

Agree to Disagree?

A qualitative content analysis of implementing agonistic
provisions on political participation in Colombia



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Abstract

The following essay aims to investigate how provisions on political participation in the Final Accord have been implemented in Colombia, and what the challenges for implementing such agonistic principles are. Colombia classifies as an extreme case in the sense that the peace accord is regarded as highly agonistic, and provisions on political participation are selected based on connections to agonism both in general and in terms of the specific case. To answer the line of question, a qualitative content analysis has been conducted, predominantly building on comprehensive reports on the implementation process from the KROC institute. Based on the results, it can be stated that the case of Colombia presents various initiatives through which agonistic provisions on political participation can be implemented. For instance, Colombia has provided concrete suggestions in terms of improving representation, both by modifying existing governing bodies as well as creating new institutions. Furthermore, broader implications regarding challenges to agonistic implementation surfaced when investigating the case of Colombia, the most prominent being limited timeframes, substantiality and fragility.

Key words: agonism, agonistic peace theory, implementation, Colombia

Wordcount: 9764

Contents

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Background.....	5
3 Theory.....	8
3.1 Literature review.....	8
3.1.1 Implementation of peace agreements.....	8
3.1.2 Agonism.....	9
3.2 Agonistic peace theory.....	10
3.3 Operationalisation.....	11
3.3.1 Spaces.....	12
3.3.2 Inclusion.....	13
3.3.3 Framing.....	13
4 Research design.....	15
4.1 Method.....	15
4.2 Case selection and limitations.....	16
4.3 Material.....	18
5 Analysis.....	20
5.1 Political Participation.....	20
5.1.1 Spaces.....	22
5.1.2 Inclusion.....	23
5.1.3 Framing.....	24
5.2 Summary.....	26
6 Discussion.....	28
7 Conclusion.....	32
References.....	33

1 Introduction

Consensus, mutual understanding and transcending incompatibilities are guiding principles which traditionally have dominated both practice and literature on conflict resolution and peace processes (Aggestam et al. 2015:1736; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022:1239; Strömbom et al. 2022:689). By placing dissensus, contestation and pluralism at the centre, agonistic peace – both as a theory and as a normative perspective – opposes the longstanding, hegemonic liberal logic, providing an alternative view on what peace is and how to achieve it (ibid). In recent years, critical peacebuilding scholars have taken a vast interest in agonism, resulting in an increase in agonistic peace studies (Aggestam et al. 2015; Kaldor 2019; Millar & Nagle 2021; Mutimer & McRobie 2020; Richmond 2017; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Strömbom et al. 2022).

Despite the recent boost, studies have devoted little attention to agonistic principles in real-life settings (Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Strömbom et al. 2022). Thus, implications regarding agonistic ideals on structuring policy, polity and institutions have long been missing from contemporary research (ibid; Fossen 2012; Howarth 2008; Kriesberg 2015; Westphal 2019). Regardless of recent contributions to filling gaps on policy implications, questions remain regarding how agonistic ideals and principles are to be implemented in practice (Joshi & Quinn 2015:870; Lyons 2016; Rettberg & Dupont 2023:206-207; Stedman et al. 2002:1; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Strömbom et al. 2022:1246). In light of this research gap, this study intends to answer the following question: *How have provisions on political participation in the Final Accord been implemented in Colombia, and what are the challenges for implementing such agonistic principles?*

Followingly, the purpose of this study is predominantly to contribute to the research field by addressing the absence of studies on implementing agonistic principles, while also filling the institutional deficit in terms of agonistic policy implications on an institutional level. Simultaneously, the study aims to further elaborate on the theoretical framework created by Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022), widening the scope of what can be analysed through the theoretical tool. Furthermore, the study remains open to capture potential “ideational obstacles” arising when attempting to implement agonistic ideas, since crucial knowledge for future peacebuilding can be extracted from the intersection between theory and practice (Strömbom & Bramsen 2022:1246).

To answer the research question, a qualitative content analysis will be conducted based on reports on the implementation of the Colombian Peace Agreement, which classifies as an extreme case in the sense that the peace accord is regarded as highly agonistic (Strömbom et al. 2022; Walsh & Murphy 2021). To further delimit the study, agonistic provisions on ‘Political Participation’ – one of the substantive points of the Final Accord – will be singled out. The selection is based on three premises: 1) the general connection between agonism and political participation, in accordance with agonistic theory; 2) the close linkage between agonistic principles and political participation in the Colombian peace agreement (Strömbom et al. 2022); and 3) the interconnection between political participation and other substantive points with agonistic characteristics in the Final Accord.

The implementation operates within and depends on the complex political context in Colombia (González Martín et al. 2022; García Pinzón 2020; Noref 2019). Thus, the following thesis will begin by presenting the background and current political setting in Colombia. Thereafter, the theoretical field and an overview of previous research will be accounted for, followed by a discussion of methodological choices, sources and limitations. Then, the implementation of agonistic elements are to be analysed in accordance with the operationalisation of agonistic peace theory. The analysis will be followed by a discussion about what conclusions can be drawn from the results, and what further questions the study opens up to.

Based on the results, it can be concluded that the case of implementation of provisions on political participation in Colombia promotes agonism through several initiatives. For instance, Colombia has provided concrete suggestions in terms of improving representation, both by modifying existing governing bodies as well as creating new institutions. Overall, several initiatives have aimed to emphasise and promote pluralism through relational inclusion and agonistic dialogue. Furthermore, the case of Colombia elucidated broader implications on challenges to agonistic implementation, the most prominent being limited timeframes, substantiality and fragility.

2 Background

The asymmetrical internal armed conflict between the Colombian government, left-wing guerillas and right-wing paramilitary groups dates all the way back to the 1960's, making it the oldest of today's civil wars (UCDP 2023a; González Martín et. al. 2022:1274). After a long period of political violence referred to as La Violencia (1948-1959), unequal land distribution, opposition towards the conservative rule and exclusion from power sharing arrangements resulted in the formation of various left-wing guerilla groups (Ríos 2017; UCDP 2023b). The two most comprehensive and long lasting movements have been FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, National Liberation Army). In response, right-wing paramilitary groups such as the AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia) emerged for protection against the guerillas (UCDP 2023a; Stanford 2019).

One-sided violence and human rights violations have been committed by all of the warring parties, including the Colombian government (UCDP 2023b). The expansion of the various armed groups were also further driven by the drug economy (ibid). Between 1958 and 2012 – when the first peace negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC were initiated – the official number of casualties surpassed 200 000 deaths, 27 000 kidnapped, 13 000 victims of sexual violence and more than six million victims of forced displacement (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica 2020a). After years of failed attempts at peace negotiations, FARC and the Colombian government – then led by the president Juan Manuel Santos – signed the ‘Final Agreement to End Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace’ in August of 2016 (UCDP 2023b).

However, the congress called for a referendum on the agreement, which resulted in a small majority voting against the peace accord (ibid). Thereafter the agreement was revised in coalition with the opposition led by former president Alvaro Uribe, resulting in the Final Accord being finalised and signed first on November 24th, 2016 (UCDP 2023b). The agreement included regulations regarding ending the violence and the drug trade, transitional justice, rural development reforms as well as the transition of FARC into a political party with limited, guaranteed seats in the Congress (Final Agreement, 2016). In addition to the Colombian state and national initiatives such as CSIVI – the Monitoring, Promotion and Verification Commission for the Implementation of the Final Agreement – international

actors such as the UN and KROC are overseeing the implementation (Final Agreement, 2016; UDCP 2023b; LaReau 2016). The UN are working through the mandate of the UN verification mission in Colombia, while the KROC institute in accordance with point 6.3.2 in the Final Accord are responsible for monitoring the implementation through the Peace Accords Matrix Barometer, in virtue of their status as an outside, independent party (ibid).

Following the signing of the Final Accord there was an initial overall decline in conflict related violence (Human Rights Watch 2019; UCDP 2023b). Nevertheless, dissident groups of FARC fighters who disagreed with the peace agreement have formed a new, violent faction, resulting in continued state based violence (UCDP 2023b). Moreover, ELN expressed interests in peace negotiations which were initiated in 2017 (UCDP 2023b). However, the discussions broke down in 2018 after the presidential election, during which Iván Duque Márquez came to power (ibid).

Duque held the same critical line of opinion against the peace agreement as his mentor Uribe, i.e. he expressed a hard-line stance against the guerillas (Curtis & Walker 2022:4; Klobucista & Renwick 2017). For instance by advocating for removing the rights to seats in Congress as well as toughening the punishments for crimes committed by the rebels (ibid). Despite Duque's attempts, his government was in minority and several of his promised reforms were rejected by the Colombian Congress (Curtis & Walker 2022:4). Furthermore, FARC achieved less than 1% of the votes during the 2018 election, thus not gaining any additional seats to the 10 – i.e. 5 each legislature – that they are guaranteed until 2026 through the Final Accord (BBC 2018; Curtis & Walker 2022:4; IPU 2023; Parkin Daniels 2018). The poor results have been said to demonstrate a weak public support for FARC, mirroring the people's resentment for the former guerilla group (ICG 2021b:18-19).

Between 2019 and 2021 social discontent manifested in the form of several mass demonstrations (Amnesty International 2022; BBC 2021; Curtis & Walker 2022:7; García Pinzón 2020; ICG 2021a; New York Times 2021; Parkin Daniels 2019). The initial spark in 2019 involved tax initiatives and pension reforms, although it quickly extended to regard an accumulation of reasons such as dissatisfaction with Duque's government, lacking implementation of the Final Accord and long standing social, political and economic inequalities (ibid).

In the 2022 elections, Gustavo Petro – a former guerilla member – was elected, becoming the first Colombian president stemming from the political left (Curtis & Walker 2022:7; Parkin Daniels & Bolaños 2022). FARC, which in 2021 renamed their political party to Comunes, won 5 additional seats (IPU 2023). Before the election Petro declined a coalition with the Comunes, but was open to accepting their help and support as long as it was conducted outside their party association (ICG 2021b:19). Since Petro came into office he has launched the so-called Total Peace plan, which aims to implement the commitments made in the Final Accord as well as signing new peace agreements with as many guerillas as possible (Janetsky 2022; McColl 2022). Petro also reinstated CSIVI, which had been mostly inactive during Duque (Ministerio de Interior 2022; UN 2023). So far the negotiations with the ELN have resumed, although the Total Peace plan has been disputed and questioned for being too ambitious (ibid).

3 Theory

The following episode begins with a literature review, introducing previous research regarding implementation and agonism. The section on implementation builds on both previous research and practical accounts, maintaining a primary focus on the importance of implementation and the case of implementation in Colombia. The section on agonism accounts for its origin and development, followed by an overview of previous research on agonism in the case of Colombia to further underline this study's contribution to the field. Thereafter, agonistic peace theory and its core assumptions will be accounted for. Lastly, the operationalisation building on the theoretical framework developed by Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022) will be presented and slightly modified to fit the purpose of analysing implementation of agonistic elements.

3.1 Literature review

3.1.1 Implementation of peace agreements

Implementation of peace agreements is an area within peace and conflict studies which have received relatively limited focus, repeatedly described by researchers as a sub-field that has been more practised than studied (Joshi et al. 2015:551; Joshi & Quinn 2015:870; Lyons 2016; Rettberg & Dupont 2023:206-207; Stedman et al. 2002:1). This could to some extent be attributed to the difficulty of determining what successful implementation looks like, as well as how to measure it (Joshi et al. 2015:551; Rettberg & Dupont 2023:206-207). Moving on, implementation can be described as both a process and an outcome, since it entails everything from peacebuilding in general terms to normalising political relations, solving commitment issues, and in best case addressing root causes of civil conflict (Joshi & Quinn 2015:869). Furthermore, implementation is conceived to be composed of multiple stages, layers and dimensions which are mutually constitutive of one another (Rettberg & Dupont 2023:205). To elaborate, stages refer to long- and short term commitments whereas layers concern everything from international to local levels (ibid). Lastly, 'dimensions' include for instance economy, culture, politics and justice (ibid).

There are several reasons why conducting research and generating theory about implementation of peace agreements is important as well as necessary. Joshi and Quinn (2015) found that the extent of which an agreement has been implemented has significant

effects on conflict relapse, which applies not only to the signatory parties but also to outside factions, who more often than not are strongly influenced by the level of implementation. Moreover, Stedman et al. (2001) confirms that adequate strategies for implementing peace accords are of utmost importance to counter threats such as spoilers. Additionally, implementation is also of great importance for future agreements (ICG 2021b). For example, successful implementation demonstrates a higher level of commitment, which establishes trust both in specific actors as well as peace processes in general (ibid). Furthermore, Jones (2001), Lederach (2005) and Lyons (2018) all emphasise that peace agreements per se do not generate peace unless the provisions and commitments are successfully implemented.

In regards to the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement in Colombia, various research has been conducted. Flores and Vargas (2018), Rico and Barreto (2022) and Tellez (2019) have all studied key challenges with implementing the agreement in the context of Colombia, focusing on security concerns, access to justice, political will, polarisation and participation. Karreth et al. (2023) and Morales and Gebre (2021) also discuss challenges to the implementation. The former studies the implementation from an international context by investigating the involvement of third parties, while the latter discusses implementation on grassroot level by looking into peace education from the perspective of local teachers. Another addition to the research on implementation is made by Buchely (2020) who looks at the implementation of the Victims and Land Restitution Law, which is a provision of the Final Accord.

3.1.2 Agonism

Agonistic peace theory is associated with the emergence of a comprehensive critical research agenda during the 1990's (Richmond 2011; Mac Ginty 2012). The theory originates from Chantal Mouffe's notion of radical democracy, which emphasises how hegemony is challenged by counter discourses, generating progression necessary to social life (Mouffe 2005, 2013; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022). Later on, agonistic theory was introduced to the field of peace and conflict-studies through Shinko (2008), who argued for the need to transform antagonistic relations into agonistic, where opponents regard one another as respectable adversaries. Since then, diversifying research has been conducted on specific conflicts such as Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland (Aggestam et al. 2015; Bramsen

2021), agonistic dialogue (Maddison 2016) and interactions (Bramsen 2021) as well as agonism in peace agreements (Strömbom et al. 2022).

In regards to previous research on agonism in relation to the Colombian peace process, González Martin et al. (2022) studied the research program LPOA (La paz es una obra de arte) where former antagonists meet, share and engage in each other's narratives. The authors concluded LPOA to be helpful in understanding the depth of agonistic peacebuilding. Furthermore, Walsh and Murphy (2021) investigated how agonism can be built into transitional justice mechanisms. They also found the Final Accord to be highly agonistic. On that note, Strömbom et al. (2022) studied agonism in three peace agreements, Colombia being the case with the clearest and strongest agonistic connections. The authors concluded and emphasised the difficulty with implementing peace agreements and encouraged further research on the matter in relation to agonism.

3.2 Agonistic peace theory

“When conflict is not given the possibility of having legitimate channels of expression, it takes the form of violent antagonism.”

(Mouffe 2005:21)

Agonistic peace theory builds on the assumption that conventional, consensus-seeking principles at best reinforces status quo, and in worst case scenarios further fuel violent conflict by suppressing legitimate grievances (Aggestam et al. 2015; Nagle 2014, Ramsbotham 2010; Shinko 2008; Strömbom 2020; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Strömbom et al. 2022). In other words, agonistic theory critically approaches and opposes traditional presumptions of peace as the absence of conflict, which is achieved through seeking mutual understanding and finding common ground amongst the warring parties (ibid). Contrasting, agonistic theory defines peace as nonviolent continuation of conflict, which is promoted through plurality and the creation of spaces for dissensus and contestation (Strömbom et al. 2022). This view testifies to an ontological and epistemological understanding of conflicts as non-linear and cyclical processes which can be both destructive and constructive, as well as crucial for societal progression (Lederach 1997:8 in Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Mouffe

2005, 2013; Shinko 2008). Followingly, agonistic peace relates to the emerging, normative debate regarding what peace is, and what it should be (Strömbom & Bramsen 2022).

Consequently, peace accords – and thus implementation of such agreements, as well as policy implications in general – should not intend to end conflict in itself (Strömbom et al. 2022). Rather, in alignment with agonistic theory, the aim should be the enabling of transformation from antagonistic, violent relations into respectful acknowledgements of the opposing ‘other’ as legitimate adversaries (Lederach 2005; Mouffe 2005, 2013; Rumelili & Çelik 2017; Shinko 2008:478; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022; Strömbom et al. 2022:690; Wæver and Bramsen 2019). To elaborate, legitimate adversaries means a fundamental respect for the ‘other’s’ need for and right to contestation, i.e. ascribing opponents an undisputed right to present and defend one's own views and ideas (Mouffe 2005:5; Shinko 2008:478; Strömbom & Bramsen 2022).

On the one hand, this makes agonistic peace less ambitious than traditional notions of peace, since it disregards perfection by welcoming dissensus and contestation (Strömbom & Bramsen 2022). On the other hand, agonistic peace makes higher demands in terms of the high requirements of maintaining constant and deep-seated respect towards one's opponent (ibid). Thus, agonism can be understood as an “ontologically shared commitment between former antagonists on societal as well as political level” (Strömbom et al. 2022:692).

To further elaborate, even though parties within an agonistic peace does not necessarily coexist in harmony, they are still in agreement regarding their shared symbolic sphere within which the conflict is taking place (Mouffe 2013:12; Ramsbotham 2010:53; Wæver and Bramsen 2019). This shared symbolic space consists of regulations through institutions, platforms and procedures which are accepted by the conflicting parties (Mouffe 2005; Wæver and Bramsen 2019; Strömbom et al. 2022). To concretise, a peace agreement or transitional justice mechanism are both examples of such regulating institutions (ibid).

3.3 Operationalisation

To systematically apply agonistic peace theory and analyse the implementation from an agonistic perspective, a theoretical framework developed by Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022) will be used. Since the framework was originally developed to analyse agonism within

peace agreements, some alterations will be made to adapt the framework to analysing implementation. Strömbom et al. (2022) built the framework around three indicators, namely: (1) spaces for interaction; (2) stipulated forms of inclusion; and (3) agonistic framing, which regards conflict termination in terms of consensus or dissensus. Below follows a more thorough presentation of the three. The first two categories will remain unaltered, while the third will be restructured to fit the new material. The three elements are independent and interconnected, meaning that the elements are closely connected but not dependent on each other.

3.3.1 Spaces

Agonistic spaces focus on how and in what way spaces for agonistic relations and interactions are provided. To elaborate, if spaces for interaction are provided and protected, hegemony can continuously be challenged and subjected to contestation and dissent, which according to Mouffe (2005) is vital for societal progression. The spaces in question refer to institutions – either created or restructured – as well as space for resistance. To concretise, institutions refer to several bodies and forums on all levels – i.e. track 1 (elite), 2 (civil society) and 3 (grassroots) – which can bring input to the peace process. Space for resistance refers to bottom-up, agonistic public spaces such as peaceful protests and activism, where dissident voices interact with the elite political level. Bearing context-specific circumstances in mind, neither spaces for resistance nor institutions are assumed to be designed or function in the same way. The point of agonistic spaces is not to give instructions on how spaces should be constructed, but rather to ask questions about how different spaces can increase the agonistic character of policy and politics.

As mentioned, spaces do not only address questions regarding *what* platforms, but also *how* interaction in these spaces are envisioned. To elaborate, it is not sufficient to solely enable space for former antagonists to discuss, but the dialogue itself needs to be invested in agonistic features. In accordance with Maddison (2016), this means that the interaction should be intense, continuous, relational. To concretise, the interactions should occur frequently, be sustained over time as well as promote the engagement of exchange between all parties regardless of whether they agree with the content or direction of the interaction or not. Agonistic dialogue can thus be characterised as “open-ended and unfinished” (Strömbom

et al. 2022:694). Following the *what's* and *how's* of agonistic spaces, it can be concluded that space is “a multiplicity of discursive areas” where contestation can be practised (ibid).

3.3.2 Inclusion

Inclusion builds on the core agonistic principle of pluralism, and regards whom to include and how inclusion should be carried out. While agonistic spaces are mainly material, agonistic inclusion is also ideational in terms of considering matters of conceptions. Furthermore, inclusion is – based on research conducted by Hirblinger and Landau (2020) – divided into three categories: (1) open inclusion; (2) closed inclusion; and (3) relational inclusion. Examples of open inclusion are ‘conflict parties’ or ‘local actors’, which are ambiguous and universalistic references to groups with no collective identification or self-evident members. On the one hand, open framings could be argued to promote agonism since no collective is excluded. On the other hand, by avoiding the task of specifying groups one also fails to safeguard the right and possibility for all interest groups to participate. In other words, open inclusion risks being too vague in identifying and including vital groups, which is necessary to protect “ideational pluralism” (Strömbom et al. 2022:696).

Furthermore, closed principles of inclusion identifies groups in accordance with categories such as gender, religion or ethnicity, often related to protection of the rights of said group. However, such formulations risk excluding varying interests within groups, as well as the fact that closely identified groups can share traits and identities with other groups. When disregarding intersectionality and the inconstant and interchangeable nature of identities, they risk being essentialised. Thus, by solidifying identities, the transformative potential of agonism is endangered. Lastly, a relational understanding of inclusion takes power dynamics into consideration, framing collectives in terms of their relation to others and with regards to for instance socio-political context. Formulations such as ‘marginalised groups’ emphasise the fluctuating character of identities, and that interests cannot be attributed to one fixed group. Conclusively, relational inclusion is most in alignment with agonism out of the three.

3.3.3 Framing

When used by Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022) to analyse peace agreements, the indicator regarding framing focuses on wording, and how conflict issues are described in peace agreements. For example, formulations such as “ending conflict” can imply

termination rather than continuation of the conflict post-accord. The indicator was also used to analyse whether a unitary perspective on history and root causes was presented, or if several differing views were allowed. Evidently, the indicator is specifically designed for peace agreements, and risks not providing as vital and accurate information about implementation.

However, the underlying, agonistic assumption which framing builds on can still provide relevant insights on agonistic elements in implementation (Maddison 2016; Strömbom et al. 2022; Shinko 2008). It is thus still relevant to ask questions about the intentions and motives behind the framings. For instance, what is the goal with the initiative or institution? Is it to terminate conflict by reaching consensus, or to allow for continued contestation and differing voices and perspectives on societal and conflict matters? Rather than analysing the wordings themselves, framing will be used as an indicator to analyse if the implementation initiatives intend to leave room for dissensus and pluralist views, or seeks to end the conflict and reach unification in opinions and perspectives.

4 Research design

4.1 Method

To answer the line of question, a single-N case study has been conducted to analyse the implementation of the Colombian peace agreement, which due to its high levels of agonism is regarded as an extreme case (Walsh & Murphy 2021; Strömbom et. al. 2022). Agonistic peace theory has been operationalised in accordance with the theoretical framework developed by Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022). In short, three indicators of agonism – spaces, inclusion and framing – will be applied to structurally analyse documents reviewing the development of the implementation of provisions on political participation. Thus, a qualitative content analysis has been conducted, through which data regarding the case has been collected, interpreted, and analysed (Esaiasson et al. 2017; Lindvall 2007).

Conducting a qualitative content analysis has allowed for potential underlying motives, purposes and meanings to surface, which has been essential for uncovering agonistic elements and tendencies (Weber 1990:72-76 in Halperin & Heath 2017:376). Furthermore, using a single-N case study method has entailed a beneficial contribution to the study in terms of allowing for the retention of an analytical openness (Esaiasson et al. 2017; Lindvall 2007). In other words, instead of having to determine which factors to investigate beforehand, the method has allowed for a continuous flexible attitude towards the data. For example, the initial ambition was to analyse more areas of implementation than political participation. However, when processing the material it appeared that political participation intertwined with other agonistic parts of the agreement. By being able to alter the focus and narrowing the analysis to political participation, the analysis became more profound simultaneously as being able to include provisions connected to other parts of the agreement.

Another common disadvantage regarding qualitative content analysis and smaller case studies is the difficulty to provide generalizability (ibid; Bergström & Boreus 2012:42-44; Halperin & Heath 2017:197, 235, 237). However, the ambition of this study is not to produce generalizable answers, but rather to investigate possible broader implications as well as generate ideas on what potentially could be connections on a larger scale. To successfully generate suggestions on larger connections, a high level of internal validity has been maintained throughout the study (ibid). For this purpose, the choice of an extreme case has

been very useful since it has the possibility of containing more easily accessible and detectable elements (Bergström & Boreus 2012:42-44; Esaiasson et al. 2017; Halperin & Heath 2017:197, 235, 237; Lindvall 2007). Furthermore, agonistic peace theory has also contributed to the level of internal validity in the capacity of being a middle-range theory (Halperin & Heath 2017:131, 237; Höglund & Öberg 2011:119). To elaborate, in contrast to grand theories, agonistic peace theory is more contextualised and less abstract, which have generated a greater empirical connection as well as increased the explanatory value in terms of the specific case being studied (ibid).

Moving on, using a case study method also entails certain risks regarding reliability, in terms of that potential mistakes and measurement errors could affect the entire study (ibid). To prevent this from disrupting the study and its results, great caution has been taken when collecting data and processing literature. Moreover, conducting a literature study and analysing textual information broadens the scope of what can be studied (Halperin & Heath 2017:374). Another benefit regards the time aspect, since a few years have passed since the signing of the agreement in 2016, providing time during which attempts to implement the accord have taken place. For instance, past policy positions can be studied as they were during the time they were written (ibid:385-388). Although, this also opens up for me as the researcher to influence the data through subjective interpretation when analysing the material (ibid; Bergström & Boreus 2012:42-44,85). To maintain a high level of reliability, reflexivity and transparency have been sustained throughout the entire research process (ibid).

4.2 Case selection and limitations

As mentioned, the case of the Colombian peace agreement and thus its implementation is regarded as an extreme case due to its high levels of agonism (Walsh & Murphy 2021; Strömbom et. al. 2022). To elaborate, extreme case sampling means selecting a case which stands out from the universe of cases (Seawright & Gerring 2008). Extreme cases are argued to be useful in terms of providing significant insight to particular phenomena, generating lessons which can guide both future research and practice (ibid). Furthermore, the accord consists of several agreements which were negotiated separately, and then merged into the Final Accord (Final Peace Agreement 2016). When Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022) analysed the accord, they found certain agreements and provisions to be particularly

agonistic. For instance the part on political participation, which as a concept can be loosely defined as a broad range of activities through which people can express, take part in and affect politics (van Deeth 2014). Not only is political participation closely connected to agonistic elements in the Colombian case, but also to agonistic theory in general since questions and implications regarding agonism largely relate to the nature and extent of political participation (Mouffe 2005, 2013; Shinko 2008). Additionally – as mentioned above in connection to flexibility towards the material – several agonistic parts of the Colombian agreement overlap with political participation. For instance ‘End of Conflict’ and ‘Implementation, Verification and Public Endorsement’ both share provisions with the part on ‘Political Participation’.

As mentioned in section 3.1.1, implementation is both an outcome and a process which is highly complex. Limiting the material to reports regarding provisions on an institutional level is, on the one hand, necessary in regards to the scope of the study, in terms of for instance time and accessibility. On the other hand, the selected material is therefore not enough to encompass everything that could be defined as implementation. However, a study which attempts to capture all dimensions and perspectives might not be possible, if even desirable. Since delimiting the study is a necessity, it is important to maintain reflexivity by keeping in mind that some levels and dimensions will be overlooked (Bergström & Boreus 2012:42-44,85; Halperin and Heath 2017:385-388).

Moreover, this study aims to contribute to filling the ‘institutional deficit’ gap. Hence, delimiting the material to implementation on an institutional, national level is in alignment with the line of questioning as well as the overarching goal of the study. Even though implementation is more than just one mission and one actor, KROC and the UN verification mission has produced several reports, presenting an outlook from an institutional perspective which aligns with the purpose of the study. Another option would be to look at national policy documents, although language is a factor which has affected accessibility on that front (Höglund & Öberg 2011:192). In other words, despite not providing a complete picture, the studied material offers a window into the implementation of agonistic ideals which is relevant to the research field.

4.3 Material

Below follows a critical revision of the sources which have laid the foundation for this study. All sources have undergone a critical assessment based on relevance, objectivity, credibility and reliability. However, they will not be discussed equally thoroughly. Rather, the main focus will be on the most comprehensively used material.

Firstly, the background of the conflict has been largely based on data from UCDP, which is a reputable provider of continuously updated data on organised violence (UCDP n.d.). Additionally, the data from UCDP have been complemented with various studies and articles. As for the literature review and account for agonistic peace theory, a large selection of academic literature by established researchers with relevant expertise have been used. A recurring reference made throughout the thesis regards Strömbom, Bramsen and Steine (2022), which have developed the theoretical framework used to operationalise agonistic peace theory, as well as laid the foundation for the thesis in terms of previous research.

Moreover, the analysed material mainly stems from the KROC institute, which in accordance with the Final Accord has the mandate to monitor the implementation of the accord. In practice this is done through the Peace Accords Matrix program (PAM), which contains the largest existing collection of implementation data on intrastate peace agreements (KROC n.d.). PAM consists of researchers and practitioners who provide research support to ongoing peace processes on for instance implementation (ibid). The main report which is used is the comprehensive five-year report, which takes the entire time period from December 2016 until October 2021 into account. The report is supplemented by the most current quarterly report from KROC, which presents the state and development of implementation from July to September 2022, as well as the UN verification mission report from December 2021.

Regarding the overall treatment of sources, the large selection of academic articles, reports, studies and books that have been used to conduct this study are all written by operative researchers who possess relevant expertise. Their work builds on previous research and has been subjected to peer-review. Furthermore, the articles have been published in scientific journals while the books have been produced by academic publishing houses, which strengthens both relevance and credibility in terms of objectivity. However, the risk that all researchers have unconscious or underlying tendencies cannot be ruled out. Hence, it has

been constantly taken into consideration during the course of the study. All sources have been assessed based on the independence, relevance and trustworthiness of the author or publisher. To reduce bias, confirm information and hopefully increase replicability through a diversity of sources, all collected material has been verified through triangulation.

Lastly, as the researcher behind this study, I am aware that my context and values colour my choices, for instance when it comes to selecting and interpreting the material (Teorell & Svensson 2007:54). Moreover, the choice of agonistic peace theory also contains normative aspects, since the perspective is part of an emerging discussion on what peace is and should be (Strömbom & Bramsen 2022). In order to promote intersubjectivity I have been careful to maintain reflexivity by keeping my own biases and tendencies in mind at all times, as well as to carefully cite sources and report each step of the work process.

5 Analysis

In the following section, the indicators of agonism – spaces, inclusion and framing – will be applied to the implementation of provisions on political participation, stated in the Final Accord. The comprehensive five-year report from the KROC institute will constitute the material foundation of the analysis. Since all actions to implement the provisions on political participation cannot be encompassed by the study, the following analysis will address achievements and challenges which are highlighted in the comprehensive report.

In addition, the latest quarterly report from KROC, reports from the UN verification mission and additional sources are used for triangulation as well as to provide context, elaborate on certain initiatives and to anchor the analysis in agonistic peace theory. If no other source is referred to, all statements below derive from the comprehensive five-year report. Firstly, an overview of the provisions to be analysed will be presented. Secondly, the three indicators of agonism will be applied separately. Lastly, a short summary of pervading implications will conclude the analysis. To ease the reading, schemes will be used to summarise the initial presentation of the provisions as well as the concluding section of the analysis.

5.1 Political Participation

KROC highlights two achievements and two challenges regarding political participation in their comprehensive five-year report. The first achievement regards the creation of the Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts, a temporary addition of 16 seats in the House of Representatives, which are reserved for victims from the 16 worst impacted regions during the conflict (Bocanumenth & Puerta Cuartas 2022). The second achievement is the reformation and reactivation of the National and Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation and Coexistence. The councils are committed, on a national and territorial level respectively, to foster the relationship between civil society and institutional actors.

Moreover, the first point in terms of challenges regards passing a bill to guarantee and promote citizen participation and other activities conducted by social movements and organisations. The second point considers designing and implementing a program for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Non-Stigmatisation. When the comprehensive report was

released the policy was pending. However, KROC’s latest quarterly report announced the adoption of the policy, which will be considered the benchmark when applying the indicators.

Additionally, relevant achievements and challenges with associations to political participation are also presented in affiliation to other parts of the peace agreement, such as ‘End of Conflict’ and ‘Implementation, Verification and Public Endorsement’. In regards to the former, KROC presents the transformation of FARC into a political party, and their representation in Congress as an important milestone. Contrastingly, a challenge has been the development of a Comprehensive Security System for Exercising Politics, which aims to monitor and protect actions dealing with threats towards political parties, movements and their members. Moving on, an achievement connected to both political participation and the implementation-part of the peace agreement is the Special Legislative Process for Peace, which has made it possible for the Congress to more rapidly adopt certain legislative acts needed to implement the accords.

Below follows a scheme of the initiatives presented above, categorised based on their implementation status according to KROC.

Figure 1. Table of initiatives to implement provisions on Political Participation

Implementation Status (KROC)	Initiatives to implement provisions on Political Participation
<i>Achievements</i>	Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts <hr/> the National and Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation and Coexistence <hr/> FARC representation in Congress <hr/> Special Legislative Process for Peace
<i>Challenges</i>	Bill to guarantee and promote citizen participation <hr/> Program for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Non-Stigmatisation <hr/> Comprehensive Security System for Exercising Politics

5.1.1 Spaces

The Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts aims to improve the representation of victims in the House of Representatives, which in alignment with Maddison's (2016) notion of agonistic dialogue opens up for intense, continual and relational dialogue between track 1 and track 3. Similarly, the Territorial and National Councils provide space for intense, continual and seemingly relational dialogue between track 1 and 2. Additionally, the territorial councils have strong attachments to track 3. Even though the spaces accounted for include dialogues between all tracks, the rooms in which they take place are all traditionally confined to the elite level, which according to Maddison's (2016) account of agonistic dialogue might be insufficient.

To elaborate, while formal political actors on the elite level concentrate on issues and interests, people – i.e. track 3 and grassroots level – tend to put more focus on relationships (Maddison 2016). Even though both tracks are vital, "deep-rooted conflicts are not likely to be resolved" unless the relationships in divided societies are transformed (Saunders 2001:32 in Maddison 2016). Hence, it can be argued that spaces involving track 2 and 3 require greater involvement for functional and progressive agonistic spaces, and a lack thereof can thus be considered a challenge or impediment for agonistic implementation (ibid; Mouffe 2013; Strömbom 2019). Likewise, the Special Legislative Process for Peace also promotes decision making solely in track 1. However, the members of Congress are elected by popular vote, and along general lines the decisions have already been agreed upon in the Final Accord, building on negotiations between the tracks.

Furthermore, the creation and representation of the Communes Party entail some sort of interaction between track 1 and 3 through national and regional elections, although lacking the interactiveness of agonistic dialogue (Maddison 2016). Additionally, the main space provided for agonistic dialogue is still enclosed to the elite political level. Also, the Communes are only guaranteed seats in Congress until 2026, meaning that the intensity and continual nature of the dialogue is limited. However, since a foundation is now created for further representation through democratic elections, continued agonistic dialogue is made possible. Regardless, limitation could be considered a challenge regarding agonistic implementation.

Contrastingly, the Public Policy for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Non-Stigmatisation fills the gap of providing spaces for dialogue outside the elite level 1 by creating spaces for dialogue in territories most affected by the conflict (KROC 2023; Maddison 2016). However, the nature of the dialogue cannot be confirmed as agonistic due to the policy's recent adoption, and thus lack of documentation. Furthermore, a lack of space for resistance is implied through the inadequate implementation of a Comprehensive Security System as well as the bill to promote citizen participation. Additionally, a challenge regarding the Comprehensive Security System has been to create a regular, functional and operational schedule for meetings. In other words, the initiative is lacking intense and continual space for dialogue, in accordance with agonistic theory and Maddison's (2016) account for agonistic dialogue. It remains unclear whether the current dialogue is relational, as well as which tracks are involved.

Lastly, civil society actors, members of opposition as well as State oversight entities all report delays of key measures from the Final Peace Agreement in regards to political participation, especially in terms of legislation and political reform to ensure the right to peaceful protest (UN 2021). Consequently, this restricts the space for track 2, and more so track 3, to voice their opinions (Maddison 2016). In other words, it hinders counter discourses and perspectives to challenge the hegemony (Mouffe 2013). Thus, it also presents a potential challenge for agonistic implementation.

5.1.2 Inclusion

As mentioned, the Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts mainly focus on the inclusion of victims. Although 'victims' is a rather close reference group, the 16 regions strategically consist of historically marginalised areas where state presence traditionally has been weak, multidimensional poverty is high and ethnic communities make up the majority of the residents (UN 2021; Bocanumenth & Puerta Cuartas 2022). Out of the 401 candidates, 200 were male and 201 female (ibid). However, only three women, one indigenous person and four members of Afro-Colombian organisations were elected (ibid). Consequently, despite the selection of regions based on a slightly relational inclusion, the substantial election of the positions reflect a rather closed inclusion.

Furthermore, the National and Territorial Councils and the Public Policy for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Non-Stigmatisation both indicate relational inclusion through outspoken

focuses on marginalised groups, as well as specifying said groups in terms of women, LGBTQI+, children, ethnic communities and so on (KROC 2023). Similarly, the Comprehensive Security System also incorporates a gender approach. However, important to note is that even if the the Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts or the National and Territorial Councils could ensure the election or inclusion of representatives from marginalised groups, this is not enough to ensure that their representation is substantial rather than merely descriptive (Hirblinger & Landau 2020; Strömbom 2019). Without specifying the *what's* and *how's* of 'inclusion', it risks not being substantially valuable (ibid).

Regarding the Communes Party, inclusion in form of representation is presented openly in terms of 'candidates'. If the inclusion in practice is closed or relational depends on how the candidates are elected, both by FARC as well as in national and regional elections. Important to keep in mind is the intersectionality within FARC just as within any other group referred to in terms of closed inclusion. For example, elements of intersectionality risk being disregarded without further specification of overarching groups. Likewise, the bill to promote citizen participation also implies open inclusion in terms of referencing 'civil participation'. One possible explanation is that the provision is not implemented, and therefore not further elaborated on in terms of inclusion.

Moving on to the Special Legislative Process for Peace. On the one hand, the decision making is made in Congress by democratically chosen representatives, which thus has been elected through a process that could lead to relational inclusion. On the other hand, democratic elections do not automatically bring substantial inclusion of marginalised groups (Mouffe 2013). Thus, questions remain regarding how the relational inclusion in Congress looked when the decisions were made. Once again, the substantial versus descriptive inclusion following implementation of agonistic provisions remains questioned, indicating another challenge for agonistic implementation.

5.1.3 Framing

The Special Transitory Peace Voting Districts is motivated by fostering political debate and promoting pluralist voices by integrating local perspectives into the national political agenda. This implies dissensus as well as continuation of conflict in political spheres, and resonates with Mouffe's (2013) notion on challenging hegemony. However, a substantial question that

follows regards who is considered a victim? Is there a common understanding of who is considered the victims of the conflicts? Do the victims all have a common view of the conflict? Depending on the answers to these questions, the opposite of fostering contestation and conflict continuation could be generated by the provisions (Mouffe 2013; Shinko 2008; Strömbom 2019). Although, based on the reports this does not seem to be the case. Additionally, in some ways the organisation of FARC into a political party with guaranteed representation temporarily assures that other definitions of victims are represented, as well as implies dissensus and the political continuation of the conflict in alignment with agonistic theory (ibid).

Despite not saying much directly about intention, the bill to promote citizen participation and the Comprehensive Security System can be argued to indicate promotion of varying perspectives and dissensus. The lack of implementation of these provisions, as well as the shortcomings in implementing legislation for peaceful protests, can potentially either insinuate a lack of interest in these matters, or signify general difficulties in implementation. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Security System also raises questions regarding certain definitions. To elaborate, the initiative states their purpose to be the monitoring and protection of actions to deal with threats against political parties, movements and their members. What is meant by and included when referring to ‘threats’? Who is included in the decision making body which defines the threats, and how these are to be addressed? On the one hand, the initiative to protect the right to free political expression in itself is aligning with promoting dissensus and conflict continuation (ibid). On the other hand, depending on what is defined as a threat and who gets to decide that, the initiative can not be ascribed agonistic characteristics just as easily.

Moreover, the National and Territorial Councils are said to be vital for broadening perspectives and recognizing the other mutually, which insinuates underlying agonistic principles in accordance with Shinko (2008). Simultaneously, the councils are referring to “linking interests” and “creating a shared vision for the future”, indicating ideals on consensus and termination of conflict (KROC 2023:11). Contrastingly, the Public Policy for Reconciliation, Coexistence and Non-Stigmatisation presents rather clear, agonistic intentions. While the component regarding reconciliation aims to “increase awareness about forms of violence and discrimination” against marginalised groups, the component on coexistence aims to promote “understanding of differentiated impacts” (ibid:18).

Lastly, the Special Legislative Process for Peace builds on the notion that the implementation should be conducted through the existing rules laid out by the constitution and the current legal system, agreed upon in the Final Accord. In other words, no efforts to “attempt or seek comprehensive constitutional change” would be made (KROC 2021:15). This contradicts Mouffe’s (2013) notion of challenging hegemony as vital to societal progression, as well as introduces another critical dimension of implementing agonistic principles in terms of decisions. Seemingly, at some point certain decisions have to be made. If not in consensus, should decisions then be made in spite of disagreement? Who gets to make that final decision? Mouffe (2013:23-25) refers to the dilemma as the ‘moment of decision’. She acknowledges that decisions are a constitutive necessity for politics, and states that decisions do not contradict agonism as long as they remain contestable. Consequently, a challenge for agonistic implementation regards which decisions are necessary in ‘the moment of decision’, and which should be left to further discussion.

5.2 Summary

Below follows a brief account of the broader connotations which have stood out from the analysis. Focus will be on how provisions on political participation can be implemented, whereas challenges will be more elaborately deliberated on in the following discussion. As mentioned in section 3.3, the indicators interact to a certain extent. To concretise, various notions of ‘victims’ require representation for the Special Voting Districts – discussed in section 5.1.3 – to be genuinely agonistic. Guaranteeing various types of victims also becomes a question of ensuring substantial, relational inclusion as well as providing suitable space. Consequently, the scheme below contains overlaps between the indicators.

A common theme amongst the implementing initiatives has regarded the improvement of representation and inclusion in political spheres. The case of Colombia has shown that one possible way to implement agonistic provisions is not only to reserve existing seats in governing bodies, but also to add new seats such as in the case of the Special Voting Districts. Additionally, new institutions and councils have been created to create spaces for the tracks to meet. Followingly, challenges have emerged in terms of ensuring that this includes all levels in meaningful ways. Moreover, some of the spaces are provided for a limited amount of time, which can be considered a challenge if it entails that agonistic characteristics are lost if not being further initiated.

Moving on to the indicator on inclusion. Concrete initiatives to promote relational inclusion have for instance been the selection of historically exposed regions to receive guaranteed seats, as in the case of the Special Voting Districts. Simultaneously, this has highlighted overall challenges regarding recognising and ensuring the inclusion of intersecting identities within marginalised groups, as well as making sure that the inclusion is substantial, and not merely descriptive. Lastly, several initiatives have, either expressly or unspokenly, aimed to promote pluralism through different voices and perspectives on various levels. Similarly to inclusion, framing faces the challenge of ensuring substantiality. Also, initiatives such as the National and Territorial Councils contain mixed framings of intention, which can constitute a challenge when implementing.

Figure 2. Summary of the analysis

Research question	Spaces	Inclusion	Framing
<i>How can provisions on political participation be implemented?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteeing (temporary) seats in political spheres • Engaging spaces in agonistic dialogue • Ensure space for resistance through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Peaceful protests-reforms ◦ Security measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make allocations to reserved seats based on relational inclusion • Promoting relational inclusion on all levels, i.e. (track 1, 2 and 3) • Security measures to safeguard the inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting pluralism and dissensus by integrating local perspectives in the national political agenda • Raising awareness of different perspectives through education
<i>What are the main challenges in relation to agonism?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing spaces on all levels, and not only top-down from track 1 • Effects of temporary access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial and not merely descriptive inclusion • Promoting and safeguarding intersectionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed intentions • Who decides on the definition of for example 'victims' and 'threats'? Is that also up for contestation?

6 Discussion

To refer back to the research question: How have provisions on political participation in the Final Accord been implemented in Colombia, and what are the challenges for implementing such agonistic principles? Overall, the analysis not only maps out how provisions on political participation have been implemented, but also shows that the initiatives contain elements promoting agonism to various degrees. In other words, based on the empirical material several suggestions on how to implement agonistic provisions can be derived. Regardless of current implementation status, agonistic elements have for instance been found in initiatives to improve representation and relational inclusion in political spheres, as well as through ensuring that newfounded institutions engage in agonistic dialogue. Simultaneously, challenges to agonistic implementation have surfaced, for example in terms of balancing contradicting intentions and ensuring inclusion to be substantial rather than merely descriptive. While accounting for the various ways through which agonistic provisions can be implemented in the analysis, the following discussion will mainly focus on elaborating on related challenges.

Before immersing further into the discussion, it is relevant to reflect on the results in relation to the limitations of the study. As previously mentioned in section 4.1, the results cannot be generalised due to the methodological limitations – a notion which has been accepted and taken into account throughout the entire research process. Instead, this thesis aims to say something about the specific case of implementation in Colombia, which by virtue of being an extreme case might generate broader implications for future research. In other words, while the following discussion will highlight certain initiatives and challenges in more general terms, it is crucial to keep in mind that the point of this is to start conversations on potential, larger connections. Furthermore, it is relevant to emphasise that the purpose of this study is to investigate how agonistic provisions can be implemented. Thus, this thesis does not aim to evaluate or rate the implementation of the Final Accord, but rather to map out which measures can be taken to implement provisions on political participation, and if implementation of such agonistic provisions is further aggravated by certain challenges.

When analysing the material, a general and overarching challenge has been the lacking or inadequate implementation of some initiatives. While it could indicate absence of incentives to implement the peace agreement as a whole, or a lack of will to implement specific

agonistic provisions, it could just as easily point towards political difficulties related to implementation in general, rather than being the deliberate act of spoilers. Determining a definite answer might not be possible, and even if it were it would be outside the scope of this essay to attempt doing so. Nevertheless, it opens up for discussions on threats towards agonistic implementation in itself.

To elaborate, agonistic implementation is based on the promotion of pluralistic views and continued contestation. By promoting dissensus and differing voices, agonism also opens up for movements which disagree on the very foundation of the implementation itself, making agonism highly dependent on and affected by political winds. To concretise, as accounted for when presenting the current political setting in Colombia, the last presidents and their governments have had varying views on the Final Accord, which have affected the extent and pace of its implementation. In cases where implementation for instance reinforces oppressing power structures, the ability to challenge and even change the governing power could be advantageous. However, rapid political shifts can cause instability to the implementation, making it an uncertain and fragile process.

Furthermore, agonism can also be argued to slow down the implementation process, making it less efficient by placing high demands on pluralism in terms of inclusion. Contrastingly, the very same demands on relational inclusion can be argued to create a more sustainable peace by enhancing legitimacy through involving various perspectives and voices. On the one hand, agonistic implementation could generate a more durable peace by anchoring it on all levels of society. On the other hand, contestation and the chase for broad inclusion risks delay or even obstruct the implementation, due to constant demands for deep and wide anchoring. When faced with this trade-off between efficiency and stability contra inclusion, it is important to ask questions on which kind of peace we desire, and for whom?

In the case of Colombia, one way around this trade-off was implementing the Special Legislative Process for Peace, which provided a fast track for decisions made in the Final Accord. From one point of view this is a way to protect agonistic implementation from rapid political shifts. Also, it could ensure that decisions made in inclusive, agonistic spaces are not hindered by governing bodies where hegemony has not been challenged, and neither pluralism nor substantial inclusion prevail. In other words, it is a way of seizing the momentum of peace negotiations, utilising the opportunity to challenge existing hegemony

and power structures. However, at the same time it is a slippery slope to protect agonistic provisions from contestation. Not only does it contradict the very foundation of agonistic theory, it also overlooks questions on who decides whom to include in peace negotiations, and who is gaining what from those choices. Furthermore, assured implementation which avoids contestation also raises further questions regarding what should be determined before the implementation – in accordance with Mouffe’s (2013) account of the ‘moment of decision’ – and what should be left to contestation?

Before leaving the subject of inclusion, it is relevant to say something about the challenges of ensuring substantial, relational inclusion. As mentioned several times in the analysis, broader challenges lie in the necessity of designing mechanisms that not only guarantee representation, but also empower marginalised groups to actively engage in the provided spaces. Intersectionality within marginalised groups must also be acknowledged to ensure the recognition of intersecting identities and differing voices. For measures to raise public awareness and encourage active participation to be valuable, people need to be provided with tools to make use of the opportunities. To exemplify, for the representation of FARC to not only entail seats in political rooms for a limited time period, empowerment through for instance education is necessary to overcome structural disadvantages. Additionally, as mentioned in section 2 on the background to the conflict, FARC was established several years ago, and its active members have long lived outside of the existing frameworks of society. Hence, for the inclusion of FARC into Congress to be substantial for both the political representatives and FARC as a whole, support is needed to for instance ensure that FARC members are inclined, or even registered, to vote.

If not providing tools to make the limited time in which agonistic spaces and inclusion is guaranteed to marginalised groups meaningful, the temporality could endanger the continuation and the long-term effects of agonistic implementation. Additionally, if not making the guaranteed representation temporary, power dynamics risks being entrenched. This has been the case in Northern Ireland, where the outcome has become agonistic dualism rather than pluralism (Dybris McQuaid 2019). To elaborate, power dynamics transform along with the conversion of the conflict from violent into non-violent and political. If freezing the warring parties to be constant, it risks solidifying the identities. Hence, if political representation is dynamic and open to change, identities are also allowed to be so. Consequently, a challenge to agonistic implementation can be argued to regard the

acknowledgement of groups, simultaneously as not solidifying them nor disregard intersectional identities within said groups.

Lastly, even though it is not the aim of this study to evaluate or rate the implementation, it is essential to ask questions about the measuring of implementation in itself. When describing initiatives as ‘achievements’, a certain value is being ascribed. Vital questions to ask are for whom the initiative is an achievement? Is the implementation successful merely if it is realised in alignment with what was decided on in the peace accord, or is the success rate based on the actual outcome of the initiative? If the answer is the latter, then for whom is the outcome beneficial? Who is hindered the most by inadequate implementation, and who gains what from it?

7 Conclusion

To summarise, the analysis maps out how provisions on political participation have been implemented in Colombia, which in extension provides suggestions for how to implement agonistic provisions and elements. For instance, measures have been taken to improve representation in political spheres, both through opening up existing spaces and establishing new ones. Simultaneously, pluralism, relational inclusion and agonistic dialogue has been emphasised and promoted in several initiatives.

Furthermore, various challenges to agonistic implementation surfaced while investigating the *how's* of the implementation in Colombia, with time limits, substantiality, and fragility being especially noteworthy. Time limits entail a fine line between hazards of solidifying identities and providing enough time to allow for transformations. Substantiality is vital for making all initiatives to implement agonism meaningful and worthwhile, as well as for agonistic institutions and bodies to set out and continue on their own. Lastly, contestation opens up for dissensus on the foundation of the implementation itself, making the process insecure and fragile simultaneously as providing legitimacy and enabling a more sustainable peace.

Agonistic implementation could be further explored in more extensive studies, looking into different provisions from the Final Accord or building on other material than the KROC reports. One suggestion is studying national documents instead of international, investigating potential differences in the reporting and views on the implementation. Additionally, other cases than Colombia could be studied, with varying levels of agonistic agreements. Even though this thesis has emphasised the need to contribute to filling the 'institutional deficit', the final paragraph of the discussion implies a need for studies on implementation from the perspective of the people whom the implementation and the peace is actually for.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the implementation of provisions on political participation in Colombia contains potential broader implications for how agonistic elements can be implemented, and the challenges that follow. In accordance with the purpose of the study, the result contributes to diversifying the current discussion on agonism, as well as further elucidating complexities regarding implementation. Above all, the study encourages further research into agonistic peace, especially in connection to real-life-settings and implementation.

References

Aggestam, Karin. Cristiano, Fabio. Strömbom, Lisa. (2015). "Towards Agonistic Peacebuilding? Exploring the Antagonism–Agonism Nexus in the Middle East Peace Process." *Third World Quarterly* 36 (9): 1736–1753. doi:10.1080/01436597.2015.1044961. [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

Amnesty International. (2022). "Repression in the Spotlight". Available: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/repression-in-the-spotlight/> [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

BBC. (2018). "Colombia election: Farc fails to win support in first national vote". *BBC News*. March 8. Available: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-43367222> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

BBC. (2021). "Why Colombia's protests are unlikely to fizzle out". *BBC News*. May 31. Available: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-56986821> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Bramsen, Isabel. (2021). "Agonistic Interaction in Practice: Laughing, Dissensus and Hegemony in the Northern Ireland Assembly." *Third World Quarterly*, 1–19. doi:10.1080/01436597.2021.1976631. [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

Bramsen, Isabel. Poder, Poul. Wæver, Ole. (2019). *Resolving International Conflict: Dynamics of Escalation, Continuation and Transformation*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Bergström, Göran. Boréus, Kristina. (2012). *Textens mening och makt*. Lund: Studentlitteratur. 461 pp.

Bocanumenth, Matthew. Puerta Cuartas, Felipe. (2022). "Victim Seats in Congress Could Help Advance Peace in Colombia". *WOLA*. March 11. Available: <https://www.wola.org/analysis/victim-seats-in-congress-could-help-advance-peace-in-colombia/> [Retrieved 2023-05-11]

Buchely, Lina. (2020). "Peace, Land, and Bureaucracy in Colombia: An Analysis of the Implementation of the Victims and Land Restitution Law from a Multiscale Perspective of State Bureaucracies" *Land* 9, no. 6: 181. Available: <https://doi.org/10.3390/land9060181> [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. (2020a). *Estadísticas del conflicto armado en Colombia*. Available: www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/informeGeneral/estadisticas.html [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. (2020b). *¿De quién es la tierra en Colombia?* Available: www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/balances-jep/tierras.html [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Curtis, John. Walker, Nigel. (2022). "Human rights in Colombia and implementation of the 2016 peace agreement". *House of Commons Library*. Available: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cdp-2022-0081/> [Retrieved 2023-05-05]

van Deth, Jan. (2014). "A conceptual map of political participation". *Acta Polit* 49, 349–367 <https://doi.org/10.1057/ap.2014.6> [Retrieved 2023-05-18]

Dybris McQuaid, Sara. "‘Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed’: Institutionalising radical disagreement and dealing with the past in Northern Ireland". In Bramsen, Isabel. Poder, Poul. Wæver, Ole. (eds.). (2019). *Resolving International Conflict: Dynamics of Escalation, Continuation and Transformation*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group

Esaiasson, Peter. Gilljam, Mikael. Oscarsson, Henrik & Wängnerud, Lena (2017). *Metodpraktikan: Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*. Stockholm: Norstedts Juridik.

Final Agreement = National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, Colombia: *Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace* (2016), 24 November 2016. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b68465c4.html> <https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/1845> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Flores, Thomas E. Juan F. Vargas. (2018). "Colombia: Democracy, Violence, and the Peacebuilding Challenge." *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, vol. 35, no. 6, 2018, pp. 581–86. Available: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26959417>. [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Fossen, Thomas. (2012). "Agonism and the Law." *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 38 (3): 327–331. doi:10.1177/0191453711430932. [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

García Pinzón, Viviana. (2020). "Colombia: Between the Dividends of Peace and the Shadow of Violence". *Giga Focus*, No. 2. ISSN 1862-3573 [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

González Martin, Diana. Hansen, Hans Lauge. Parra Grondona, Agustín. (2022). "A case for agonistic peacebuilding in Colombia". *Third World Quarterly*, 43:6, 1270-1287. doi: 10.1080/01436597.2021.1993812 [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Halperin, Sandra. Heath, Oliver. (2017). *Political research. Methods and practical skills*. Glasgow: Oxford University Press. 417 pp.

Hirblinger, Andreas T. Landau, Dana M. (2020). "Daring to differ? Strategies of inclusion in peacemaking". *Security Dialogue*, 51(4), 305–322. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010619893227> [Retrieved 2023-05-21]

Howarth, David R. (2008). "Ethos, Agonism and Populism: William Connolly and the Case for Radical Democracy." *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 10 (2): 171–193. doi:10.1111/j.1467-856x.2007.00308.x. [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

Human Rights Watch. (2019). *World Report 2020, Colombia, Events of 2019*. Available: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/colombia> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Höglund, Kristine. Öberg, Magnus. 2011. *Understanding Peace Research. Methods and Challenges*. New York: Routledge. 199 pp.

ICG = International Crisis Group. (2021a). *The Pandemic Strikes: Responding to Colombia's Mass Protests*. Crisis Group Latin America Report N°90. 2 July 2021. Brussels. Available: <https://icg-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/090-the-pandemic-strikes%20%281%29.pdf> [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

ICG = International Crisis Group. (2021b). *A Fight by Other Means: Keeping the Peace with Colombia's FARC*. Crisis Group Latin America Report N°92. 30 November 2021. Brussels. Available: <https://icg-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/092-a-fight-by-other-means%20%282%29.pdf> [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

IPU = Inter-Parliamentary Union. (2023). Colombia, Elections, *House of Representative*. [dataset: Parline]. Geneva. Available: https://data.ipu.org/node/37/elections?chamber_id=13366&election_id=78297 [Retrieved 2023-05-08]

Janetsky, Megan. (2022). "Colombian leader's promise of 'total peace' may prove too ambitious". *The Guardian*. September 22. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/22/colombia-gustavo-petro-total-peace> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Jones, Bruce D. (2001). "The Challenges of Strategic Coordination: Containing Opposition and Sustaining Implementation of Peace agreements in Civil Wars." *International Peace Academy and Center for International Security and Cooperation*, Stanford University, New York [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

Joshi, Madhav. Quinn, Jason M. (2015). "Implementing the Peace: The Aggregate Implementation of Comprehensive Peace Agreements and Peace Duration after Intrastate Armed Conflict." *British Journal of Political Science*, 47 (4): 869-892. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123415000381> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Joshi, Madhav. Quinn, Jason M. Regan. Patrick. (2015). "Annualized Implementation Data on Comprehensive Intrastate Peace Accords, 1989–2012." *Journal of Peace Research* 52 (4): 551-562. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343314567486> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Kaldor, Mary. (2019). “Agonistic Politics and the Contestation of Truth: Towards a New Normative Framework for Peacebuilding”. *International Peacekeeping*, 26(3), 275-293. [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

Karreth, Johannes. Quinn, Jason. Joshi, Mashav. Tir, Jaroslav. (2023). “International third parties and the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements after civil war”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 67(2-3), 494–521. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00220027221113273> [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Klobucista, Claire. Renwick, Danielle. (2017).”Colombia’s Civil Conflict”. *Council on Foreign Relations*. Available: <https://www.cfr.org/background/colombias-civil-conflict> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Kriesberg, Louise. (2015). *Realizing Peace: A Constructive Conflict Approach*. Oxford University Press, New York, NY

KROC. (2023). *Quarterly Report: Implementation Status of the Colombian Final Peace Accord, July–September 2022*. Notre Dame, IN: Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies/Keough School of Global Affairs, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.7274/t435gb2326k>

KROC. (2022). *Executive Summary, Five Years After the Signing of the Colombian Final Agreement: Reflections from Implementation Monitoring*. Notre Dame, IN: Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies/Keough School of Global Affairs, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.7274/0z708w35p43>

KROC. (n.d.). Peace Accord Matrix, *About PAM*. Available: <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/about-pam> [Retrieved 2023-05-16]

LaReau, Renée. (2016). “Kroc Institute Charged with Technical Verification and Monitoring of Historic Colombian Peace Accord,” University of Notre Dame. Available: <http://news.nd.edu/news/kroc-institute-charged-with-technical-verification-and-monitoring-of-historic-colombian-peace-accord/> [Retrieved 2023-04-08]

Lederach, John Paul (2005). *The moral imagination: the art and soul of building peace*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Lindvall, Johannes (2007). “Fallstudiestrategier”. *Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift*, 109(3), 270-278.

Lyons, Terrence. (2016). “Successful Peace Implementation: Plans and Processes.” *Peacebuilding*, 4 (1): 71-82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2015.1094906>
[Retrieved 2023-04-28]

Lyons, Terrence. (2018). “Peace Implementation and Quality Peace.” In Joshi, Madhav. Wallensteen, Peter. (eds.). *Understanding Quality Peace*. London: Routledge, p. 29-43.
[Retrieved 2023-04-28]

MacGinty, Roger. (2012). “Routine Peace: Technocracy and Peacebuilding.” *Cooperation and Conflict* 47(3): 287–308. doi:10.1177/0010836712444825. [Retrieved 2023-04-24]

Maddison, Sarah. (2016). “Relational transformation and agonistic dialogue in divided societies”. *Political Studies*, 63, 1014–1030. [Retrieved 2023-04-24]

McColl, Richard. (2022). “Can Colombia’s President Achieve ‘Total Peace’?” *Foreign Policy*. November 8. Available:
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/11/08/colombia-total-peace-gustavo-petro-eln-farc-guerrillas-conflict/> [Retrieved 2023-04-26]

Millar, Gearoid. Nagle, John. (2021).” Agonistic Peace: A Critical Reading of Peace and Conflict Studies”. *Manchester University Press*. [Retrieved 2023-05-02]

Ministerio de Interior. (2022). “National Government Installs Monitoring, Promotion and Verification Mission for the Implementation of the Final Agreement – CSIVI”. October 2. Available:
<https://www.mininterior.gov.co/national-government-installs-monitoring-promotion-and-verification-commission-for-the-implementation-of-the-final-agreement-csivi/>
[Retrieved 2023-04-24]

Morales, Esteban. Gebre, Engida H. (2021). "Teachers' understanding and implementation of peace education in Colombia: the case of Cátedra de la Paz". *Journal of Peace Education*, 18:2, 209-230, DOI: 10.1080/17400201.2021.1937085 [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Mouffe, Chantal. (2005). *On the political*. London: Routledge

Mouffe, Chantal. (2013). *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically*. London: Verso

Mutimer, David. McRobie, Heather. (2020). *Agonistic Peace and Critical Security Studies*. Routledge.

Nagle, John. (2014). "From the Politics of Antagonistic Recognition to Agonistic Peacebuilding: An Exploration of Symbols and Rituals in Divided Societies." *Peace & Change* 39 (4): 468–494. doi:10.1111/pech.12090. [Retrieved 2023-04-24]

New York Times. (2021). "Colombians Fill Streets in Protest, Riding Region's Wave of Discontent". *New York Times*. 21 November 2019. Updated: 28 May 2021. Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/21/world/americas/colombia-protests-duque.html> [Retrieved 2023-04-24]

NOREF. (2019). *Designing Peace: Colombian Peace Process*. Available: <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/designing-peace-colombian-peace-process> [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

Parkin Daniels, Joe. (2018). "Colombian former rebels shunned as critics of peace deal dominate election". *The Guardian*. March 12. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/12/farc-former-colombian-rebels-cast-votes-elections> [Retrieved 2023-04-23]

Parkin Daniels, Joe. (2019). "Colombia: thousands take to the streets in third national strike in two weeks". *The Guardian*. December 4. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/04/colombia-protest-duque-bogota> [Retrieved 2023-04-23]

Parkin Daniels, Joe. Bolaños, Edinson. (2022). “Former guerrilla Gustavo Petro wins Colombian election to become first leftist president”. *The Guardian*. 20 June. Available: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/20/former-guerrilla-gustavo-petro-wins-colombian-election-to-become-first-leftist-president> [Retrieved 2023-04-23]

Ramsbotham, Oliver. (2010). *Transforming Violent Conflict: Radical Disagreement, Dialogue and Survival*. London: Routledge.

Rettberg, Angelika. Dupont, Federico. (2023). “Peace Agreement Implementation (PAI): What Matters? A Review of the Literature.” *Colombia International*, 113: 205-234. <https://doi.org/10.7440/colombiaint113.2023.08> [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

Richmond, Oliver. (2011). *A Post-Liberal Peace*. London: Routledge.

Richmond, Oliver. (2017). *Agonistic Peace: Rethinking Conflict, Resistance, and Democracy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Rico, Diana. Barreto, Idaly. (2022). “Unfreezing of the conflict due to the peace agreement with FARC–EP in Colombia: Signature (2016) and implementation (2018)”. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 28(1), 22–33. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000545> [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Ríos, Jerónimo. (2017). “el Acuerdo de paz entre el Gobierno colombiano y las FARC: o cuando una paz imperfecta es mejor que una guerra perfecta.” *Araucaria. Revista Iberoamericana de Filosofía, Política y Humanidades* 19 (38). Available: <https://www.redalyc.org/jatsRepo/282/28253016027/html/index.html> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Rumelili, Bahar. Çelik, Ayşe Betül. (2017). “Ontological Insecurity in Asymmetric Conflicts: Reflections on Agonistic Peace in Turkey’s Kurdish Issue.” *Security Dialogue* 48 (4): 279–296. doi:10.1177/0967010617695715.[Retrieved 2023-04-25]

Saunders, Harold H. (2001). *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Seawright, Jason. Gerring, John. (2008), “Case selection techniques in case study research”, *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2. doi:10.1177/106591290731307.

Available:

17/5-2023https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/2023_01_forecast.pdf [Retrieved 2023-05-17]

Semana Sostenible. (2018). “Un millón de hogares campesinos en Colombia tienen menos tierra que una vaca.” Available: <https://sostenibilidad.semana.com/impacto/articulo/concentracion-de-la-tierra-en-colombia-el-1-por-ciento-de-las-fincas-mas-grandes-ocupan-el-81-por-ciento-de-la-tierra/40882> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

Shinko, Rosemary E. (2008). “Agonistic Peace: A Postmodern Reading.” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 36 (3): 473–491. doi:10.1177/03058298080360030501. [Retrieved 2023-04-24]

Stedman, Stephen J. Rothchild, Donald. Cousins, Elizabeth M. (2002). “Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements”. Boulder, CO: *Lynne Rienner Publishers*. [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

Stanford University. (2019). “Mapping Militant Organisations. Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.” Available: <https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/revolutionary-armed-forces-colombia-farc> [Retrieved 2023-04-12]

Strömbom, Lisa. (2019). “Exploring Prospects for Agonistic Encounters in Conflict Zones: Investigating Dual Narrative Tourism in Israel/Palestine.” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 44 (2-4): 75–93. doi:10.1177/0304375419857421. [Retrieved 2023-04-02]

Strömbom, Lisa. 2020. “Exploring Analytical Avenues for Agonistic Peace.” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 23 (4): 1–23. doi:10.1057/s41268-019-00176-6. [Retrieved 2023-04-017]

Strömbom, Lisa. Bramsen, Isabel. (2022). "Agonistic peace: advancing knowledge on institutional dynamics and relational transformation". *Third World Quarterly*, 43:6, 1237-1250, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2022.2054797 [Retrieved 2023-04-02]

Strömbom, Lisa. Bramsen, Isabel. Stein, Anne Lene. (2022). "Agonistic peace agreements? Analytical tools and dilemmas." *Review of International Studies*, 48(4), 689-704. doi:10.1017/S0260210522000055 [Retrieved 2023-04-02]

Tellez, Juan. (2019). "Peace agreement design and public support for peace: Evidence from Colombia". *Journal of Peace Research*. 56. doi:10.1177/0022343319853603. [Retrieved 2023-05-10]

Teorell, Jan & Svensson, Torsten (2007). *Att fråga och att svara*. Malmö: Liber.

UCDP. (2023a). *Colombia*. Available: <https://ucdp.uu.se/country/100> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

UCDP (2023b). *Government of Colombia - FARC*. Available: <https://ucdp.uu.se/statebased/623> [Retrieved 2023-04-09]

UCDP. (n.d.). Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict, Research, UCDP, *About UCDP*. Available: <https://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/about-ucdp/> [Retrieved 2023-04-28]

UN = United Nations, Security Council. (2021). *United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia: report of the Secretary-General*, S/2021/1090 (27 December 2021). Available: undocs.org/en/S/2021/1090

UN = United Nations, Security Council. (2023). *January 2023 Monthly Forecast*. December 29. UN, New York. Available: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2023-01/colombia-20.php> [Retrieved 2023-05-02]

Walsh, Dawn. Murphy, Emma. (2021). "Agonistic transitional justice: A global survey", *Third World Quarterly*. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1952068> [Retrieved 2023-04-17]

Westphal, Manon. (2019). "Overcoming the institutional deficit of agonistic democracy". *Res Publica*. 25:2. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11158-018-9397-2> [Retrieved 2023-04-17]