, how the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez, defined themselves concerning others based on their structural basis of power (Kinnvall, 2004, p.745; 2006, p. 35).

Secondly, this analysis will show how religion worked as a pole of attraction or identity signifier (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 742) as these conservative politicians and the Catholic Church felt vulnerable, experienced anxiety, and, therefore, reaffirmed their threatened self-identity through the anti- "gender ideology" discourse.

Based on this, I will argue two things. On the one hand, that the anti- "gender ideology" and anti-genderism discourse was a covert political strategy and an attempt to securitise the selected actor's subjectivity in relation to an abject other. On the other, that feminism and egalitarian advances can trigger ontological insecurity.

²⁶ All direct quotes from the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez, Alejandro Ordóñez, and the Procurator's Office are my own translations.

6.1 Nomination and Predication²⁷

On the one hand, nomination strategies designate the different ways in which entities are referred to in the course of the texts. Reisigl and Wodak (2016) list some of these, including nouns, verbs, and metaphors. On the other, prediction strategies explore the discursive characterization/qualification of those social actors, actions, or events (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016). Hence, this section is concerned with how actors, objects, phenomena, and events related to the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia's second half of 2016 referred to linguistically in the data. This characterization is more or less positive or negative.

The analysis of nomination and predication is thus expected to reveal variations in actor descriptions, and variations for self and other representation (Abdel Kader, 2016, p. 31). Since at the individual level ontological security is provided by the belief that the discourse told is the good one (Kinnvall, 2004, p. 751), studying how feelings of fear, loathing and hatred crawl into the selected actors' perception of the "self" and the "other" becomes relevant for this thesis.

6.1.1 Social actors

The four most frequently mentioned social actors found in the analysed texts are the family, the parents, Colombian boys and girls, and President Juan Manuel Santos' government. Moreover, the first three social actors have particular religious connotations that make them rhetorically valuable in the construction of the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia. The way these are mentioned and discursively constructed varies (in some cases more than others) depending on the actor.

The family

The family is the most important social actor mentioned in the analysed texts as the anti- "gender ideology" discourse is constructed around its protection. There is no significant

²⁷ Emphasis in the direct quotes is added.

variation in the ways the family is referred to by the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez, and Alejandro Ordóñez-

Additionally, in the Episcopal Conference of Colombia and Hernández texts, the family is only constructed by means of positive predications, and its references are related to the 10th of August protests against the Constitutional Court sentence T-478 of 2015 and the Ministry of Education's documents to revise schools' handbooks. In comparison, in Marco Fidel Ramírez and Alejandro Ordóñez texts the family, and its protection, is closely related to the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum.

Notably, in the Episcopal Conference analysed texts the family is referred to as being an "institution" that is "constituted by a mother and a father" (2016h) and has a "natural and positive right to join the children's comprehensive training" (2016j, l, k). As the family is the "fundamental society's cell" (2016k), any attempt to abuse it will jeopardize "the whole human and social structure" (2016m): "**We** are experiencing serious situations against the family, it is being threatened, **we** need to go out and defend it, it is necessary to go out and state that the family is social life's cell" (2016d).

Similarly, in Hernández analysed texts, "**our** family" is mainly referred to as something that has to be "defended," "protected," and "respected" by going out and protest against "gender ideology" the 10th of August (2016a-ak). Moreover, Hernández frequently uses the hashtag #RescuingPrinciples in her posts to extrapolate the discursive construction around the family to other events such as the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum (2016b, z, ac, ad, ai).

In Ramírez texts, the family is referred to as "natural" and "constitutional" that is being threatened by the Peace Agreement, the referendum, and the new Peace Agreement (2016s, aj, as). By "natural" and "constitutional," Ramírez refers to the family constituted only by a mother and a father, as he continually uses the hashtag #WeStandForFatherAndMother (2016n, o, s, ae).

Finally, in Ordóñez analyzed texts, "the family" or "**our** family" (2016m) is characterised with predications such as being the children's owner: "children are not from the government, not for the state, children are from father and mother, from the family" (2016b). This is related to the argument that the Ministry of Education's documents about non-hegemonic sexual orientations and gender identities intended to revise schools' handbooks goes against the parents' right to educate their children. Moreover, the family in Ordóñez texts is referred to as something that is in danger if the Peace Agreement is approved in the referendum: "(...) if the yes vote wins it means that the parameters to demolish the family and steal children's innocence will be established in the new constitution" (2016f).

The Parents

There is no variation in how parents, a mother and a father, are referred to in all four selected actors' texts. This social actor is then referred to as the children's main educators and tutors (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016g, l; Hernández, 2016a, b; Ramírez, 2016c, f, k, x, ai, aj; Ordóñez, 2016a, b, g), and as to those who are entitled to define their children's education based on their own moral and religious beliefs (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016l, n; Hernández 2016i, w; Ramírez, 2016c, f, ai; Ordóñez, 2016a, b, g).

Colombian Boys and Girls

As parents are the only ones entitled to educate children, in the analysed texts "boys and girls" are represented as to be innocent (Hernández, 2016ak; Ramírez, 2016d; Ordóñez, 2016f), incapable of understanding complex things such as non-hegemonic sexual orientations or gender identities (Hernández, 2016a; Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016f), and therefore in danger (Ramírez, 2016d, g; Hernández, 2016aa, ad; Ordóñez, 2016b, ad). Boys and girls or "children" are also referred to as "**our** children" (Ramírez, 2016k, f; Hernández, 2016w; Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016h; Ordóñez, 2016a, b, c, g).

The Government

The way the government is mentioned in the texts varies among the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez. In some texts, for example, the government is mentioned as "the Ministry of Education" or "the Constitutional Court," in others as "the government," and in the rest as "the president." Its qualifications, however, are mostly negative.

The Episcopal Conference of Colombia's selected texts, for instance, only mention the "Ministry of Education" and the "Constitutional Court"²⁸. Both institutions are accordingly constructed only utilising negative predications and are all related to the 10th of August protests: (i) both are going "beyond the faculties of law to impose criteria that are extracted from the gender ideology" (2016d); (ii) do not respect the schools' autonomy (2016d); (iii) and ignore the "family's natural and positive right" to stand by the side of the "children's integral formation" (2016j).

In Hernández's analysed texts, "the government," without any differentiation to a particular institution, is constructed by utilizing negative predictions. These predictions are closely related to the 10th of August protest event, the Peace Agreement, and the peace referendum. The government is then represented as "deaf, intolerant, incapable of listening to the Colombian people's will" because it does not "listen to the sovereign voice that the last the 2nd of October in the referendum asked them not to include gender ideology issues in the Peace Agreement" (Hernández, 2016ak).

Similarly, in Ramírez's analysed texts, the government is mentioned as "Mr Juan Manuel Santos" and is qualified with only a few predications such as "deaf, blind and mute to the clamour of millions of Christians and Evangelicals that ask for the no imposition of gender

²⁸ The Constitutional Court is not part of the government because it is part of the legislative branch of Colombia's state. However, the predications do not vary among the Court and the Ministry of Education as they are equated.

ideology" (2016j). Moreover, Ramírez mentions "Humberto de la Calle" – leader of the peace negotiations in Habana, Cuba – and he is represented as to be "an enemy of the family that keeps fooling us" (2016o).

Finally, Ordóñez mentions "the government" as an important social actor in the analysed texts and it is referred to as having "bad faith":

it knows that one of the meanings of the gender focus concept is referred to gender ideology. What is happening is that, as **they** did it with the Ministry of Education's documents and many public policies, **they** are trying to smuggle **us** (sic) the gender ideology" (2016j)

As seen from the examples provided above, the traditional family model – a family constituted by a man, the father, and a woman, the mother – appears to be an essential social actor threatened by the "imposition" of "gender ideology" in Colombia. Moreover, the use of pronouns such as "our" to refer to the "family" and "boys and girls," while "they" is used to refer to "the government", can help the observers conceptualize groups identity as insiders and outsiders (Chilton, 2004, quoted in Abdel Kader, 2016, p. 31).

Also, by portraying Colombian children as innocent and incapable of understanding complex things such as non-heteronormative sexual orientations and gender identities, the selected conservative politicians and the Catholic Church are taking away the children's power and personal agency to decide. Paradoxically, children are an important rhetorical element in the discourse of subject as the group that needed to be protected the most from the perverse imposition of "gender ideology".

The protection of the traditional family model and the construction of "home" is of particular importance in the Colombian religious and cultural contexts. According to Virginia Gutiérrez (2005), the most prominent and culturally rooted way within a traditional Catholic model in Colombia is the one constituted by the union of a man and a woman through a marriage (religious or civil). However, as I will argue in the argumentation strategies section, the

Colombian family is a dynamic entity that has had different meanings beyond this traditional model.

6.1.2 Phenomena, Actions, Objects, and Events

The five most frequently mentioned phenomena, actions, objects, and events found in the texts are "gender ideology", the Ministry of Education's documents intended to revise the schools' handbooks, the 10th of August protests for the family, the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum.

The four events – the Ministry of Education's documents, the protests for the family, the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum – were all decisive in Colombia's political scenario not only in the second half of 2016, but onwards. On the one hand, the Ministry of Education's documents were a response to a constitutional decision intended to create respectful school environments because of the suicide of Sergio Urrego (see Chapter 2). However, the documents and the spread of fake news around them created essential debates around the alleged violation of parents' and schools' rights to decide the children's education and put the "gender ideology" debate in Colombia's political agenda (Serrano, 2017).

On the other hand, the country was going through a significant transitional justice process with FARC-EP guerrilla. The anti- "gender ideology" debate that started with the Constitutional Court sentence T-478 of 2015 and the Ministry of Education's documents permeated the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum. The analysis provided below will then show how these events were linguistically constructed and linked to the phenomenon of "gender ideology". The way these are mentioned and constructed varies depending on the actor.

Gender ideology

The "gender ideology" phenomenon is constructed in all analysed texts employing only negative predications and has the most qualifications. Overall, it is referred to as an imposition by the government that has dangerous implications for families, children, and

society. As stated before, the way this phenomenon is mentioned and qualified in the texts is directly linked to the four events that will be analysed in the next pages.

In the Episcopal Conference of Colombia analysed texts, “gender ideology” is represented as to be “the pretext for the inclusion and imposition of one valid way of living” (2016d). The phenomenon is also referred to as support of “educational and legal principles that promote a personal identity and privacy that is radically unrelated to the biological differentiation between men and women” (2016d). Furthermore, “gender ideology” is linked to the Peace Agreement when stating that it is a “dangerous and destructive essential part in state policies that even include its claims in the Peace Agreement” (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016g).

Hernández refers to "gender ideology" as perverse: "Why are **they** including the perverse gender ideology in the Peace Agreement?" (2016y). The phenomenon is also represented as to be "delicate, painful and perverse theme" that is "absolutely immerse in the peace referendum" (2016aa). Moreover, it appears as a "behavioural and teaching method for boys and girls that the government and the media insist on imposing" (2016ak).

Similarly, in Ramírez analysed texts, "gender ideology" is mostly qualified with predications such as "leading to a homosexual dictatorship" as it teaches children in schools "about abortion, homosexuality, masturbation and puts them against Christianity" (2016k). Moreover, "gender ideology" is referred to as being promoted by a "homosexual agenda" (2016a, e, y) and as a "mortal poison that the homosexual agenda is imposing in children for them to accept sodomy as a normal thing" (2016a). It is also represented as an "evil threat" imposed by the government and FARC-EP guerrilla (2016n).

Finally, in his texts, Ordóñez refers to “gender ideology” as “one of the reasons for the ‘no’ votes in the referendum” (2016c), as an imposition having the “peace as an excuse” (2016c, d) and as an “indoctrination by the state” (2016g).

The Ministry of Education's documents regarding the Constitutional Court's sentence intended to revise schools' handbooks

The mention and discursive qualification of the Ministry of Education's documents to revise the schools' handbooks does not have significant variations among the conservative politicians and the Catholic Church texts. Overall, they are represented as to be, as the "gender ideology", an imposition of a particular view of human sexuality that goes against the parents' right to educate their children.

In the Episcopal Conference of Colombia analysed texts, the documents are represented as to be "abuse by the Minister of Education, Gina Parody, to intervene from the Ministry in school's handbooks when these are part of the school's educational autonomy" (2016h, 1). Moreover, they are also referred to as an "imposition of gender ideology that the Ministry of Education is trying to apply and that goes against the moral principles of the majority of Colombians" (2016c).

Hernández, in her texts, refers to the Ministry of Education's documents as "perverse and atrocious" and as an "attempt against Colombia's education" (Hernández, 2016ad). Hernández (2016ad) even said that this event "cannot remain unpunished. Someone has to be responsible and has to assume why they were asking those things²⁹, and why they were attempting like that against the children". Moreover, in some of the regional representative texts, the Ministry of Education's documents are being equated to LGBTQI+ individuals:

We, who have a different opinion, can no longer talk or express ourselves. So, where is our moral? Where is the right to be respected and the status quo that **we** have as humans? We tell the LGBTQI community to not attempt to our morals. My right continues to the right of the other starts. The most worrying thing is that those who have no opportunity to speak, boys and girls, are the target of this form of education in Colombia. Starting in pre-school the Ministry is trying to impose all these

²⁹ For instance, questions about the school's uniform and the liberty a student has to wear it as she/he wishes, based on the right to freedom of expression.

discussions, violating the rights the parents have to educate their children [...] (Hernández, 2016a).

These documents are often referred to as a “booklet” in former Bogotá’s councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia’s ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia’s general procurator Alejandro Ordóñez texts. The use of this name to refer to the documents accentuated their negative connotation in Colombian society as it was related to the spread of the fake news that a Belgium homoerotic comic that was allegedly being distributed in Colombia’s schools as part of the Ministry’s response to the constitutional decision (See Chapter 2).

In Ramírez's analysed texts, the "booklet" (2016f, k) is referred to as "manipulative, astute and an imposition" (2016k) and as "evident homosexual colonization in Colombian schools" (2016c). Hence, Ramírez constructs these documents through only negative predications such as a "systematic implementation" of the "dangerous gender ideology in Colombian schools" (2016l). Moreover, these are represented as to be an "imposition of teaching children something the parents do not authorize, based on the pretext of tolerance and anti-bullying" (2016k).

Finally, Ordóñez refers to the Ministry of Education’s documents to as a “booklet” (2016b, c, j, k) and as “educational policy” (2016b) that “infringes the conscience of Colombian citizens” (2016a) and “has the purpose of indoctrinating our children” (2016b). Moreover, Ordóñez argues that the “booklet” was a fact and not part of fake news: “it has been proven that the booklet exists, that there is an inter-administrative partnership and that schools’ principals participated in workshops related to the matter” (2016b).

The 10th of August Protests for the Family

The 10th of August protests are only qualified with positive predications in all analysed texts and are equated to a country-level event. In the Episcopal Conference of Colombia texts, this

event is referred as to a “strong support to the institution of the family” (2016k) and as a rejection of the imposition of the gender ideology in the **country** (2016d, f).

In Hernández analyzed texts, the protests are referred to as “the fight” or “our fight”: “**our** fight will be that for the boys and girls in **our country** can be sexually and morally educated by their parents [...] I thank you in name of all children: those who already were born and those who will born because you are fighting for the real future of **our country**” (Hernández, 2016i). The event is also represented as to be something to be proud of as it inspired other countries: “**we** feel proud of how **Colombia’s fight** has motivated Mexican people to stand up and kindly defend, with peace and love, the moral and the principles” (Hernández, 2016x).

Finally, Ramírez refers the 10th of August protests as a “historical day” because “**Colombia** defended the family” and Colombians “tired of this dictatorship, of being discriminated against for the current government and high courts, made themselves felt” (2016k). Similarly, in Ordóñez analysed texts, the protests are represented as to be the day “**Colombia** protested when the national government tried to impose, through a booklet, the gender ideology in Colombian schools” (2016c).

The Peace Agreement

The Peace Agreement is often referred to as “the Havana agreement”, the “agreement between Santos and Timochenko³⁰” and the “agreement with FARC”. The way this event is qualified varies among the three Conservative politicians and the Catholic Church.

On the one hand, in both Episcopal Conference of Colombia and Hernández analysed texts, the Peace Agreement is qualified with only neutral predications such as “Peace Agreement” (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016g), the “agreement between the government and the FARC guerrilla” (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016o), “the Havana agreement” (Hernández, 2016, y, w, z) and the “agreement with FARC” (Hernández, 2016ae).

³⁰ Former FARC’s-EP commander alias.

On the other hand, in Ramírez texts the Peace Agreement is mentioned as "the agreement with FARC" (2016s, x, ad, ag, ai), and it is constructed only with negative predications. For instance, it is referred to as being "literally plagued with impunity and gender ideology" (Ramírez, 2016r). Finally, in Ordóñez texts the Peace Agreement is mentioned as "Havana agreement" (2016c, g, l, m), "agreement Santos/Timochenko" (2016c, d, e) and "agreement with FARC" (2016n) and it is represented as to be an "imposition of gender ideology" (2016c).

The Peace Referendum

The peace referendum, "the referendum," is only mentioned once in Episcopal Conference of Colombia's texts, and it is represented as to be "a wonderful opportunity to work on Colombians reconciliation and harmony" (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016o). In Hernández analysed texts, this event is mostly qualified with positive predications such as "the sovereign voice which asked for the gender ideology not to be included in the Peace Agreement" (Hernández, 2016ak), and as a democracy's manifestation as it was:

Colombian people's voice finally being heard after four years of not being heard [referring to the peace process and its negotiation] and now, together, **we** have to make sure that this **overwhelming** voting translates into something practical and the improvement of the agreement (Hernández, 2016ad).

On the contrary, the peace referendum is constructed by only negative predications in Ramírez analysed texts. It is referred to as: "putting the family in danger trough the homosexual dictatorship" (2016ao). Moreover, the referendum, and in the same way the Peace Agreement is represented as a "threat to freedom of expression, religious freedom, the constitutional family, the conscientious objection and the authority parents have to define their children's education" and, therefore, as "not peace" (Ramírez, 2016z, ai).

Likewise, both the peace referendum and the Peace Agreement are being equated in Ramírez selected texts to socialism, atheism, censorship, and persecution: "my vote is going to be NO

in the #Referendum. I do not want socialism! I do not want gender ideology! I do not want atheism! I do not want censorship and persecution!" (Ramírez, 2016ai) [original emphasis]. Finally, in Ordóñez texts, the peace referendum appears as if it is decisive for the future of Colombia: "the 2nd of October you decide Colombia's future. You decide the future of your children. You decide the future of Colombia's family" (2016c).

Given the topic's cultural and social context, the texts under study reveal more than just media texts. The Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez have made use of various nomination and predication strategies in their publications that have revealed a process of othering, regarding the representation of actors, objects, events and phenomenon in the anti-"gender ideology" discourse in Colombia's second half of 2016.

The nomination and predication strategies identified in the data revealed that all four selected actors seek to construct inside and outside groups through the use of "we," "our," "us," and "they" pronouns and to achieve positive representations of the "self" and negative representation of the "abject other." In portraying the other as an abject, seeing people in negative or positive terms has to do with the belief that some categories are more essential than others (Kinnvall, 2006, p.36).

In addition, several adjectives and expressions have contributed to the representation of the "self" as being in danger and under a constant threat because of the imposition of "gender ideology". This imposition was a "perverse" plan designed by the "other" and was also represented in a negative way through adjectives and expressions.

The construction of "us" around the family, the parents (a father and a mother), and Colombian boys and girls have a close link to religion and the notion of country. As Yuval-Davis (1997) has pointed out, gender relations often come to be seen as constituting the "essence" of cultures as ways of life to be passed from generation to generation. Hence, the construction of "home" is of particular importance, including relations between adults and

between adults and children in the family. Based on this, women are responsible for the survival and continuity of the nation. Being the "natural" biological and cultural reproducers of a country, they need to fulfil their roles of child-bearers and mothers, and their sexuality needs to be controlled (Yuval-Davis, 1997, pp. 22-23; 26).

Through this rhetoric of an existential threat, the discourse of anti- "gender ideology" created a dense antagonism that was not limited to specific problems or events but pertained to Colombian society as a whole. The government of former president Juan Manuel Santos, the Peace Agreement, women's movements, and LGBTQI+ individuals promoting egalitarian and democratic norms became incompatible with the selected actor's "country" as they challenged the foundation of "their" group.

Consequently, it is plausible to argue that The Episcopal Conference of Colombia, Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez, and Alejandro Ordóñez had the power to not only produce the discourse around anti- "gender ideology" but to make it true. The analysed actors used a language of difference to portray the anti- "gender ideology" discourse in Colombia's second half of 2016 as an ontological threat as well as a covert political strategy. Moreover, this language of difference was based on religious beliefs. The four selected actors are active members of different churches; the Catholic (Episcopal Conference of Colombia and Alejandro Ordóñez), the Evangelical (Ángela Hernández) and the Christian (Marco Fidel Ramírez). Hence, religion worked as an identity signifier in the process of securitisation of subjectivity.

6.2 Argumentation

The way social actors, events, objects, and phenomena are mentioned and qualified are linked to and form the basis for the argumentation schemes. Reisigl and Wodak (2016, p. 33) define the argumentation strategy as a justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness through the use of fallacies and topoi. Topoi is an old rhetorical notion referring to "content related warrants which connect premises with conclusions" (Wodack, 2001, p. 75).

Topoi are thus a type of "stereotypical" arguments based on socially shared opinions generally implying "common sense reasoning schemes" for the sake of persuasion (Van Dijk, 2000, cited in Abdel Kader, 2016, p. 34). For this thesis's purpose, I use the list of topoi developed by Wodak (2001, p. 74) to analyse content-related argument schemes. As the author states (Wodak (2001, p. 74), the analysis of argument schemes "can be carried out against the background of the list of topoi, though incomplete and not always disjunctive".

The two most frequently employed topoi that occur in the discourse about anti- "gender ideology" in all analysed texts are the topoi of threat and numbers. The paraphrasing of the topoi follows that of Reisigl and Wodak (2001, pp. 75-80). These are used to justify four main claims.

The first claim is that the status quo is being threatened because "gender ideology" promotes the idea that gender is a social construct. Therefore, political and religious authorities, which serve the values of Colombian people, will fight to combat it. The use of *topoi of threat* justifies this: if there are specific dangers and threats, one should do something against them. The following quote from Ordóñez (2016g) exemplifies this argumentation scheme:

The core of gender ideology is when gender is defined without mentioning sex. It is stated that a man is not born as a man or woman as a woman, but they become one. That is the implicit concept in many of the uses of the word 'gender' [...] this is a movement of social reconstruction that implies new anthropology, further implying the imposition of the conception of men and society guided by the state. This will imply new public policies based on this concept: in education and family, which goes against beliefs and affects the Colombian family and children.

This status quo is built around the notion of the traditional family as the core of society. Although in Colombia the most culturally rooted type of family is monogamous and heterosexual, a product of a marriage or a union (Gutiérrez Negrete, 2019, p. 140), the family is a dynamic entity that varies depending on the region, ethnicity, religious beliefs or class (Gutiérrez Negrete, 2019, p. 140). Among the different types, some families challenge this

traditional model that implicitly has the obligation of species reproduction within it, homosexual couples being one of them (Gutiérrez Negrete, 2019, p. 144).

In Colombia, the Constitutional Court has had to intervene in the construction of the family as a concept and protect and guarantee the rights of those families that challenge the status quo (Gutiérrez Negrete, 2019, p. 145). For instance, the Court has played a leading role in recognizing rights to LGBTQI+ individuals; it has been guaranteeing the exercise of individual rights without discrimination and the right to form a family and a marriage (Carrillo and Molina, 2018).

Consequently, by using words such as “constitutional” (Ramírez, 2016s, aj, as) or "natural" to refer to the family the selected actors are employing a language of difference that reaffirms "their" notion of a country that is not only incompatible with the egalitarian jurisprudential advances but with the nation's reality.

The second claim found in the analysed texts is that many Colombians are publicly rejecting the imposition of "gender ideology". This justified by the *topoi of numbers*: if the numbers prove a specific event, specific action should be performed/not be carried out. The next extract from one of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia's texts shows the argumentation scheme:

We are calling for governmental institutions to listen to **millions** of people, without distinction of religion, that are protesting against the imposition of an ideology. **We** want to build a country with kindness. There cannot be a particular ideology that determines the rules of living of a whole society (Episcopal Conference of Colombia, 2016d).

The mention of "millions" of people gives validity to the claim, and it reinforces the discourse that Colombia, as one big and united country, is rejecting the imposition of "gender ideology" (see the nomination and predication strategies on the construction of the 10th of August protests for the family).

The third claim is that dangerous and radical "gender ideology" views in the documents to revise schools' handbooks are impositions by both the Ministry of Education and the government, violating parents' right to educate their children. Here, the *topoi of threat* is also used as justification. An extract from one of Bogotá's former councilman's texts, Marco Fidel Ramírez, illustrates this argumentation scheme:

[...] I also strongly reject the aim of the Minister of Education, Gina Parody, of promoting, through the schools' handbooks, evident homosexual colonization in Colombian schools. Those who want to silence **us** are wasting their time: **we** will not be silenced. **We** will continue defending the right the parents have to guide their children's educational focus (Ramírez, 2016c).

The documents were not just constructed as words in paper, but they were portrayed as an abuse of power by the then minister Gina Parody, the former president Juan Manuel Santos and the Constitutional Court. Allegedly, through excessive use of power, the state was trying to indoctrinate Colombian boys and girls. The threat of the family and schools' rights, then, gave validity to the claim.

This alleged imposition can be traced back to various Constitutional Court's decisions intended to protect women's and LGTBTQI+ individuals' rights (see Chapter 2). According to Marco Fidel Ramírez (2016k), "**Colombians in general**" and some religious and political sectors united against the Ministry of Education's documents and the Constitutional Court's decision regarding Sergio Urrego, but also against "a series of events where, without any consultation to the Colombian people, there was an imposition of same-sex marriage and homosexual adoption" (Ramírez, 2016k).

Finally, the fourth and last claim is that the Peace Agreement's gender focus is an imposition of "gender ideology" in Colombian society. Therefore, people must vote "no" in the referendum. This is justified by the use of *topoi of threat* and *topoi of numbers*. The next quote exemplifies this argument scheme [original emphasis]:

Mr. President, the agreement with Farc and with the Ministry of Education, not only promoted gender ideology; what they intended was to impose it. That is why Colombians voted NO. To say that those ideologies do not exist is not enough (Hernández, 2016ag).

The NATURAL FAMILY is being threatened in the peace referendum.

There IS gender ideology in the agreement with FARC.

The "peace" that they are offering today tramples down biblical principles and attacks the family.

ALARMS must be turn on! #Let'sKeepDefendingTheFamily

The FAMILY is in DANGER. Let's vote NO! [original emphasis] (Ramírez, 2016s).

There is not enough evidence to argue that it was because of the anti- "gender ideology" discourse that the no-vote won the elections in the October 2016 peace referendum. However, what can be argued is that this discourse was both a political strategy and an attempt to securitise subjectivity. On the one hand, in the process of the construction of the anti- "gender ideology" discourse as a threat to Colombian society in general and children and families in particular, the selected conservative politicians and the Catholic Church built walls of ontological security around the idea of the self through the refusal to allow ambiguity in social structures (Kinnvall, 2017, p. 91).

On the other hand, and after the peace referendum results in October 2016, former general procurator Alejandro Ordóñez held a meeting with ex-president Juan Manuel Santos. According to Ordóñez (2016g):

Various themes were discussed. The first one: I told the president the reasons a lot of Colombians had to vote "no" regarding childhood and family- the presence of gender ideology in the Peace Agreement. I exposed all of this; I gave him a document, a thorough study that showed where and how this subject is within the Peace Agreement. The president said that he shared these concerns, and we agreed that the government would create a document to purge if I can use this word, gender ideology

of the Peace Agreement. This document will be handed to me in the next couple of hours for its study. However, the important thing here is that the family and Colombian children are protected and that, by doing this, there is no affection to the morality and beliefs of **millions** of Colombians [...]

[...] we are facing a truly social restructure based on the notion of gender in the Peace Agreement. Gender is not only when women's rights and discrimination against women are being discussed. Likewise, the notion of gender has to do with gender ideology that implies a new conception of life, the family, the marriage, and the adoption. It is, like I told you, a social restructure. [...] (Ordóñez, 2016h).

This "purge" of the "gender ideology" of the Peace Agreement meant that the proposals and changes that different women's movements were trying to accomplish, particularly in the issues of gender, had no place not only in the Peace Agreement but in its implementation. Moreover, this alleged imposition of "gender ideology" has to be understood not only within the second half of 2016 Colombian context, but within a larger scenario of political and jurisprudential advances that recognised women's and LGBTQI+ individuals' rights (decriminalisation of abortion, same-sex marriage and the recognition of the right LGBTQI+ couples have to adopt).

More importantly, the understanding of this "imposition" has to be done within a bigger political framework of protection and rights' guarantee of populations that have been historically discriminated against in the Colombian armed conflict. As Esguerra (2017, p. 24) argues, to "purge" "gender ideology" from the Peace Agreement is to go against the recognition that homophobia and transphobia structured social and armed conflict, which maintains a heterosexual social order where "the other" is considered a threat.

Therefore, it is plausible to argue that the Peace Agreement gender focus triggered the ontological insecurity of not only Alejandro Ordóñez, but Ángela Hernández and Marco

Fidel Ramírez³¹, as it allegedly threatened the morality and beliefs of Colombians. Hence, to claim for a space within an established patriarchal and violent order was perceived not only as an imposition but as a threat.

To summarise, and as clear from the analysis above, the actors in question (the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez) exploited the topos of threat to justify their establishment and give credence to their actions. Moreover, the selected actors provided additional validity to its claims about the threat of "gender ideology" embedded in the government documents (i.e. the Ministry of Education's documents) and reforms (i.e. the Peace Agreement. It can be considered as a reform and a social pact as it was intended to create structural legal and socio-economic changes for peacebuilding and peacekeeping) through the use of the topoi of numbers.

31. The majority of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia analysed texts (13 out of 16) were published in August and were related to the 10th of August protests for the family. The Peace Agreement and the peace referendum are barely mentioned. Therefore, there is not enough evidence to argue that these two particular events triggered the institution's ontological insecurity.

7. Conclusions

This thesis has aimed to examine the phenomena of anti-genderism and anti- "gender ideology" discourses through an ontological security lens. Furthermore, this thesis has contributed to a gendered approach to ontological security theory and a critical analysis of the anti- "gender ideology" discourse. It has argued that egalitarian advances and former gender hierarchies being restructured threaten a stable sense of self-identity and, thus, trigger ontological insecurity. Therefore, the anti- "gender ideology" discourse can be interpreted as a strategy to securitise subjectivity.

This gendered approach to ontological security was then applied to the Colombian setting in a case study of the country's political context in the second half of 2016. The case study analysed the anti- "gender ideology" discourse/anti-genderism of four main political actors: The Catholic Church represented by the Episcopal Conference of Colombia; regional representative, Ángela Hernández; former Bogotá's councilman, Marco Fidel Ramírez; and Colombia's ambassador to the OAS and former Colombia's general procurator, Alejandro Ordóñez.

To analyse this discourse, a Discourse Historical Approach was applied. Particularly, three discursive strategies were used in the selected texts: nomination, predication and argumentation. On the one hand, the DHA, namely the nomination and predication strategies, proved helpful in providing insights about the representation of social actors (the family, the parents, Colombian boys and girls and the government), phenomenon ("gender ideology") and events (the Ministry of Education documents, the 10th of August protests for the family, the Peace Agreement and the peace referendum). The analysis unveiled how the selected conservative politicians and the Catholic Church employed various adjectives and expressions to reveal positive attitudes about the "self" and negative ones about "the other".

On the other hand, the argumentation strategies revealed how the four selected actors exploited both the topoi of threat and numbers to give validity to their claims. The analysis showed how the anti- "gender ideology" discourse of some Colombian conservative politicians and the Catholic Church could be considered as a political strategy that

implemented a language of difference through relying on different discriminatory claims to achieve their aims. The claims referred to the supposed imposition of dangerous and radical "gender ideology" views in Colombian society (particularly in the family and the children) through the Ministry of Education's documents to revise schools' handbooks, the Peace Agreement, and the peace referendum.

By applying an ontological security lens, the anti- "gender ideology" discourse of the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez, and Alejandro Ordóñez can be understood as seeking to securitise subjectivity. Relying on religious and moral beliefs to understand social and power structures, these actors offer ontological security by stating that it is the family –constituted by a married heterosexual couple– the one entitled to educate their children according to those beliefs. By portraying the idea that gender as a social construct is a threat and an imposition, and by identifying the abject other as an external, an apparent dichotomy of female/male and us/them is constructed. During that process, the four selected actors seek to securitise subjectivity.

Regarding the research question of this thesis: *how can the Colombian anti- "gender ideology" discourse be understood in terms of ontological security?* As the document has demonstrated, the anti- "gender ideology" discourse can be understood as a strategy to securitise subjectivity. By portraying this discourse as a threat to their identity, to the family, the children and Colombian society as a whole, and playing on ontological insecurity in their audiences, the Episcopal Conference of Colombia, Ángela Hernández, Marco Fidel Ramírez and Alejandro Ordóñez seek to gain political support by offering the preservation of the status-quo and, therefore, a stable identity.

Consequently, the "abject-other" in this discourse were LGBTQI+ individuals and women's movements that used legal and social tools to demand their rights. Moreover, the "other" was also former president's Juan Manuel Santos government represented in jurisprudential decisions by the Constitutional Court (although the high courts are not part of the government, they were all equated to it in the analysed texts), documents with a gender focus

to educate children in schools about diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, and the gender focus of the Peace Agreement.

To stand against the transformation of the homophobic structural conditions in Colombian schools and to oppose to a peace process with a visible and important gender focus categorizes every individual as an "abject-other" that occupies (or tries to) space within the "gender ideology" phenomena. Moreover, this discourse could also be understood as a symptom of a broader crisis in the Colombian context. However, giving the scope and the length of this thesis, it is not possible to go in-depth with this regard.

Therefore, future research could focus on an in-depth analysis of anti- "gender ideology" discourses in Latin America as not only mobilisations against equality, but also as a metaphor for the ontological insecurity and injustice produced by the current socio-economic order. It would be interesting to analyse a large amount of data to understand what anti-genderism and the anti- "gender ideology" discourse could tell us about democracy, neoliberalism, and capitalism in specific regional contexts.

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9. Empirical Material³²

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³² By May 17th, 2020, I realized that Marco Fidel Ramírez's public Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/7MarcoFidelR>) is no longer available. All the data collected from this page was copied and pasted, or transcribed in the case of videos, into a Word document. For the sake of transparency, I am attaching these posts as an Appendix (see Appendix 1).

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Appendix 1: Marco Fidel Ramírez's Facebook posts

Since currently former Bogotá's councilman Marco Fidel Ramírez's Facebook page is not available, and for the sake of transparency, I am pasting here the posts and the video transcriptions. Regarding the transcriptions, I only transcribed what Ramírez himself said on the videos.

1. Ramírez, M. F. (2016f, August 9).

“Ministra Parody tiende cortina de humo para ocultar colonización de ideología de género”: Concejal Ramírez. Comunicado – 08 de Agosto de 2016.

El Concejal de Bogotá Marco Fidel Ramírez declaró que “la ministra de educación Gina Parody no podrá confundir con ‘cortinas de humo’ a millones de familias colombianas que le estamos haciendo resistencia a que le enseñen a nuestros hijos en los colegios, que no nacemos niñas o niños, sino que “se aprende a serlo, de acuerdo con la sociedad y época en las que se crezca”.

Esta concepción hace parte del documento ‘Ambientes escolares libres de discriminación, orientaciones sexuales e identidades de género no hegemónicas en la escuela. Aspectos para la reflexión’, elaborado en el marco del convenio entre el Ministerio de Educación Nacional, el Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas, la Unicef y el PNU y en cuya mesa de participaron de aportes estuvieron: la Mesa LGBT de Bogotá, Colombia Diversa y otras ONG que impulsan la ideología de género.

Según el Concejal de la Familia, el escrito basado en una de las teorías de género, la queer, plantea “el género como un conjunto de normas que se imponen sobre los cuerpos y no dependen del sexo del sujeto...” y agrega que así “se empieza a entender que no se nace siendo hombre o mujer, sino que se aprende a serlo...”.

Además, entre otros lineamientos de este documento-cartilla se “insta a las comunidades educativas a “promover [en los manuales de convivencia] el uso diferenciado de prendas” y a que se permita “que las niñas y jóvenes usen pantalones y que los niños y jóvenes usen faldas... podrían establecerse 2 tipo de modelos de uniforme sin importar el género de quién los use”.

Adicionalmente, esta cartilla recomienda que “se puede promover como política institucional el desarrollo anual de una semana del reconocimiento y la promoción de los derechos humanos sexuales y reproductivos, donde la visibilidad de las OS (Orientación Sexual) e IG (Identidades de Género) no hegemónicas sea un centro importante”. Esto implicaría la colonización de las mentalidades de nuestros niños, niñas y adolescentes desde este tipo de ideología de género que promueve la ministra Gina Parody.

Finalmente el Concejal Ramírez reiteró que “respetamos la opciones sexuales personales, pero nos seguiremos manifestando pacíficamente en defensa de la familia natural, de la libertad religiosa y de cultos, de la autonomía escolar y del derecho de los padres a formar a sus hijos según sus valores y creencias. No permitiremos que la ministra Parody con falsos positivos imponga esta ideología de género a la mayoría de los colombianos”.

MARCO FIDEL RAMIREZ

Concejal de Bogotá

2. Ramírez, M. F. (2016k, August 12).

UN DÍA HISTÓRICO!!! COLOMBIA DEFIENDE LA FAMILIA.

El Concejal Marco Fidel Ramírez, venía denunciando y advirtiendo desde el 2011 que si no despertábamos, nos llevarían hacia una dictadura homosexual, pese a ser calificado como “homofóbico”, “cavernícola” y hasta “fanático” tenía razón. Pues existe una agenda mundial que presiona los países para que abracen la IDEOLOGÍA DE GÉNERO, con el que se enseña a los niños en sus colegios sobre aborto, homosexualismo, masturbación, cristianofobia, y demás.

En éstos 5 años se ha visto el fortalecimiento del activismo lgbti y al mismo tiempo la discriminación hacía las comunidades religiosas y hacia los padres de familia que conforman una mayoría significativa en Colombia y que cree firmemente en los principios y valores tradicionales, que hasta el día de hoy han guardado y protegido el núcleo de la sociedad.

La molestia y la unidad de todos los sectores cristianos, católicos, Padres de familia, líderes juveniles, políticos, académicos, grupos provida, grupos profamilia y colombianos en general, la desató esa serie de acontecimientos donde sin consultarle al pueblo, se le impuso el Matrimonio homosexual y la Adopción Homosexual.

Lo anterior sumado a la polémica de los baños "Sin género" y las preguntas orientadoras, que algunos calificaron como manipuladoras, astutas e impositivas por parte del Ministerio de Educación con sus talleres, citas y su cartilla, preocuparon a Colombia, Más aún cuando justificados por la decisión de la Corte, el Ministerio de Educación se toma el atrevimiento de enseñar a los niños algo que los padres no desean autorizar, incluso excusados bajo el pretexto de la "tolerancia" y el no "matoneo", cuando la Corte misma es la que discrimina a los Padres de Familia y les impone algo con lo que ellos no están de acuerdo, siendo atacados, insultados y calificados como "homofóbicos" por expresar su libertad de expresión, su libertad religiosa y defender a sus hijos.

Cansados de ésta dictadura, de ser discriminados por el actual Gobierno y las Altas Cortes, el pasado 10 de Agosto del 2016 los colombianos se hicieron sentir. Más de 1 millón de personas levantaron su voz de protesta. Incluso hubieran podido ser más, pero el horario laboral y académico de muchos no les permitió participar de la actividad. Aun así, las calles se vistieron de blanco; padres, madres, niños y jóvenes levantando su voz en contra de toda imposición del Gobierno Nacional e incluso de Gobiernos Extranjeros para meter la IDEOLOGÍA DE GÉNERO en Colombia.

Éste es tan sólo una muestra inicial de lo que podemos hacer en defensa de la familia, seguiremos alertas y vigilando muy bien lo que quieren hacer con el futuro de nuestros niños. No callaremos!

3. Ramírez, M. F. (2016m, August 24).

Hoy en la Iglesia MANANTIAL DE VIDA ETERNA alertando sobre la implementación de la ideología de género en los Acuerdos con las FARC. Gracias a los Pastores Eduardo y Fulvia Cañas por su invitación. #SigamosDefendiendoLaFamilia

4. Ramírez, M. F. (2016o, August 27).

IDEOLOGÍA DE GENERO EN LOS ACUERDOS CON LAS FARC

(PELIGRO) --- ¡IDEOLOGÍA DE GENERO en los ACUERDOS con las FARC!

Te dejamos este video para que lo mires antes de VOTAR por el PLEBISCITO. No bajemos la guardia! quieren meter la ideología de género silenciosamente en Colombia a través de los acuerdos.

Si se aprueba, ya no habrá vuelta atrás. #SigamosDefendiendoLaFamilia

Levantemos nuestra voz!

#RescatandoPrincipios #Abanderadosporlafamilia #Yodefiendolafamilia

#Yodefiendolaniñez #SIperoNO #NOestaPAZ #SigoFirmePorPapaYMama #VotoNO

#Acuerdos #FARC #Plebiscito #QueremosPazSinIdeologiaDeGenero

#PazSinIdeologíaDeGénero

Video:

Marco Fidel Ramírez: “Saludos a los defensores de la familia. Todos recordamos las marchas del 10 de agosto en Colombia. Por qué marchamos? Rechazando la imposición de la ideología de género en los colegios. Esto motivó la siguiente aclaración (Juan Manuel Santos): “y debemos dejar claro ante todas las comunidades religiosas que ni el Ministerio de Educación ni el Gobierno Nacional han implementado ni han promovido, ni van a promover o a implementar la llamada ideología de género”. Pero hoy nos preguntamos: “y en el proceso de paz?” (música de terror).

Mujer: lo preguntamos porque en el comunicado 82 emitido en la Habana, Cuba, el 24 de julio de 2016 se afirma que hay una subcomisión de género que fue instalada desde el 11 de septiembre de 2014 que revisó e incluyó el enfoque de género. Sí. Escucharon bien. El ENFOQUE DE GÉNERO en los puntos centrales 1, 2, 3 y 4 del proceso. Y otros más [...]"

5. Ramírez, M. F. (2016s, September 3).

La FAMILIA NATURAL amenazada en el PLEBISCITO

Para los que creían que estábamos exagerando o mintiendo, les presentamos NUEVAS pruebas contundentes que demuestran que SÍ hay Ideología de Género en los Acuerdos con las FARC.

La "Paz" que hoy nos ofrecen, pisotea los principios bíblicos y ataca la FAMILIA.

¡Encendemos las ALARMAS! #SigamosDefendiendoLaFamilia

La FAMILIA está en PELIGRO. Votemos NO!

redes sociales y comparte ésta importante denuncia:

#RescatandoPrincipios #AbanderadosPorLaFamilia #YodefiendoLaNiñez #SigoFirmePorPapaYMama #Familia #PorLaVidaYLaFamilia #DiosGuardeAColombia #HaremosLoQueSea #VotoNo #Plebiscito #SIperoNO #NoEstaPaz #QueremosPazSinIdeologiaDeGenero #PazSinIdeologíaDeGénero

Video:

Marco Fidel Ramírez: Para los escépticos que creen que estamos viendo ideología de género hasta en la sopa y que estamos calumniando, mintiendo y exagerando al asegurar que el proceso entre el gobierno y las farc ha sido infiltrado por la ideología de género, los invito a

ver nuestro análisis de las declaraciones de Humberto de la Calle Lombana, jefe del Equipo negociador del gobierno, hechas el 24 de julio de 2016 en la Habana, Cuba.

Estéban Ramírez: [...]

6. Ramírez, M. F. (2016x, September 12).

¡Unidos en defensa de la familia! Votamos NO al PLEBISCITO

Unidos en defensa de la familia!

Votamos NO al PLEBISCITO.

Ideología de género en los Acuerdos con las FARC amenaza la FAMILIA, la LIBERTAD RELIGIOSA, LIBERTAD DE EXPRESIÓN y la AUTONOMÍA de los Padres sobre la educación de sus hijos. Eso NO es PAZ.

7. Ramírez, M. F. (2016ae, September 26).

Amo, defiando y protejo la familia #NoAlPlebiscito

Colombianos VOTAMOS NO al Plebiscito.

Ideología de Género = Enfoque de Género

en Acuerdos entre FARC y el Gobierno Nacional, ¡NO ES PAZ!

#SigamosDefendiendoLaFamilia

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#No #Plebiscito #Colombia

#RescatandoPrincipios #AbanderadosPorLaFamilia #30s #SigoFirmePorPapáYMamá #Yo

DefiendoLaFamilia