

Territorial Peace Through Peace For the Territory

Analysing Conditions for Indigenous Peacebuilding in Colombia

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Bachelor thesis

“We say no to the peace that keeps us on our knees, no to the peace that keeps us in chains, no to the false peace that denies the values and contributions of our peoples”

- Rigoberta Menchú

Abstract

The “territorial peace” runs as a buzzword around Colombian peacebuilding. A so-called territorial approach was adopted in the beginning of the Havana Peace Talks, as a means of creating locally based, differentiated modes of peacebuilding, and addressing the structural neglect of Colombia’s diverse rural areas. This study highlights the experiences of Colombian indigenous peoples in the context of the territorial peace approach. Drawing upon an emergent literature on the ethnographically based concept of indigenous peacebuilding, it analyses contrasting ideas on the part of indigenous peoples and national elites. The study zooms in on three main themes – *local ownership* and *authorship*, *governance locus*, and *sustainability* – in aiming to draw conclusions about the conditions of indigenous peacebuilding. The textual empiricism suggests that indigenous notions of local agency, territorial autonomy and sustainable relationships among people and nature are largely neglected in elite ideas underpinned by international liberal peace ideals. As such, various shortcomings are identified related to the ambitions of inclusion and comprehensiveness of the territorial approach.

Keywords: Territorial peace, indigenous peacebuilding, local ownership/authorship territorial autonomy, sustainability

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1. Introduction

Seeking a termination of over half a century of armed conflict in Colombia, the Havana Peace Talks were initiated on August 26th 2012. This peace process gathered the government of president Juan Manuel Santos and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) on fifty-one eleven day-long rounds of negotiations in Cuba, before a Final Agreement was reached on November 24th 2016. Right off the bat in 2012, the High Commissioner of Peace of the Santos government Sergio Jaramillo declared the need for a comprehensive peace program: one that seeks to deepen democracy, overlap societal divides and address underdevelopment, particularly in the conflict affected rural territories. Jaramillo coined the concept of “territorial peace”, which gained resonance and to this day remains an omnipresent discussion topic around Colombia’s peacebuilding and development challenges.

The territorial agenda for peace acknowledges that peacebuilding needs to reach further than ceasing direct violence. It sheds light on structural causes behind the conflict and highlights the need for sensitivity of Colombia’s geographical, economic, political, ethnic and cultural diversity. Following the dawning of the territorial approach, the first item agreed upon between the government and FARC was the Comprehensive Rural Reform, aiming to reinvent the conditions of the Colombian countryside. Not long after, the issue of political participation was also recognised by the parties as closely pertinent to issues of territory. Indeed, the “territorial” runs as a buzzword throughout all aspects of the peace process and Final Agreement, as well as in the wider public conversation (Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Paz 2016b: 38). While there is broad consensus surrounding the comprehensive ambitions of the territorial peace approach, its concrete implications for peacebuilding practice remain vague and debated. This fact is illustrated by a concise scholarly literature that has emerged on the topic in the time since the peace process. As Heriberto Cairo with colleagues argue, the concept of territorial peace is a fuzzy and polysemic one, unspecified in the official discourse and meaning different things to different political actors (Cairo et al 2018: 466).

One group whose understandings of peace and the role of territory remain understudied is the country’s indigenous peoples. Ranging from the coastal lowlands via the Andes mountains to the Amazon, about one third of Colombia’s national territory is the legal historical tenancy of indigenous groups. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples postulates the rights to indigenous sovereignty and self-determination over this territory (A/RES/61/295). Nevertheless, in Colombia and globally alike, indigenous

peoples sit on the margins of economic and political influence and continue in the postcolonial era to struggle against displacement and land deprivation; the armed conflict has been yet another disturbing presence for decades in Colombian indigenous territories. Against this background, it is far from an overstatement to assert that Colombia's 87 indigenous groups make out some of the main beneficiaries of the intended territorial peace (IWGIA n.d.).

1.1. Aims and research question

This paper intends to contribute to the literature on the Colombian case by focusing on the experiences and understandings of indigenous peoples in the post-conflict context. It does so by drawing upon the concept of indigenous peacebuilding found in anthropology and peace research. Indigenous peacebuilding is a wide concept rooted in ethnography, gathering knowledge of dispersed ideas and practices of indigenous peoples globally. In this study, I zoom in on three broad components found in the literature on indigenous peacebuilding, and apply these in the Colombian case. These themes are ideas of (1) local ownership and authorship, (2) governance locus, and (3) sustainability. Guided by these aspects, I seek an answer to the following research question: *In the context of the territorial peace approach, what facilitating and/or hindering conditions for indigenous peacebuilding can be identified in Colombia?*

To approach the research question, I analyse contrasting ideas on the part of indigenous peoples and national elite actors. By analysing differing perspectives surrounding the territorial approach, the primary aim is to reach conclusions concerning experiences and opportunities of Colombia's indigenous peoples and, at best, contribute to broadened understandings of peace and peacebuilding. A secondary aim is to develop and enrich the scholarly concept of indigenous peacebuilding through empirical nuance.

In the following chapter, following a brief review of scholarship on the Colombian territorial peace, I outline a theoretical conceptualisation of indigenous peacebuilding. Subsequently, chapter 3 discusses my chosen case study, idea analysis methodology and data material. In chapter 4, I present my empirical findings and analysis before summarising and discussing some implications in chapter 5.

2. Theory and earlier literature

2.1. Colombia's territorial peace approach: A literature review

Scholarly interest in Colombia's territorial peace approach has largely been a critical response to the imprecision of the term. The ambiguities surrounding the territorial peace approach renders it a relevant study object of diverging ideas between social and political groups.

In a collection of academic essays, Cairo et al (2018) provide an overview of the territorial peace concept. The contributors note that while the territorial approach is generally presented in the Agreement as a facilitator of bottom-up peacebuilding, and as a means for countering socio-economic, urban-rural, ethnic and gender divides, its concrete implications lack specification and are understood in a multitude of ways. In a similar vein, Criado (2017) conceives of the territorial approach as a systematic device for participation and differentiation of peacebuilding, however filled with imprecisions. Stakeholders expressing different conceptions of “territorial peace” range from state institutions, security forces and paramilitaries, via peasant communities, ethnic minorities and NGOs, to FARC-EP and other guerrillas (Cairo et al 2018: 466–468; Bautista Bautista 2017: 101; Criado 2017). Furthermore, there is scholarship highlighting the views on the territorial approach between levels of governance (Eaton 2020). Yet other authors identify the polarised assumptions of how and by whom the Comprehensive Rural Reform (CRR), as stipulated in the Final Agreement, is to be implemented to provide relief to heavily affected rural regions (Amaya Castro & Olarte Olarte 2017; Bautista Bautista 2017).

Some important case studies have spotlighted indigenous peoples in relation to Colombia's territorial peace approach. Predominantly, this literature contributes with thick descriptions of experiences of conflict and bottom-up peacebuilding of specific indigenous groups, such as the non-violence strategies and collective identity construction of the Nasa community of Northern Cauca (Chaves et al 2018), and the distressing encounters of groups from five different territories with extractive mining industries (Le Billon et al 2020). These and other studies of indigenous, afrocolombian and peasant communities have demonstrated instances of local resistance against state practices and clashing views of peace, conflict, territorial governance and sustainable land use (see eg. Lao-Montes 2020; Strambo & Puertas Velasco 2017).

2.2. Conceptualising indigenous peacebuilding

The above scholarship hints of the imprecisions of the territorial peace approach and of difficulties in its interaction with indigenous peoples. However, a detailed account of the overall conditions for indigenous peacebuilding is still missing in the Colombian case. Drawing upon existing literature on the concept of indigenous peacebuilding, I intend to make such a contribution. Reviewing this literature, the first observation one is confronted with is the difficulty in pinpointing one unitary concept. Confining some 370 million people in over 500 groups spread across all continents, indigenous peoples is a profoundly heterogeneous category and it would be meaningless to attempt to outline one approach applicable universally (Synott 2017: 10). The intention here is to distinguish broad areas of continuity in relation to indigenous peacebuilding. In the subsequent analysis, these categories will be refined by contextual nuance from the Colombian case.

Having long been overlooked, the concept of indigenous peacebuilding is starting to see an upsurge in academic interest. Indigenous peoples' globally shared experiences of colonisation and its impacts on land ownership, self-determination and political and sociocultural inequality shape conditions that contradict basic assumptions of the dominating liberal paradigm of international peacebuilding (Hitchcock & Biesele 2000; Devere et al 2017). In indigenous societies, there normally exist elaborate and well-conserved notions of peace as well as traditions of conflict resolution. An objective is therefore to reach synergies of differentiated approaches to peacemaking, distributed across demographic diversities (Mac Ginty 2008: 143; Wanis-St. John 2013: 363). Scholars have also identified continuities in the concrete strategies of peacebuilding among indigenous peoples worldwide. Indigenous approaches are more often than not described as relationship based, focusing on healing and reconciliation and emphasising values of holism, non-violence, harmony, trust and respect (Mac Ginty 2008: 141-142; Devere et al 2017: 170-171; Synott 2017: 10).

I distinguish three areas in the literature as of particular importance to understanding the conditions, perspectives and practices pertaining to indigenous peacebuilding. These are *local ownership* and *authorship*, *governance locus*, and *sustainability*.

2.2.1. Local ownership and authorship

An important starting point for analysing the conditions for indigenous peacebuilding is to look at the conditions for agency at the general grassroots level. Local ownership of peacework runs as a buzzword in the state-of-the-art peace research at large, and is also a

central theme in the indigenous peacebuilding literature. So called “local turn” scholars have underscored the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding schemes, relying heavily on international interveners and imposed top-down models (Mac Ginty & Richmond 2013; Paffenholz 2015; Heathershaw 2008). In the liberal peace paradigm, inclusion of local actors typically extends only as far as capacitating civil societies according to liberal democratic ideals, or is treated as a technocratic strategy for legitimising the peace process (Mac Ginty 2008: 143-145). Contrarily, from a local turn viewpoint there must be substantial involvement of local knowledge in shaping and implementing peace agendas. Every post-conflict context is its own complexity requiring attention to particular diverse social, cultural and political environments.

Adopting Autesserre’s (2014) terminology, a distinction is made here between local *ownership* and local *authorship*. The former refers to local actors’ participation in implementing decided agendas and the latter concerns the role of local knowledge in the shaping of these agendas (Autesserre 2014: 102). Since the upswing of attention towards indigenous peacebuilding in academia and practice, local inclusion is understood not only as practical participation in peacemaking but also as ingraining worldviews of the grassroots in deciding the course of action (Mac Ginty 2008: 142). Indigenous societies carry local knowledge in experiences of colonisation and inequalities, and in the form of sophisticated traditional concepts of conflict, peace and social order (for ethnographic accounts from the Americas see e.g. Vidaurre Belmonte 2017; Ansloos 2017). This knowledge requires careful consideration at all levels of peacebuilding work. As such, I argue that both local ownership and local authorship are prerequisites for indigenous peacebuilding, providing legitimacy and contextually appropriate visions of a sustainable peace.

2.2.2. *Governance locus*

The second theme emerging in the literature as a key component of indigenous peacebuilding is governance locus. This component makes visible the incompatibility of the liberal scheme with scaled-down, collectivistic indigenous traditions of governance (Mac Ginty 2008: 147). In liberal international peacebuilding ideals, there is a salient belief in state institutions and centralised governance. Peacebuilding is perceived as a mission of “fixing” failed states and is thus characterised by statebuilding, i.e. restituting sovereignty, rule of law and administrative functions of central institutions. A main objective of liberal peacebuilding is establishing sovereign states and liberal democracies according to Western ideas, with

specific notions of a peace promoting civil society (Mac Ginty 2008: 143-145; Heathershaw 2008: 602-604).

In contrast, indigenous peacebuilding scholars emphasise the need for diversified communal and regional governance, in accordance with socio-political heterogeneities. A considerable strand of the literature illustrates how endeavours for self-determination at the level of community affiliation is at the core of indigenous peacebuilding (Synott 2017; Keesing 1992). As shown in Shih's ethnography from Taiwan, for instance, the pursuit of enhanced local self-governance has been essential to the assertion of influence of indigenous peoples in peacebuilding (2017: 41-50). Indigenous experiences of conflict are often associated with encounters with colonial powers and experiences of land deprivation. Resultantly, struggles against central governments for decentralisation and territorial autonomy have been vital for the endurance of many indigenous societies.

2.2.3. Sustainability

The third component of indigenous peacebuilding I extract from the literature concerns different ways of thinking about sustainability. Whereas in liberal peacebuilding ideals a guiding principle for sustaining peaceful relationships is economic interdependence, indigenous societies give priority to lasting relationships with intrinsic emotional and symbolic values (Mac Ginty 2008: 148). This extends beyond relationships between people and includes people's relationships with land, resource ecologies and the natural environments that people inhabit (Bitzker 2019; Devere et al 2017: 171). Conflict implies a breach of the mutuality that underpin ongoing human relations, and where there is conflict over land and/or natural resources sustainable relations with these livelihoods are also impaired. An important aspect of making peace is therefore to ensure equal rights and access to agricultural land and that utilisation of the land is environmentally sustainable (Mac Ginty 2008: 148). Peacebuilding must also pronounce restoration of balance and harmony through compensating and honouring the people and territory that have suffered losses. In the Andean Aymara and Quechua traditions, for instance, a central aspect of reconciliation is the "dialogue among people and parallel worlds", the parallel worlds consisting of dead ancestors, the cosmos, "Pachamama" (Mother Earth) and the entire surrounding biosphere (Vidaurre Belmonte 2017: 81). Reparation and reconciliation beyond human relations is a requisite for sustainability, and sustainability is a requisite for peace.

The dialogue among people and parallel worlds is an example of a relationship based approach to peacebuilding with a clear socio-environmental dimension of sustainability. This perspective showcases inadequacies of Western liberal peacebuilding. In the liberal peace paradigm, notions of sustainability are of little importance: at best sustainability of peace translates to the durability and stability of the restituted state sovereignty and liberal democratic institutions. An environmental notion of sustainability is missing, or even counteracted. As Mac Ginty (2008: 144) argues, “the liberal peace is (...) generically neo-liberal in its promotion of marketization, austerity programmes and the notion that the market will provide the motive force for peace and reconstruction”. Neoliberal economic models encourage the presence of multinational companies in pursuit of resources on indigenous land, or the land itself. Struggles against extractive industries and its inflictions to land sovereignty and natural environments is a recurrent experience for indigenous peoples worldwide (Synott 2017; Klemmer & McNamara 2020).

2.3. Theoretical framework summarised

In Table 1, the operationalised framework of indigenous peacebuilding is compiled. For pedagogical purposes, an account of corresponding liberal peacebuilding components is also added as comparison. It is worth reiterating that the concepts presented here are to be understood as ideal types, drawing upon broad areas of continuity which I identify in the literature. As noted earlier, given the heterogeneous experiences of indigenous peoples worldwide there cannot be one simplifying understanding of indigenous understandings of peace and conflict. As such, this framework is a tool of analysis in the subsequent reading of Colombian indigenous and elite perspectives.

The functions of the present theoretical framework are twofold. First, I aim with this approach to highlight and evaluate the conditions for indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia. The framework leaves space for findings of both facilitating and obstructing conditions for indigenous understandings of peacebuilding. This allows for drawing conclusions of both strengths and weaknesses of the territorial approach and its claims of inclusive and differentiated peacebuilding. Second, it is a contribution to the theoretical literature of indigenous peacebuilding. Acknowledging that thorough contextual nuancing is needed for its operability, I intend to refine, develop and complement the framework during the course of the study.

Table 1. Framework.	<i>Indigenous peacebuilding</i>	<i>Liberal peacebuilding</i>
<i>Local ownership and authorship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ownership of implementation. ➤ Authorship of agendas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Civil society capacity building. ➤ Inclusion as means for legitimacy.
<i>Governance locus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decentralisation. ➤ Self-governance, community affiliation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Centralisation. ➤ Reliance on state institutions.
<i>Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Socio-environmental sustainability a core feature. ➤ Relationships based on intrinsic values ➤ Restoration of harmony and balance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notions of sustainability of little importance. ➤ Peaceful relationships promoted by markets ➤ Neoliberalism.

3. Research design

3.1. Case selection

This paper is a case study of the Colombian peace process and post-agreement period, focusing on indigenous peacebuilding within the context of the territorial approach. The start of the Havana Peace Talks in 2012 marks the early limit of the time frame of the study, and with no end point of peacebuilding in sight the interval continues through 2016 and beyond. For contextual background, certain references are made to the time before the peace process. The use here of phrases such as “territorial peace”, “territorial peacebuilding” and “territorial approach” refers to the way in which this terminology has emerged and been used in the Colombian case after 2012. It is a contextually specific concept that is not to be confused with other, diametrically different, notions of “territorial peace” in the literature, such as that of Gibler (2012) referring to geopolitical conditions of interstate peace and conflict.

Colombia is home to 1,5 million indigenous people and some 30 percent of the national territory is legally classified as indigenous reserves. With its sociocultural diversity and conflict history Colombia is an excellent case of the study of indigenous peacebuilding, even more so in light of the territorial approach and its imprecise meanings. The topic of indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia could be analysed from many different approach angles. Against the background of the 2007 United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the Colombian government, normative rights-based studies are well motivated; as are historical, postcolonial and prescriptive approaches, to name a few. The present study is however chiefly descriptive, and attempts to critically identify and contrast diverging sets of ideas surrounding peace and peacebuilding. Applying and refining the theoretical framework outlined above, the aim is to highlight marginalised perspectives and broaden the common understandings of peace.

3.2. Research method

This study is structured on the methodology of idea analysis. As framed by Ludvig Beckman (2005), idea analysis seeks to analyse and critically assess political messages and their underlying meanings. The study is thus concerned with ideas, perceptions and worldviews in written form related to peace and peacebuilding; practices and outcomes are not analysed directly but are acknowledged to be influenced by expressed ideas. The method is divided by Beckman into three subcategories: the descriptive, the explanatory and the critical idea

analysis. The approach adopted here is mainly descriptive, which is not to say that the purposes are limited to reporting and referencing a material. The scientific value of descriptive idea analysis is based on inference, that is, drawing conclusions of the text that the text does not already reveal by itself (Beckman 2005: 50). The intention is thus to describe and contrast ideas in order to make independent interpretations and conclusions about the conditions for indigenous peacebuilding. Important insights from critical idea analysis are also adopted; in particular, the notion that interpretation of manifest political messages can lead to revelations of latent, underlying meanings and values (Beckman 2005: 57).

Making qualitative interpretations of large portions of text is an unavoidably subjective exercise. Whereas the subjective nature of idea analysis does not necessarily imply a weakness in the method, it poses demands of systematic expositions of the research process. Reliability in qualitative textual analysis is dependent on the plausibility of the findings, which demands transparency on the part of the researcher as to how and why these conclusions were drawn (Halperin & Heath 2020: 387).

To overcome the potential problems of subjective interpretation and transparency, idea analysis is made operative through comparison between the text and certain points of reference. In my case these points of reference are the ideal types of indigenous and liberal peacebuilding presented in the above theoretical framework. Working with ideal types as tools of analysis generally means endeavouring to identify consistencies in the idea content that pertain to broad, coherent ideologies or meaning systems (Beckman 2005: 28, 52). In my case of indigenous peacebuilding however, this ideal type is based on diverse ethnographies and does not consist of one coherent idea system. As such, the aim is rather to fill with contextual nuance and “un-idealise” the concept through applying it in the Colombian case. Rather than pure deductive hypothesis testing or inductive theory construction, I allow the concept of indigenous peacebuilding to highlight, explain and make relevant an aspect of interest in the empirical case and, in turn, the empiricism adjusts and refines this theory. In other words, I use an abductive research logic where the theoretical and empirical dimensions interact continuously and elaborate each other (Alrajeh et al 2012). With the theory highly dependent on the contextual specificities of the empirical case, the claims to generalisability of the results are low. Nevertheless, the study contributes to developing a theoretical approach transferable to other cases: a theoretical approach that is steadily enriched by its diverse empirical substance.

Qualitative text analysis approaches, such as idea analysis, also make assumptions of the capacity of language and text content to constitute reality in some way. Ideas expressed in a

peace agreement have implications for peacebuilding practice not only as a result of concrete policy provisions, but also as a result of certain dominant understandings of, for example, conflict causes, peace and justice that policy provisions are based on. An important task for the idea analyst is therefore to show how text creates meaning latently, and how this meaning is relevant for understanding practical outcomes (Halperin & Heath 2020: 388). Throughout the study, I indirectly observe implications for the practice of indigenous approaches to peacebuilding. By contrasting the different sets of views between indigenous peoples and what is provided in the Agreement and among national elites, I intend to make an account of underlying rationales that set out different courses of action.

3.3. Material

The data material of this study consists of various documents where idea content on Colombian peacebuilding and the territorial approach are prominent. One of the most important sources is the 2016 Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build A Stable and Lasting Peace (hereinafter referred to as the Final Agreement or Agreement), which contains the overall peace agenda set out by the national government and FARC and is the result of an internationally mediated peace process. In analysing ideas of national elites, the Agreement is complemented by reports and statements from the proceedings of the Havana Peace Talks, compiled by the Colombian state office of the High Commissioner for Peace. Certain challenges of representation come with this conceptualisation of national elite ideas, as the present material does not cover the views of all those who could be considered “elite” actors. With limitations of time and data access available for this study, my use of the phrase “national elites” refers to actors with dominant political influence in peacebuilding that are present in my material. Thus, I conceive as national elite actors the signatory parties to the Agreement – the state government and FARC – which also are the main actors involved in the Havana Peace Talks.

In analysing indigenous perspectives, on the other hand, I make use of documents from formal and informal side forums, initiated both by the official peace process and by civil society organisations. Side forums are the most prominent domain for regional and national indigenous organisations to articulate their visions of peace and peacebuilding. In the case of indigenous perspectives, the challenges of representation are perhaps even more precarious. Unsurprisingly, the bulk of the indigenous peacebuilding literature has its methodological basis in ethnography, as participant observation is the most suitable method for providing

thick descriptions of societies, cultures and collective worldviews. With the limitations of time and data accessibility at hand, I have responded to the challenges of making justifiable representations in two ways. First, I have collected broad assemblages of side forum data, where the regional diversity of Colombia's indigenous peoples is embraced. Second, rather than providing a definite narrative of indigenous perspectives, my method implies relating the empirical findings with broad ideal types that highlight important continuities. Continuously linking empiricism with theory, I attempt to make transparent the distinctions between direct referencing and my analytical engagement with the data.

The material was navigated and coded by means of the three components that constitute the theoretical framework (local ownership and authorship, governance locus, and sustainability). As a first step, I identified segments of the material that are of thematic relevance to these categories. In the case of the Agreement and statements from the peace process, the chapters on political participation and the Comprehensive Rural Reform were of particular interest, however the reading was not limited to these parts. In the selection of text material on indigenous perspectives, I made use of compilations of side forum reports and focused on gathering data from diverse organisations. An initial thematic coding labelled text segments with the relevant categories, and the subsequent process consisted of pairing themes together and seeking patterns and inferences. The resulting presentation of the analysis consists widely of quotations and references, with an embedded narrative of my conclusions.

4. Analysis

This chapter presents the empirical findings of this study as well as conclusions drawn in relation to the research question. The analysis is structured thematically in accordance with the three components of the indigenous peacebuilding framework. The first segment of each component examines the Colombian indigenous peacebuilding perspective, while in the second segment the analysis proceeds to the Agreement and national elite ideas. In section 4.4. a compiled summary of the results are provided.

4.1. Local ownership and authorship

4.1.1. The indigenous perspective: A matter of structural conditions

We have to make peace from below, without disregarding the dialogues and what there is in them to contribute to democracy and the construction of the country. We have to make peace from the communities, from our experience, as it implies a very strong process, a process of indigenous organisation, work of convergence and unity (Hernando Hernandez in Gutiérrez León 2015: 34-35, my translation).

The above quote is retrieved from an informal peace forum gathering various regional indigenous organisations in Colombia. Hernando Hernández, delegate of the Regional Indigenous Council of Caldas (CRIDEC), expresses demands of increased room for local agency and recounts experiences of the peace process thus far of indigenous peoples from the department of Caldas. Hernández describes the official efforts of peacebuilding in Caldas as largely resting upon structures that leave out indigenous knowledge from influencing political agendas. On the part of the government and FARC, there is a lacking commitment to peace that goes beyond the cessation of hostilities, as well as to inviting the grassroots into the process of making peace. Likewise there are experiences of widespread xenophobic attitudes against indigenous peoples, that lie behind the lack of productive gestures from national elites and that counteract productive peace collaborations across the levels. Hernández maintains that the lack of peace gestures from national elites towards the indigenous peoples of Caldas has not, however, hindered communities from creating and carrying out their own peacebuilding practices. Indigenous groups have mobilised and managed to influence local agricultural reforms and environmental conservation projects benefiting livelihoods and

equity for indigenous peoples. According to Hernández however, mobilisation is impeded by the fact that indigenous political leaders often are targets of arbitrary persecution (Gutiérrez León 2015: 33-35).

The experiences from Caldas illustrate the central concern with issues of local ownership and authorship shared by many indigenous groups in Colombia. Diametrically different conceptions of peace between the elite and local levels aggravate the conditions for indigenous participation in implementing and authoring peacebuilding agendas. Efrén Tombé, representing the Regional Indigenous Organisation of Valle del Cauca (ORIVAC), contends in the same forum that while relying on a language of inclusion of rural territories, effectively the Havana Peace Talks is “a process where two actors talk and dispute over access to and control over our land” (Gutiérrez León 2015: 33). Hence, the indigenous peoples of the Valle del Cauca department talk not so much about peace as about resistance; resistance against violent conflict that have caused damage to the natural environments and social fabric of the territories, and against the inequitable structures that persist in the post-conflict period, that preclude local knowledge from influencing peace agendas. According to Tombé, the government and FARC attempt to justify disregarding local inclusion by using a language of victimisation. Portraying indigenous peoples as passive victims of conflict makes for a hindering condition for conceiving them as active agents in peacebuilding (Gutiérrez León 2015: 33).

Conditions for local ownership and authorship are articulated as a main concern by various other indigenous organisations. Converging the interests of the National Indigenous Organisation of Colombia (ONIC) and the National Afrocolombian Peace Council (CONPA), the Ethnic Commission for Peace has emerged as an important representative of the rural and ethnicised civil society. Besides forming a delegation that participated directly in the Havana Peace Talks in 2016, the Commission has made statements demanding political participation, agency and peacebuilding from below in indigenous and afrocolombian territories (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz 2016b: 480-481). A representative of the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC) explains that indigenous peoples are not represented by the parties of the Havana Peace Process, The termination of the armed conflict and the territorial agenda for peacebuilding, the CRIC asserts, will do little to transform a deep-seated structural violence, manifesting itself in forced displacements and land deprivation (Gutiérrez León 2015: 30-31). In another side forum to the peace process, representatives of indigenous organisations discuss the problems of political participation presented by the current economic model that maintains structures of inequality and land deprivation. An objective

should instead be to “democratise” the economy, and ensure that it provides equal distribution of agricultural land in rural territories and basic services to all of the population. Only then can structural conditions for substantial local participation in political life, including peacebuilding, advance (Organización de Naciones Unidas en Colombia & Universidad Nacional de Colombia 2013a: 93-94).

This segment illustrates that issues of ownership and authorship at the grassroots level are a central feature in the Colombian case of indigenous peacebuilding. A key idea is that the conditions for local agency of peacebuilding are linked to structural factors such as distribution of political and economic influence, land access and xenophobia. The present structural conditions are perceived as largely untouched by the national elites, and constitute obstacles for inclusion of local knowledge. Referencing the indigenous experiences, little differentiation has been made here between the ownership and authorship concepts. In the following analysis of ideas in the Agreement and of national elites, this distinction will become more important.

4.1.2. National elite ideas: Local ownership a technocratic fix?

The Havana Peace Talks and Final Agreement has been internationally renowned for its efforts of inclusion. With an explicit participatory and differentiated approach, and provisions of gender, equity and economic development aspects, the Colombian territorial peace has been recognised as one of the most comprehensive peace agendas of the 21st century. Within the Agreement and the ideas of national elites, conditions that hinder inclusion of people at the margins can be observed. These conditions pertain to local ownership and authorship, where the latter is particularly impeded.

Throughout its chapter on political participation, the Final Agreement expresses the importance of civil society inclusion in peacebuilding and political life. The signatories posit that “citizen participation will become a genuine complementary force and, at the same time, a mechanism of control of the political representation and public administration system” (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016: 35). Strategies are outlined for strengthening the participation of civil society and its social movements in state politics, for example by providing access to mass media and issuing security guarantees for political exercises (ibid: 36-37). Another provision that illustrates the attention given to empowering civil society actors is the early warning system against threats to those exercising politics (ibid: 39).

These and other measures for political participation in the Agreement aim to facilitate inclusion of local actors in the implementation stage of the peace process, acknowledging the need for *local ownership* and measures that make for facilitating conditions on the matter. There are nevertheless diverging ideas of local ownership between the Agreement content and the proponents of indigenous peacebuilding in Colombia. As we have seen, indigenous peoples articulate structural issues that neglect marginalised actors from integration into the political sphere. Formulating political participation as a matter of capacitating and protecting an already existing and active civil society, on the other hand, demonstrates a technocratic notion of inclusion. Through a series of tangible measures, peaceful political activity among grassroots – pertaining to peacebuilding or political life at large – is expected to monitor and uphold the functionality of democratic state institutions. This technocratic view extends to ideas of local ownership of peacebuilding. Cautious parallels can be made here to the ideals of the liberal peace which have dominated peacebuilding since the cold war. In liberal peacebuilding, local ownership typically extends only as far as capacity building of civil society and legitimising top-level processes.

However, in the Colombian Final Agreement the topic of local ownership is not limited to the chapter on political participation: issues of empowerment and inclusion of civil society are a prominent feature throughout, in the scheme of the overarching territorial approach. There is recognition throughout the Agreement of the importance of citizen participation and bottom-up planning and implementation (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016: 81, 117, 213). Government visions of “peacebuilding from the territories” are also expressed in documents from the peace process, where High Commissioner of Peace Sergio Jaramillo declares as a key priority the proliferation of state institutions and its cooperation with local communities. Jaramillo reiterates that the peace process strives to deepen Colombian democracy and that this requires mobilising the populations of the territories around the peace project (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz 2016b: 520-522). In spite of a technocratic idea of political participation, the national elite ideas around the Agreement adopt ideas of local ownership that go further than in liberal peacebuilding ideals.

Still, the space for *local authorship* making room for traditional indigenous notions of peace and conflict resolution is largely absent. As mentioned above, the measures towards participation proposed in the Agreement target an already active civil society. Except for the general lingo of “mobilisation around peace”, there is no mention of how to create the conditions needed for participation to extend to those completely outside of the public political sphere. If conditions for local authorship are to be reached, peacebuilding must look

into the specific exposednesses of groups on the margins and the structural obstacles of their political influence, indigenous peoples being one such example. The Agreement makes no response to indigenous experiences of inequalities, xenophobia, persecutions and land deprivation, and, as such, ignores a lacking structural space for local knowledge.

4.2. Governance locus

4.2.1. Indigenous demands of territorial autonomy

The second area where I investigate the conditions for Colombian indigenous peacebuilding concerns governance locus, where important continuities can be identified among indigenous groups. Juvenal Arrieta, secretary of the National Indigenous Organisation of Colombia (ONIC), makes the case in the Regional Indigenous Peace Forum of Antioquia that, for indigenous peoples, the current situation is not understood as “post-conflict” but simply as “post-agreement”. Conflict is constant in the consciousness of indigenous peoples, the armed one being one of myriad conflicts communities around the country experience each day. Another one is the struggle for territorial autonomy against the central government. Arrieta claims that one of the government’s main post-agreement strategies is consolidating judicial control over rural territories, including ancestral indigenous territories with protected rights to self-determination, and justifying this by a rationale of economic development. In the forum, ONIC further makes the case that a key aspect of post-agreement justice entails the admittance and respect of indigenous authorities and territorial governments from the state. The threats to indigenous autonomy over their ancestral territories are understood in terms of macrostructures of socio-cultural hierarchies and marketisation (Gutiérrez León 2015: 28-29).

In other words, the government is perceived to rely on a rationale of centralisation whereas the indigenous point of view favours territorial autonomy through decentralised indigenous governance. This perspective is shared among several indigenous organisations. For instance, a representative of the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC) comments about the economic political interests of the central government in indigenous territories that, even if the armed actors there fully demobilise, conflict will persist regarding the ownership and governance of these territories (Gutiérrez León 2015: 31). And as withheld by the Mesa de Unidad Agraria in a side forum discussing the rural development agenda, territorial peace means respecting the ethnocultural diversity and sovereignty of territories. Santiago Perry, a representative of the National Workers Union Council, contends in the same forum that Colombia as a nation state has two historical debts. The first one is the debt to the rural parts

of the country which have seen insufficient attention by the central government due to an urban-favoured model of development. The second one is the debt to poor people in rural territories that expresses itself in the lack of integral strategies and long-term development policy that favours agricultural small producers. This perceived failure of creating a lasting model of rural development is linked to failures of trusting and empowering local governments (Organización de Naciones Unidas en Colombia & Universidad Nacional de Colombia 2013b: 73).

From the Colombian indigenous point of view, concerns with governance locus correspond largely with what is outlined in the theory chapter. Decentralised governance in accordance with diversities must be embraced. The government's vision of territorial peace as approachable through centralised governance over indigenous territories. is rendered inadequate. As in other instances of indigenous peacebuilding throughout history, conflicts between levels of governance persist in the post-conflict period, and territorial autonomy is an issue of justice as much as an issue of indigenous political influence.

4.2.2. Model of the Agreement: Centralisation and extended state presence

Pointing to the consequences for FARC:s reintegration in civil politics, Kent Eaton (2020) argues that the heavy reliance on centralisation in the Colombian Final Agreement comes with many risks. One consequence is that FARC:s only arena for seeking political influence was top-level national politics, where competition was high and reactionary currents generated an electoral victory for anti-peace-process candidate Ivan Duque (Eaton 2020: 10-11). As this segment will demonstrate, Eaton's observations of the centralising logics are accurate, and a heavy reliance on state institutions also have repercussions for indigenous peacebuilding.

Throughout the Final Agreement there is very limited acknowledgement of the roles of subnational governments, despite the ambitions of building peace from the territories. Instead, a first concern for national elites is to increase the outreach of state institutions in order to restore central administrative functions in rural regions (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz 2016b: 520; Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016: 14). While the need for differentiated peacebuilding in accordance with heterogeneous cultural and political traditions is stressed throughout, there is also an underlying idea that extended state presence can replace municipal and regional authorities. Recurrent notions of "responsibility" on the part of the state to carry out peacebuilding and reparation projects in rural regions underpin the

bias towards state presence (see e.g. Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016: 29). Such projects could – and should, in the indigenous peacebuilding ideas – be delegated to lower levels of governance. The potential of decentralised governance in planning and implementing peacebuilding is largely overlooked; as is the potential of local governments to provide space for political participation and authorship of peacebuilding. This becomes particularly clear in the case of indigenous peoples, whose territorial authorities have demanded increased autonomy from the initiation of the peace process and long before.

For indigenous groups, self-governance over indigenous territory is an issue of reclaiming rights as much as a pursuit of suitable differentiated politics. The model provided by the Agreement and its elite actors rely on a liberal peace-esque rationale of statebuilding and centralisation, and hinders indigenous notions of peacebuilding and governance.

4.3. Sustainability

4.3.1. Peace for the territory: Indigenous notions of peace and sustainability

Peace for the indigenous means peace for the territory; if the ancient connexions between culture and nature broken by war are not recovered, peace is merely an exogene project outside of culture. (...) If territory-nature is an ontological continuum for the indigenous being, restituting the rights of under- and above ground assets and natural elements will be the only possible way to reparation and reconciliation (Catalina Caro in Ulloa & Coronado 2016: 37, 51, my translation).

Sustainability as a component of indigenous peacebuilding is of paramount significance in the Colombian case. As the Colombian intellectual Catalina Caro asserts in the above quote, in the indigenous consciousness the term “territory” refers directly to the environmental features and resource ecologies the territory consists of. This understanding naturally leaves implications for how the idea of a “territorial peace” is interpreted. The quote also speaks to a relationship based view of peacebuilding, and the need for relationships to be nurtured and protected. As in the Andean traditions of conflict resolution where compensation to “Pachamama” is at the core (Vidaurre Belmonte 2017: 81), the role of Mother Earth is emphasised also among indigenous peoples in Colombia. In a statement in defense of territorial rights, the Ethnic Peace Commission asserts that “with Mother Earth as victim, intercultural dialogue is required to enrich the agreements and its implementation” (Oficina

del Alto Comisionado para la Paz 2016b: 481, my translation). The indigenous view echoes that Colombia's natural world and its resource richness hold inherent values and provides the basis of sustainable living for the country's sizable rural population. These values must be appreciated and upheld as an element of peacebuilding. One threat to harmony among people and nature stands out as prominent in the views of many indigenous organisations: that of large-scale extractive mining.

The mineral and energy sectors have been cornerstones of Colombia's economic development strategies in the 21st century. Coal alone made up for 12% of the country's exports in 2015, and over 80% of the extracted coal was sold on international markets (Strambo & Puertas Velasco 2017: 1). The open-market orientation of mineral and natural resource policy is a pervading target of criticism on indigenous peace forums. Various participants at the side forum on rural development reject this marketisation of the natural territory itself; open accessibility to indigenous lands for multinational companies must be regulated (Organización de Naciones Unidas en Colombia & Universidad Nacional de Colombia 2013b: 65, 89, 95). The delegates of CRIC and ORIVAC at the Regional Indigenous Peace Forum of Antioquia both speak of their communities' encounters with extractive "megaprojects" and mining corporations, aspiring to exert control over indigenous territories (Gutiérrez León 2015: 31, 33). From the indigenous perspective, these megaprojects are the results of an unsustainable view of relationships, as resting upon interdependence and short-term economic benefits rather than intrinsic values. Relying on extractive industries for economic development is not sustainable neither to relationships between people nor to those between people and the environment. The experience of CRIC is that the "megaprojects of capitalism" and its impact on social and environmental sustainability remain untouched by the government and FARC. Delegate Efrén Tombé of ORIVAC notes that for the elite actors of the peace process, the presence of multinational mining industries is a token of development, oppositely to the views of the indigenous communities of Valle del Cauca (Gutiérrez León 2015: 31, 33).

In sum, the sustainability aspect applies undoubtedly well in Colombia. As outlined in the theory chapter, healing relationships among both people and nature is a vital component of indigenous peacebuilding worldwide. An observation here is that the widespread language of "territory" in Colombia leaves openings for indigenous understandings of peacebuilding. With notions of environmental sustainability ascribed directly to the term "territory", building a "territorial peace" implies sustainable restoration among people, land, resource richness and

nature alike. However, as will become clear in the following segment, some hindering conditions can be identified in the Agreement and national elite ideas.

4.3.2. National elite ideas: Peace through neoliberalism and interdependence?

Ideas of social and environmental sustainability occur frequently in the Final Agreement and among national elites in Colombia. Typically, the term is fitted within general statements on the long-term ambitions of deepening democracy and restoring respect for social, cultural and ecological diversities. Notions of sustainability are also recurrent within the scheme of the Comprehensive Rural Reform (CRR), for instance in proposals concerning food and water security in rural regions (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016).

While articulated as necessary, many details of the sustainability aspects of the CRR remain vague. Two observations can be distinguished here. First, environmental sustainability is presented as one abstract criterion, among others such as “territorial planning” and “land suitability”, for the development programs (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP: 14). Specifics of what these criteria entail as well as policy measures for its implementation are missing; rendering the idea of environmental sustainability an obstacle for, rather than an objective of, the Agreement. This stands in contrast with the indigenous view that harmonious coexistence with the natural world is a prerequisite for peace and should therefore be at the core of peacebuilding. Second, unlike the case in the indigenous consciousness, in the Agreement there is no direct connotation in the term “territory” of natural environments, resource ecologies and land itself. In national elite ideas, the “territorial” in territorial peace is mainly a mode of demographic and political categorisation.

Perhaps most conspicuous when comparing the perspectives is the absence of references made in the Agreement to extractive industries in relation to sustainability. What indigenous organisations underscore as the most salient obstacle to sustainability, namely unregulated access to land and resources for multinational corporations, is at best ignored and at worst implicitly promoted in the Agreement. While mentions of the topic of extractive mining and land use are missing, it is formulated that “Comprehensive rural development will move forward in the context of globalisation and the insertion policies therein on the part of the state”, referring to the state’s measures to insert Colombia into international markets (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP 2016: 12). Furthermore, the signatories agree upon the “provision of conditions and incentives to promote production and marketing (...) with the aim that, in the rural, family-run and community-based economy, the negative impacts of

economic globalisation and the freeing-up of trade can be avoided or minimised” (ibid: 33). International extractive projects have also been documented as a part of the government’s strategies to enhance local participation (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz 2016a: 291)

The economic orientation of the CRR and the overall agenda of the Agreement is globalised and marketised, a premise not challenged despite being acknowledged as potentially problematic. The approach is welcoming of the “megaprojects” that indigenous organisations express as the core obstacle to socio-environmental sustainability. From the indigenous peacebuilding point of view, this neoliberal model poses threats to natural environments and indigenous territorial autonomy. Moreover, it emphasises interdependence and economic incentives as a foundation for peaceful relationships, whereas for indigenous peacebuilding relationships ought to be based on lasting and intrinsic emotional values. As such, the inherent value of the natural territory needs to be reiterated, and pursuing sustainability needs to become a main peacebuilding goal in its own right. As put to words by a participant at the side forum on rural development, “the land cannot be turned to a commodity for the best bidder” (Organización de Naciones Unidas en Colombia & Universidad Nacional de Colombia 2013b: 66).

4.4. Summary of findings

This section provides a summary of key findings of contrasting ideas between Colombia’s indigenous peoples and national elites. First, the Colombian indigenous peacebuilding view stresses the need for far-reaching local ownership and authorship. This calls for thorough consideration and counterbalancing of structural conditions that impede the opportunities of indigenous peoples for political participation and agency. At the same time, the national elite ideas of local ownership are largely technocratic, focusing predominantly on safeguarding and capacitating already existent civil society movements. Whereas certain outlooks for local inclusion in peacebuilding practice can be identified, recognition of the structural conditions that impede local authorship is missing.

Second, in indigenous views the locus of governance should be decentralised accordingly with Colombia’s disparate cultural and political traditions. Indigenous territorial autonomy is emphasised as a core issue of Colombian indigenous peacebuilding. Opposedly, the ideas manifested in the Agreement reveal a heavy reliance on centralisation. Expanded state

presence in conflict affected and neglected rural territories is a fundamental strategy for implementing the peace agenda.

Third and finally, in the consciousness of many of Colombia’s indigenous peoples the term “territory” has an inseparable environmental dimension. Building “territorial peace” thus implies, quite literally, building peace for the territory: restoring intrinsically valuable and harmonious relationships among people but also between people and natural environments. One hindering condition for this socio-environmental sustainability in Colombian indigenous peacebuilding is the marketised economy, which favours large-scale extractive industries on indigenous territory. The neoliberal model, promoted by the Agreement and national elites, deems economic incentives a foundation for peaceful relationships. Whereas notions of sustainability are recurrent in the Agreement, this view of relationships is, from the indigenous perspective, profoundly unsustainable.

Table 2. Table of findings.	<i>Colombian indigenous peacebuilding</i>	<i>Agreement and national elites</i>
<i>Local ownership and authorship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local ownership and authorship require consideration of structural conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Technocratic view of local ownership ➤ No consideration of structural conditions for local authorship
<i>Governance locus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decentralisation along with diversities ➤ Indigenous territorial autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Heavy reliance on central government ➤ Extended state presence in rural areas
<i>Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental meaning of “territory” ➤ Restoration of people-nature relationships ➤ Opposes large-scale extractive industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustainability aspect as obstacle for peace ➤ Economic incentives as foundation for peaceful relationships ➤ Neoliberal model favouring extraction

5. Conclusion

The Colombian territorial agenda for peace has been a target of praise, criticism and – most importantly – questions. Transcending a history of over 50 years of conflict is a precarious task, requiring approaches that go further than addressing direct violence. With the heterogeneous Colombian countryside being structurally neglected by poverty and political exclusion, the differentiated and inclusive character of the territorial approach seems advantageous for the prospects of a sustainable peace. However, the actual implications of a territorial peace are uncertain. As showcased in this paper, dominant ideas of national elites represented in the Final Agreement reverberate poorly with the views of Colombia's indigenous peoples.

Through an analysis of contrasting ideas, the present study has examined the conditions for indigenous peacebuilding. This has been done by means of a framework consisting of the three aspects local ownership and authorship, governance locus, and sustainability. As a general answer to the research question, the findings indicate that indigenous peacebuilding confronts many aggravating predicaments. In the case of the first aspect, the technocratic view of inclusion of national elites hinders local ownership from reaching further than active political movements, and obstructs indigenous knowledge from exerting authorship over peacebuilding. As for the aspect of governance locus, centralisation and statebuilding biases in the Agreement according to liberal ideals aggravate indigenous pursuits of territorial autonomy. With reference to sustainability, priorities of indigenous peoples to conserve environments and resource ecologies are impeded by neoliberal governance and the national elite notion that open markets and interdependence are capable of sustaining peaceful relationships. Resulting from a critical assessment of underlying conceptions and ideas, these findings illustrate apparent shortcomings of the claims to inclusiveness and differentiation of the peace agenda.

The above impediments aside, some facilitating conditions of indigenous peacebuilding can be cautiously distinguished in the Colombian case. The territorial approach, despite its imprecisions, has articulated the need to relate peacebuilding with dimensions of ethnicity, culture, gender, environment and geographic and socioeconomic inequalities. This has prompted national elite actors of the peace process, in some instances, to look further than the practical toolbox of the international liberal paradigm: for instance by more deliberate efforts of inclusion and by explicitly noting the sustainability dimension. Moreover, the conversation

in Colombia of the role of territory has in and of itself left an opening for indigenous notions of peace and peacebuilding to be articulated. As has become clear in this study, a Colombian concept of indigenous peacebuilding is largely formulated around the language of “territory”; more specifically around the connotations of the relationship between people and nature therein, and around a criticism of mainstream meanings of “territory”. Space has been provided for a broadened understanding of peace: the idea that peaceful relationships with territory – its social and environmental dimensions – is a prerequisite for peaceful relationships among people. As such, the terminology of “territory”, as understood by Colombian indigenous peoples, makes for an important contribution to the theoretical concept of indigenous peacebuilding.

Nonetheless, indigenous peacebuilding remains a marginalised and underrepresented perspective. If the equal influence and rights of indigenous peoples worldwide are to be achieved in the near future, their exposednesses and culturally specific knowledge needs to be taken seriously. Scholarship and society at large must keep exposing the structures that keep indigenous peoples on the peripheries of social, political and economic influence. Correspondingly, the world must be persistent in promoting the potential there is to be found in local, traditional viewpoints on peace.

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