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THE POLITICAL VOICE OF DISPLACEMENT VICTIMS

Acts and Practices of Social Leaders in light of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement:

Making the Antagonistic Dimension more Visible

Picture front page: desplazados protesting the government's failure to provide humanitarian assistance guaranteed by law (Notiagan 2012)

Intro

The Political Voice of Displacement Victims

Acts and Practices of Social Leaders in light of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement:
making the Antagonist Dimension more Visible

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"The coronel Aureliano Buendía, who organized thirty-two armed uprisings and lost them all, said it is easier to start a war than to finish one."
In: 100 Years of Solitude – Gabriel García Márquez

*quote interpreted and translated by the author from the Spanish origin

In the end, this thesis can be seen as a story of victims of the armed conflict in Colombia.
Or more specifically, a story of how social leaders operate to fight for the rights of victims of the civil war.
I followed individuals that worked for their community.
Their stories shaped the content of this thesis.

From sharing stories to shaping the story.

Essential Facts

- Displacement victims in armed conflict and their political voice: a need to listen
- 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement: post-agreement is not post-conflict
- Social leaders making antagonistic relations more visible
- Engaging acts and practices with existing governance and authority structures through
    - Identity politics
    - Creation of political space
    - Seeking alliances

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Glossary

ACNUR …….. UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Acuerdo de Paz ..... Peace Agreement
Afro-Colombiano ..... afro-Colombian
Alta Consejería (para los derechos de las víctimas, la paz y la reconcializcion) ..... High Counsellor (for the rights of victims, peace, and reconciliation)
Autonominación …… self-determination
Bandas criminales …… illegal armed groups that emerged from the demobilization of paramilitary forces in 2006
Bosa …… 7th locality of Bogotá, located in the southwestern part of the city
Cacique …….. Indigenous leader, governor
Cámara de Representantes ..... Chamber of Representatives
Campesin(a/o) ..... peasant, countryman
Casa Local ..... local community center
Ciudad Bolívar ……19th locality of Bogotá, located in the southern periphery of the city
CLAV Centro Local de Atención a Víctimas ..... Local Support Center for Victims
Costurero de la Memoria: Kilómetros de Vida y Memoria ... Stitching memory: Kilometers of Life and Memory
Conflicto armado ..... armed conflict
Defensor(a/es) de derechos humanos .... defender(s) of human rights

Glossary

Desplazado(s) …….. displaced person/people. In Colombia desplazado inherently refers to internally forcedly displaced
Estado ..... the State
Estrato .....stratum, system of classification of residential properties and public services in Bogotá
Falsa ..... lie
Falsos positivos ..... false positives
Gobierno .....government
Holandés..... Dutchman
Finca ..... property, land
Indígen(a/o) ..... indigeneous
La Violencia ……. the Violence
Ley ..... law
Ley de Víctimas ..... the Victims Law, established in 2011
Líder(es) social ..... social leader(s)
Lucha ..... fight
Mesa local (de participación Efectiva de Víctimas) ..... local roundtable (for effective participation of victims)
Mujer ..... woman
Niñ(a/o) ……. child (girl/boy)
Palacio de Justicia ..... Justice Palace
Plantón ..... peaceful protest
Plaza Bolívar..... Bolívar's square, the main square of Bogotá
Reforma Rural Integral ……. Integral Rural Reform
Rol ..... role
Ruta Pacífica (de Mujeres) ..... (Women's) Peaceful Route
San Cristóbal …… 4th locality of Bogotá, located in the southeast of the city
Soacha …… considered a borough of Bogotá but officially it is an autonomous municipality located south of the city
Suba …… 11th locality of Bogotá, located in the north of the city
Tierra ..... Land
Unidad de Restitución de Tierras …….. Unit for the Restitution of Land. Governmental institution for the restitution of land
Unidad de Víctimas ..... Victims Support Unit. Governmental institution established to attend and repair victims, and contribute to social inclusion and peace
Usme …… 5th locality of Bogotá, located in the southeastern of the city
Víctima ..... victim
Vocer(o/a/os) ..... spokesperson(s)

Acknowledgements

"Hola que más". I still receive these kind of messages via WhatsApp from people I talked with in Bogotá. These people are victims of the armed conflict and social leaders – who are victims too. It means something like, "hello, what else" and is often used to ask what is up. I genuinely appreciate these messages, most of the times followed by updates on how things are going in Bogotá, often regarding the aftermath of the Peace Agreement. Sometimes, the messages include pictures to inform me about the next protests or gatherings of displacement victims. Without these worthwhile and trustful relations I would not have been able to gain so much insight information and, eventually, to write this thesis.

I first would like to express my sincere gratitude to Monique. After being the supervisor of my Bachelor thesis, it was obvious to me that I should ask you to supervise my Master thesis too. Our meetings were always inspiring! Thanks for your professional input and critical supervision. Above all I appreciated our conversations, in which time often was no issue, as we continued sharing thoughts and mutual academic interests. Unfortunate circumstances made it difficult for you to continue supervising my work: I keep nice memories and warm feelings about your assistance.

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Finally, Feline: thanks for helping me out with the graphics. Your creative and professional input greatly helped me in designing the layout of this thesis.

Summary

In this thesis I highlight the relations between displacement victims in Bogotá and in Colombia at large, which are complex and to some extent paradoxical. I reflect upon the political voice of victims and social leaders of victims in light of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement.

Building upon this voice, I strengthen the idea of a political agency. Political agency is often based on formal participation in the *political* . I understand the *political* as the antagonistic dimension that is always present in relations of governance and authority. My aim is to go beyond the traditional idea of formal participation by construing political agency as the engaging practices of ordinary people with existing governance and authority structures.

In post-Agreement Colombia, many displacement victims face various difficulties, obstacles, and threats. Victims often feel abandoned, left behind by the State and not listened to. At the same time, they consider the State to be the main responsible for implementing the guarantees of the Peace Agreement. I argue that this connection is being held alive by the State, as victims are targeted by governmental intervention, but also very much by victims themselves.

Social leaders actively make the relation with the State more visible: through their acts and practices social leaders consciously engage with the *political.* Though symbiotic, both sides oppose the other. In this conflictual relationship, social leaders behave in a passionate way. They have bridging capacities, are spokespersons and seen as

a voice for the victims, and operate as controlling and monitoring actors. I argue how social leaders strategically engage with existing governance and authority structures to claim their and their constituency's rights. In their political self-organization, social leaders use the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement to further their cause. They do so in three fashions; through identity politics, by the creation of a political space, and by seeking alliances. These three approaches generally intermingle and are often used concurrently.

Keywords: Political agency, Displacement victims, Colombian Peace Agreement, Social leaders, Identity politics, Creation of a political space, Seeking alliances, Antagonistic dimension

Chapter 1 | INTRODUCTION

The Political Voice of Displacement Victims

FOREWORD

During the last two decades Colombia has seen the highest number worldwide of internally displaced people due to an armed conflict. Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are people who have been displaced within their own country. In other words, they have not crossed a national border to seek protection abroad and thus remain under protection of their own government. Approximately 7.3 million people living in Colombia are internally displaced (OCHA) – an incredibly high percentage (close to 15%) considering that Colombia counts a total population of 49 million. According to existing data, 93% of IDPs have moved to urban areas (ACNUR/UNHCR). The specific focus of this research is on Bogotá, the capital city, as it is recipient of Colombia's highest flux of IDPs. Official numbers estimate that no less than 270 000 IDPs reside in Bogotá; however, as approximately at most 50% of the IDPs get registered, these numbers are most likely higher. In Colombia, IDPs are often called *desplazados,* "the displaced", *or víctimas del desplazamiento forzado*, "victims of forced displacement". While I conducted my research, most people refer to them as "displacement victims". For this reason I use this term throughout the entire thesis, with some exceptions.

Colombia recently celebrated the first anniversary of the Peace

Agreement[4] between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia* – People's Army). The Peace Agreement (*el Acuerdo Final de Paz*) was signed on 24th November 2016 after four years of negotiation in Havana, Cuba.
The Peace Agreement builds on six pillars. One of them specifically relates to the '*víctimas del conflicto,* 'victims of the conflict': it calls for justice and security for the victims and aims to guarantee victims' rights, foster reconciliation and prevent repetition of victim's suffering. To these ends, a *Sistema Integral* or Integral System was founded. This system consists of different judicial and extrajudicial mechanisms. Three other pillars of the Peace Agreement also concern victims of the armed conflict directly: *Reforma Rural Integral, Integral Rural Reform* (Return and Relocation), *Fin del Conflicto*, (End of Conflict, and *Implementación, verificación y refrendación,* Implementation, verification, and endorsement of the Agreement. Two other pillars indirectly touch upon victims – *Solución al problema de las Drogas Illícitas*, Solutions on Drugs Trafficking and *Participación Política,* Political Participation.

Despite measures by the Colombian government to attend to the problems of the conflict's victims through the careful implementation of the Peace Agreement, in practice many displacement victims still lack access to humanitarian aid, jobs, education and/or health services. Other difficulties include a lack of official registration, discrimination, stigmatization, and violence. This thesis aims to understand how displacement victims residing in Bogotá politically organize themselves in the context of the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Displacement victims are among the most vulnerable Colombians and are often not represented in decision-making processes. Guarantees are often not endorsed or implemented which prompts them to organize themselves. Displacement victims have organized themselves before. They demanded the implementation of their basic rights and their entitlements to humanitarian aid and support as these obligations were not fulfilled by the State. These events showed how displacement victims ensured that their voices would be heard as they felt they were not listened to. In this thesis I seek how they are organized in the context of the most recent Peace Agreement.

[4]The summary of the Final Peace Agreement can be found in Annex 3.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

In the recent Peace Agreement, the recognition of the victims of the armed conflict has been made central. In the past, several laws have been established specifically for desplazados, internally displaced people. In 1997, Law 387 was passed, entitling *desplazados* to food support, a basic subsistence kit, medical and psychological attention, living accommodations, and transportation. From 2007 onwards, a revision of the law forced the government to provide humanitarian aid in the first three months of displacement. The Law 387 and its revision have solely a humanitarian approach.
In 2011, the government enacted the *Ley de Víctimas*, the Victims Law in an effort to entitle victims of the armed conflict access to free shelter, food, education, and health care. Hence, the government broadened up the concept of victims and reframed its target for intervention. Before 2011 only internally displaced people were regarded as victims of the conflict and could apply for aid and support. Building upon the Victims Law, the Peace Agreement has placed the victims of the conflict as central.
It comprises three entities for justice: the Truth Commission, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Commission for Missing Persons. All three entities should pursue recognition and justice for the victims of the conflict. Hence, in both the Victim's Law and the Peace Agreement, specific mechanisms have been put in place to secure victims' rights.

Looking more closely into the situation of displacement victims, the capital city has worrying statistics. Around 8% of Bogotá's residents are displaced people – including those who are officially registered and those who have not registered (personal communication, Jerónimo, 03-11). Many of them face numerous difficulties. The personal story of Paula, a social leader, illustrates these obstacles:

Paula originates from Bucaramanga, the capital of the department of Santander, in the central-north of Colombia. She became representative of her municipality and ended up as leader. When she became more well-known, she started to receive threats from the *Águilas Negras*, an extreme-right paramilitary group. They continued to threaten her and it caused her to flee together with her family. First they went to another city, but the threatening continued. She, her

husband and her three children had to flee once again. They arrived in Bogotá in 2006 and achieved housing in Suba, in the northern periphery of the capital. *"When I applied for humanitarian aid it got denied because I was not disabled, I was not pregnant. I applied three times but I got nothing as there were many people and I got later in the line. My children got an education but not from the government, the money came from the community. health was very difficult as we had no access to health care. I have many health difficulties and cannot go to the hospital. It is very hard to find work, for discrimination reasons. When you are displaced you get a stigma. Employers deny you because you are displaced. I can say that conditions of my life and of my house are bad."*

[November, 14]

On a more general note, the obstacles faced by displacement victims residing in Bogotá can roughly be divided in two.

A first general issue is the aspect of marginalization. The poverty numbers among displacement victims are shocking; 98% of them live in poverty, 82% of them in extreme poverty (Albuja and Ceballos 2010). Displacement victims often reside in the urban periphery of Bogotá. Most of these areas seen as marginalized, violent localities, as in most cases illegal armed groups control them. The areas where many displacement victims live are often vulnerable to floods and landslides.

There are several reasons why displacement victims live in such areas. Often, it is less expensive to live on the outskirts of a city. Prices of land and housing, public services, and costs of basic necessities are lower than in the more central parts. The city of Bogotá consists of many districts that are classified according to the socio-economic status of their inhabitants. This classification builds upon estratos, a system of levels where people living in lower levels pay less for basic services. It was meant to help marginalized people in reducing their costs, however, it has stratification effects as well. Many displacement victims cannot afford housing in higher estratos neighborhoods and are therefore forced to find cheaper options. Albuja and Ceballos (2010) explain that displacement victims in Bogotá, after staying with family and friends for a short period of time, settle in the city's periphery.

Access to formal land and the property market requires a high purchasing power. Access to housing subsidies requires a financial and

credit history. Often, displacement victims lack both. Adding up, there is a lot of economic abuse. Many employers discriminate and do not employ displacement victims. On the *cédula*, citizen identification card, it is stated that displacement victims belong to the vulnerable category and in which estrato they live. Employers hence know when people are displacement victims and reject them due to the stigma they bear of being uneducated as they come from the countryside. Landlords often think that displaced people won't pay rent. Employers often pay less than the minimum wage.
Other obstacles they experience are violence, stigmatization, sexual abuse, little access if any to health services and education and low employment rates.

A second general issue is the bureaucratic system and administrative hiccups. Displacement victims are a hidden population. Often, they are not registered (i.e. they have no *cédula*) and are not visible in systems. Moreover, they are hard to pinpoint geographically as there are no designated camps or neighborhoods (Shultz, García, et al. 2014).
There are several reasons why only about half of the displacement victims are registered. Due to the overlap of rural-urban migration, mainly for economic reasons, and displacement, displacement victims generally are not aware of their rights as forcedly displaced (Albuja and Ceballos 2010). Furthermore, displaced people often disguise the status of victim or displaced as they fear for discrimination and stigmatization. Many displacement victims live in anxiety for violence and persecution from urban fractions of the armed groups that displaced them in the first place (Shultz, García, et al. 2014). With regard to support, it often takes a long time for displacement victims to receive humanitarian aid. As they tend to be invisible in the registration system, it is hard for humanitarian aid to reach them. To receive aid, displacement victims are first required to register themselves personally at a governmental office in the city center. Not many people are aware of this when they arrive in Bogotá.
After being registered you need to be interviewed to be classified as 'poor' in order to receive social and humanitarian support. This process of registration for humanitarian aid often takes from six to eight months. Sometimes it even takes up to two years before humanitarian aid reaches the displacement victims (personal communication, Dulce María, 19-10).
These bureaucratic and administrative issues faced by displacement

victims are supposed to be alleviated by the Victims law. The law consists of two parts: 1. humanitarian temporary support is provided such as money and a place to sleep and live. 2; *reparación,* reparation, should deliver long term support such as education and public pardon. Most of the displaced people have received little humanitarian support and almost none have received reparación.
The first obstacle they face is to be included into the *Registro Único de Víctimas,* the Victims Register. However, they are often not informed about the mechanism of reparación and do not even have the money to pay a lawyer who can explain the law. Another complication is that displaced people often had to flee all of a sudden. In such emergency, few think of the necessity to rush out with identity documents, or others.

POST-AGREEMENT IS NOT POST-CONFLICT

In order to understand the relation between displacement victims and the State, a short review of Colombia's recent past can prove helpful. Colombia is a country with a long history of political violence and armed conflict. The conflict in Colombia between communist rebels and government forces began after a contested peace deal in 1958. This deal followed after years of a rural based civil war between the liberal and conservative parties of the country. This war is known as '*La Violencia*, the Violence'. Sealed by the elites, the peace deal divided the power in the country between these parties. Meanwhile, a small number of armed groups formed by liberals and communist successfully established some self-governed enclaves in remote regions of the country. The government, led by conservatives, initially ignored this development. However, in May 1964, it ran 'Operation Marquetalia'. Marquetalia was a self-governed enclave and the Colombian Army was ordered to attack these communist enclaves. In response to the attack, the guerillas dispersed to other nearby enclaves. Later, they reorganized as the '*Bloque Su*r, Southern Bloc' which was renamed to FARC-EP in 1966. FARC-EP became the official military arm of the Communist Party. Next to the FARC-EP other guerilla movements were created like the *Movimiento 19 de Abril*, 19th of April Movement (M19), the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional,* National Liberation Army (ELN), and *Ejército Popular de Liberación,* Population Liberation Army (EPL); however, FARC-EP remained the largest guerrilla movement. Most

of the time the armed conflict took place in rural areas. Intensification of the armed conflict only started in the 1970s and 1980s when right-wing paramilitary forces emerged. These private armies were financed for the largest part by wealthy landowners. They were created to protect their lands and themselves and fought side by side with the government military for a long time. The paramilitary forces are responsible for about 80 percent of the conflict's victims (Nussio 2016). Officially all the paramilitary forces were demobilized in 2006. In practice, however, many still control particular zones and participate in drugs trafficking. In Bogotá for instance, displacement victims still live in fear as they are afraid for active paramilitaries living in their neighborhoods.

Just recently, on the 24th of November 2016, a Peace Agreement has been agreed upon. The final version of this Agreement was signed in Havana, Cuba by the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP. In an attempt to give more legitimacy to the final document, president Santos subjected the agreement to a referendum. This referendum for approval was voted against with a small difference due to disagreements about the FARC-EP becoming a political party as well as about equal rights for women and the LGBT community. Eventually, after a total time of four years from the start of the negotiations, the Peace Agreement got unanimously approved by the Colombian Congress. The Peace Agreement included the possibility for the FARC-EP of becoming a political party, called FARC (*Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común* - Common Alternative Revolutionary Force).

The Agreement contains a number of interesting aspects. For the first time in history a Peace Agreement recognizes the concept of gender. In addition, it states progressive ideas about land restitution. At last, the Agreement's innovative view and focus on transitional justice has not been seen before. Transitional justice concerns the aftermath of conflict and large-scale human right abuses. It is not only about moving towards a peaceful civil society, but also about addressing past wrongs. The past will not be forgotten; rather it will be used as recognition of the need for justice. Throughout the entire Agreement, six pillars are identified as key – agricultural development, political participation, ending the conflict, illegal drugs, victims of the conflict, and implementation of the treat (Acuerdo Final 2016).

The Peace Agreement is seen as progressive, innovative, and ambitious. This is also why a lot is left to happen from a practical standpoint. Although the Peace Agreement has been signed, it is worth noting that Colombia still experiences conflict. The government, and the international community too, likes to define the period after the Agreement as a time of post-conflict; but most of the Colombian people always refer to it as a time of post-Agreement. Post-conflict and post-Agreement are not the same at all. In many parts of the country, violences ar still part of the daily life. Many zones left by the FARC-EC have been taken over by other armed militias: called "vacuum zones", they are now controlled by *bandas ilegales*, illegal armed forces such as paramilitary groups or groups of deserted guerrillas; drugs trafficking is an important part of these groups' activity. As a result, people are still being displaced and must flee to safer areas. Bogotá, for instance, is still at the receiving end of many victims. In various parts of the country, social leaders are targeted if not killed. Luciana, a social leader, says;

> "in Chocó [a department on the Pacific coast] they recently killed the daughter of a social leader and they [referring to the government] keep saying it is peace? This is one of the still so many conflicts. Therefore we do not talk about the *pósconflicto,* post-conflict as the state does. It is the *pósacuerdo,* post-agreement".
>
> [October 31, 2017]

Social leaders such as Luciana represent a certain group of people. In this thesis I have focused on social leaders whose constituency consist of victims of the armed conflict. In this thesis I understand social leaders as those with bridging capacities, who are seen as spokespersons and a voice for the victims, and who operate as controlling and monitoring actors.

Another complication of calling this period a time of post-conflict are the shortcomings in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. The University of Notre Dame's KROC Institute for Peace Studies released a report at the end of November 2017, presenting the results of a study on the effective implementation of the Colombian Peace Agreement. By then, only 17% of the implementation of the Peace Accord was fulfilled; 6% was halfway, 22% still in its infancy and a more than half of the implementation has not yet

started (KROC Institute for Peace Studies 2017). From this 17% fulfillment rate, most refers to the disarmament of the FARC-EP. An often-heard argument is that previous Peace Agreements did not succeed: in 1992 the Colombian government reached a peace agreement with M19 (19th of April Movement), the first guerilla group to demobilize; soon, two other groups (EPL – Popular Liberation Army, and MAQL – Armed Movement Quintín Lame) followed the demobilization. However, talks with the FARC-EP were unsuccessful. The conflict continued and peace was still not achieved. Therefore people often wonder why the current Peace Agreement would succeed while conflict recurred after previous agreements.

OBJECTIVES

Above I described several issues and obstacles faced by displacement victims. These problems continue despite of the current Peace Agreement. Through this thesis I aim to fill a societal gap of misrepresentation and misunderstanding affecting the marginalized IDPs. I wish to make loud the voice of displacement victims in Bogotá as they often feel that they are not listened to. They also consider themselves abandoned and not represented: to tell their story is my goal. As I echo their voice regarding the Peace Agreement, I shall call this their "political voice". The term political voice does not only refer to vocal and forefront expressions; it also covers their acts and practices, both at the front- and back stage.

This thesis is an attempt to provide more understanding of the political engagement at the grassroots level in Bogotá. The Peace Agreement is said to be and promoted as the most progressive and innovative agreement in history - on paper. The political engagement of displacement victims is scarcely covered in (Western) literature, whilst their actual acts and practices are remarkable and fascinating. Literature on IDPs in Colombia is ample, but tends to focus on housing, health care, and violence. Little work has touched upon political engagement at the grassroots level. With the Peace Agreement in mind, I believe that the time has come to listen to the political voice of displacement victims. While researching literature for my thesis proposal I found little to no information about social leaders. But the fieldwork I conducted made clear that the involvement of social leaders was highly relevant for the political organizations of displacement victims.

This thesis' objective is to contribute to an academic debate on the IDPs' political agency. I understand political agency as the sum of practices to engage with governance and authority structures. Not many scholars have touched upon the issue of political agency and if so, most of them focused on formal interpretations. In my theoretical framework I elaborate on different perspectives on political agency. In response to those different perspectives, I strengthen my own understanding of political agency. Moreover I explain why I go beyond a formal interpretation of "political agency" by building upon empirical evidence from authors such as Appadurai (2001); Anand (2011); Chatterjee (2008); Auyero (2015); Lazar (2012); Lazar and Nuijten (2013); and Nuijten (2015). Within my line of argumentation, I fortify the concept of political agency and demonstrate how it can be a worthwhile approach in understanding political self-organization at the grassroots level.

Finally, I hope to make the voice of displacement victims better heard. I aim to bridge the societal gap between the Peace Agreement and the most concerned targets, the IDPs at the grassroots level.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to cover the research problem and the objectives I have formulated the following main research questions.

> "How do displacement victims residing in Bogotá organize themselves politically?"
>
> "How do they make use of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement's provisions to further their cause?"

To answer the main research questions I have formulated two sub questions. The sub questions aim to study the actions and language of IDPs in relation to the Peace Agreement and in their dealings with governance and authority structures. I make a distinction between the 'visible' and the 'invisible' in expressions and actions. The dichotomy between the 'visible' and the 'invisible' relates to Goffmann's dichotomy between front stage and back stage (1959).

I. "How do displacement victims engage with governance and authority structures in light of the Peace Agreement?"
   - o In which ways do they interact with governance and authority structures? Where and when do they engage? Which sets of acts and practices are performed (and how) that are:
     a) Visible (e.g. actions such as demonstrations or making public relations)
     b) Invisible? (e.g. actions such as using patron-client relations, or informal pressures to ensure to receive humanitarian aid)

II. "How do displacement victims express themselves in light of the Peace Agreement?"
   - o Which ways of framing are being used? How do they recognize themselves in this Peace Agreement? Which language do they use for their political voice that is:
     a) Visible (e.g. language in demonstrations or in open negotiations, in public space)
     b) Invisible? (e.g. language in bars, at home, or in the neighborhood on the street, hidden and private space)

In the following chapter (chapter 2) I discuss on what academic lens I use to scrutinize my research questions: my theoretical framework. Hereafter, in chapter 3, I elaborate on how I conducted my research in order to answer my questions. Before I start off with illustrating my argument, I comment on a brief history of examples how displacement victims have organized themselves in the past by occupying public space. Chapter Four then covers the current situation of social leaders of displacement victims in Colombia. Chapter Five deals with the concept of identity politics while chapter Six will focus on the creation of political space. In the seventh chapter I zoom in on how social leaders seek alliances. Chapter Eight is a discussion on political agency. Finally, my conclusion and recommendations will be exposed.

"No hay nada más revolucionario que las letras"
"There is nothing more revolutionary than writing"
– Unknown

Rethinking political agency

Essentially, the purpose of this research is to echo the political voice of displacement victims in Bogotá. I do so by aiming at understanding how they organize themselves politically in the light of the Peace Agreement in Colombia. I call this the political voice of the displacement victims.

In this theoretical framework I first elaborate on different perspectives regarding the concept of political agency. In response to the different perspectives, I fortify my own understanding of political agency. I argue how the concept of political agenda can be used to provide a powerful insight in how displacement victims organize themselves politically. I build upon other authors and provide examples of empirical evidence. I understand political agency as being the sum of practices of ordinary people engaging and challenging existing authorities and power structures. The fundament of this concept is based on an extended understanding of citizenship. Going beyond the formality of the law, citizenship entails multiple perceptions (Lazar 2012). I conclude this theoretical framework by linking it to the sub questions on language and actions in visible and invisible spaces.

Before I start with my theoretical framework, I would like to men-

tion two abstract ways of thinking that are the foundation of the framework. To allow myself to recognize different social spheres that overlap, I follow Von Benda-Beckmann's argument on legal pluralism. I believe it is important to recognize the co-existence of different normative orders in one single socio-political space (F. von Benda-Beckmann 2002). Specially since this research is about what Betts (2009) calls a 'symbiotic relationship' between IDPs and the State. Due to legal and quasi-legal definitions of displaced people, these same people enter in a symbiotic relationship with the state.
In addition, I find Saskia Sassen's concept of denationalized citizenship (2002) fascinating. Sassen (2002) explains how those who are "unauthorized yet recognized" and those who are "authorized yet unrecognized" extend the traditional conceptualization of citizenship. With the former she means individuals that despite their legal exclusion seem to be able to move between multiple meanings of citizenship. This is done mostly through ways of negotiation. An example can be undocumented immigrants. The latter – authorized yet unrecognized – involve those who are full citizens yet not recognized as political subjects. Though being unrecognized, this category does have political capacities and do participate politically. As elaborated in the introduction, displacement victims encounter issues of both un-authorization and un-recognition. Approximately half of the IDPs in the municipality of Bogotá are not registered, hence they are unauthorized. Despite their marginality, they do engage with the State, through identity politics, the creation of political space, and seek alliances. By understanding that people who are unauthorized or unrecognized can still negotiate and have political capacities, I see how displacement victims can engage with governance and authority structures.

POLITICAL AGENCY

In studies concerning displacement victims in Colombia, and more specifically in Bogotá, authors have considered health care, housing, and violence (Ramírez et al. 2003; Olarte and Wall 2012; Shultz et al. 2014; Shultz, Ceballos, et al. 2014; Berney 2011; Zeiderman 2013; Albuja and Ceballos 2010). But none has touched upon the concept of political agency. In this thesis I use a political approach in order to understand how displacement victims engage with existing authorities and power structures in light of the recent Peace Agreement. Therefore, I put the concept of political agency at the heart of my

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theoretical framework.

In agency theory, the general understanding on an agency relationship is that one party acts on behalf of another (Shapiro 2005; Bendickson et al. 2016; Eisenhardt 1989). Agency theory is controversial (Eisenhardt 1989) and applies to a wide range of interpretations (Bendickson et al. 2016). Nonetheless, in this wide range little attention is paid to political agency. In political science the agency paradigm is vague: principals delegate to agents the authority to carry out their political preferences (Shapiro 2005). When authors write explicitly about political agency, many refer to the voting or electoral system (Levy 2014); politician-technocrat relations (Eggertsson and Le Borgne 2010); political party systems (Driver, Hensby, and Sibthorpe 2012; Câmara and Bernhardt 2015); or public administration (Kallio et al. 2015). Mainly, Western authors tend to focus on a formal interpretation of political agency. This focus might originate from Marshall's (1950) traditional understanding of citizenship. According to Marshall (1950), citizenship consists of three elements; the civil, the political, and the social. The civil relates to rights for individual freedom and the social relates to the rights to live the life of a civilized being. The political part of citizenship, according to him, adheres to the right to participate in the exercise of power. My aim is to go beyond only formal (like voting and electoral) interpretations of political agency. These elements are built upon the formal status of members as part of a community. In this research I attempt to go beyond this interpretation that is based on a universal status of belonging. I follow Chantal Mouffe (1991), who distances herself from Marshal by stating that citizenship is more than just being formally part of a community. Citizenship goes beyond its legal status and is more than just a passive relationship with the State based only on rights. From her perspective, citizenship involves active political participation of citizens as well. Rather than only the static and administrative part, citizenship consists of dynamic processes. Sian Lazar (2004) is another author who goes beyond the traditional understanding of citizenship. She understands citizenship as a set of practices through which societies organize political participation and exclusion. Moreover, it involves the active participation in everyday political processes. She argues the normative character of citizenship and regards political agency as a crucial aspect. For her, political agency is about citizens who make themselves political subjects. More concretely, I follow Monique Nuijten (2015), who

sees political agency as the engagement of ordinary people with existing authority and power structures. Or, the ability to engage in the *political*. According to Chantal Mouffe (2005), the *political* means the antagonistic dimension that is always present in relations of governance and authority. For Mouffe (2005), the *political* provides a set of practices and institutions through which an order is created, organizing human coexistence in the context of conflictuality. This is what she defines as politics.

Getting back to the notion of the engagement, I would like to make a link with the Peace Agreement. Displacement victims engage with existing authority and power structures that are represented through the Peace Agreement in Colombia. Therefore, they are part of the political. In this engaging, the terms 'acts' and 'set of practices' enter my understanding of political agency. I consciously use the word engaging as a verb, as I see political agency as a continuous process.

There are many registered and unregistered IDPs in Colombia's capital city and many of them face problems of marginalization. Arjun Appadurai (2001), Partha Chatterjee (2008), and Nikhil Anand (2011) are three influential Indian authors who focus on agency and citizenship of the urban marginalized. They analyze agency and see how poor people's politics allow people to have the ability to engage in the *political*. I echo Auyero (2015) in seeing the State as both an abstract, macrolevel structure and a concrete, microlevel set of institutions with which the urban marginalized interact in direct and immediate ways. State as both a macro level and micro level set of institutions relates to 'existing governance and authority structures' that forms part of political agency.

Appadurai, Anand, and Chatterjee all refer to the engagement of the marginalized with other legalities or authorities and power structures. Appadurai (2001) explains that the urban marginalized organize a reconstitution of citizenship in cities. These claims of the marginalized are built upon their ability to make use of gained knowledge of earlier experiences. Anand (2011), relates these claims to citizenship. Through self-mobilization and the application of social and material claims, the marginalized are recognized as people with agency and the ability to derive benefits from resources. Although Appadurai and Anand emphasize the concept of citizenship, I recognize political agency as well. The claims they refer to are addressed to authorities and power structures. In the case of dis-

placement victims in Bogotá, examples of visible claim-making are e.g. demonstrations or the occupation of public space. They claimed recognition and framed themselves as displacement victims.

The relation of the (urban) marginalized, in this case displacement victims, with the State is well explained by Chatterjee (2006). He argues that it is often the classification as targets of governmental intervention that brings the (urban) marginalized 'into a certain political relationship with the state'. In Colombia, governmental intervention is represented through the enactment of e.g. the Victim's Law and the Peace Agreement. The interaction between the displacement victims and the State used to be based on a humanitarian discourse but has changed into a discourse of victimhood (personal communication, Carolina (*Universidad Javeriana,* Javeriana University), 03-10-2017; Valeria (*Universidad Naciona,* National Universityl), 03-10-2017). So, by being targets of the Colombian State, displacement victims are brought into a political relationship with the State. With other words, they are engaging with the State. In Chatterjee's book The Politics of the Governed (2006), the interaction between the marginalized and the State is reflected upon. He describes an arena that exists of the governor and the governed. In this arena, the governed negotiate their livelihood with the governor. As illustrated in the introduction, displacement victims have used the occupation of public parks to negotiate their entitlements for humanitarian aid and support. In the arena one can analyze how claim-making, framing, and conceptualization of discourses are constructed from different perspectives – e.g. the governor, the governed, or others such as NGOs or social movements.

Stepputat and Sorensen (2001) provide an interesting example of how this situation has occurred in the Peruvian Central Andes. They explain how warfare has caused many people from rural areas to find refuge in the regional capital city. At first they were described as 'migrants from the zones of emergency'. When local NGOs and the church experienced difficulties in providing long-term aid, they changed their language. From then on people that sought refuge from the warfare were defined as IDPs; a new category had been created. Later on, IDPs were seen as victims. Stepputat and Sorensen argue that this category of people can be interpreted as having formed through the intersection of institutional/political dynamics and the livelihood strategies of the people. An empirical example in Colombia is given by Britto Ruiz (2012). She found how displaced

women started small solidarity initiatives of material and emotional support. Later on, these actions expanded to a bureaucratic level in order to obtain humanitarian assistance and subsequently the restitution of basic rights. According to Britto Ruiz (2012), these actions enabled women to start a political dialogue with national and local governments. In these actions, collective identity plays a key role as their political agenda is oriented with own conceptualizations, e.g. gender, justice, or displacement (Britto Ruiz 2012).
Hence, labelling is done both by the State and by people at the grassroots level, and shows a symbiotic relation. The State tends to objectify people and turn the people into standardized categories, rather than focusing on the person. In addition, as Polzer (2008) argues, a broad categorization can create problems of categorical invisibility. A seminal study of Aihwa Ong et al. (1996) adheres to this two-way relationship between the State and newcomers – in her case immigrants. Top-down processes of 'being made', or being labelled, cohere with bottom-up processes of 'self-making'. Betts (2009) explains that due to the legal or quasi-legal definitions of refugees and IDPs, forced migration (whether internal or external) has a symbiotic relationship with the State.

In Colombia, what started with the Victims Law continued with the Peace Agreement. As IDPs are now seen as victims, the humanitarian perspective has evolved into a focus on transitional justice. Such a transformation is not uncommon, as explained by Stepputat and Sorensen. In the case of this research, the broad conceptualization of IDPs or victims can lead to problems of standardization and categorization by the State. A telling example is the poor access to humanitarian aid for displacement victims. They are hard to pinpoint geographically and diverse in where they live. Therefore they are difficult to access when they are standardized or categorically invisible. From the bottom-up side, literature has shown how people at the grassroots level move 'in' and 'out' of labels. I would like to refer to Von Benda-Beckmann's (1981) concept of forum shopping: when a label does not fit your demands, you can shift to another label that suits you better. There might be different benefits to be categorized as displacement victims or as victim. This moving between labels explains how people engage with existing authorities and structures.

LANGUAGE AND ACTIONS

To strengthen the understanding of political agency, I would like to add the notion of the visible and the invisible. For political agency, it is important not to focus only on the more visible, ambitious and contentious performances (Nuijten 2015). Following James Scott's concept on hidden transcripts (1990), I believe that it is important to be aware of the possibility of existence of a quiet everyday politics. In the formulation of the sub research questions I made a distinction between the 'visible' and the 'invisible' in language and actions. In the *political* multiple languages are being used in relation to different expressions of political agency. Nuijten (2015) calls this "languages of the political". These languages reflect on the political and are not necessarily coherent or consistent. They reflect on citizens as political subjects. In this thesis I focus on the languages being used and expressed in relation to existing authorities and power structures. Language can be visible in demonstrations or in open negotiations. With the invisibility of language I mean e.g. language in private and hidden space, for instance at bars, at home, or in the neighborhood.

With regard to actions, visible examples are provided in the introduction. In the past, displacement victims have demonstrated in public space and have occupied public parks. These are expressions of how displacement victims visibly engage with the State. In the next part I provide an example of invisible action which can be of relevance: patron-client relations. Lazar (2004) argues how clientelism is a part of citizenship practice. She builds her argument on how citizens actually engage with the State through patron-client relations. They do so by developing personalized relationships with politicians, or what many understand as clientelism. In her study, Lazar analyses the run-up to the elections in El Alto, Bolivia. Residents of poor urban neighborhoods seek personal relationships with politicians. These relationships have a reciprocal value: they aim to let politicians feel obliged to do something in return for their electoral support. The relations can lead to financial compensation (e.g. the provision of rice or wool) or being chosen for certain jobs. Furthermore, the patron-client relations with local politicians make the urban poor feel more represented. In this research I follow Lazar in understanding clientelism as a set of strategies through which citizens attempt to make politics and politicians more representative

and responsive. Herein, rather than being only passive, clients have an active role. In liberal representative democracies today, political agency is organized as a set of rights and obligations (Lazar 2004). Often this is related to the formal voting system, which is seen as a visible relation with the State. I argue that this engagement however goes beyond this visible relation between State and citizen. Using patron-client relations can be a set of practices through which citizens engage with the State as well – e.g. in the person of a local rooted politician. In that sense, invisible actions as using patron-client relations (or clientelism in general) are subject to political agency. In these actions citizens actively shape and use relations with the representatives of the State. By doing so, they engage with governance and authority structures. In the case of displacement victims in Bogotá, they are often regarded as invisible to the system (Shultz, García, et al. 2014; Zeiderman 2013). Many IDPs are not officially registered and it is difficult for humanitarian aid to reach their areas of residence. Hence visible relations with the State are not always effective. To whom do displacement victims go to when official aid does not reach them? Next to looking into visible and invisible *language*, this research looks also into visible and invisible *actions* of the displacement victims in their dealings with governance and authority structures.

IDENTITY POLITICS

With regard to the actions and practices of labelling, I would suggest to introduce the term of identity politics. I argue that identity politics enables people at the grassroots level to engage with the political. Hence, it plays a role in political agency. In the following chapters I show how social leaders engage in such acts and practices. I therefore choose to introduce identity politics in the debate around political agency. Identity politics can often be found in theoretical debates of political mobilizations promoting the public recognition of particular identities based on gender, ethnic, racial, religious, or sexual orientation (Béland 2017). Béland (2017) however argues that identity is a fundamental element of politics across time and space, regardless of the type of actors and their goals. By recognizing identity politics one can gain powerful insight about how actors understand themselves and are seen by others. In addition, as Béland (2017) argues, it enables to formulate the impact of identities on the politics of public policy. He follows by stating that these identities

can become an integral part of political mobilization.

Before understanding identity politics, it is crucial to understand the meaning of identity. Herein I agree with the American political scientist James D. Fearon (1999) who elaborates on the understanding of identity as we know it today. He therefore presents two meanings of identity. The first is identity as "a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors". The second is identity as "socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential" (Fearon 1999, 2). Both meanings can also be understood as one. In this thesis I adopt both meanings of Fearon as their combination can be applied usefully to the contexts of victims. Displacement victims are placed into a specific social category. On the one hand this social category is defined the State and the policy it makes for displacement victims. On the other hand displacement victims are brought into this social category by similar characteristics they have amongst each other. As a result, many victims of the armed conflict take victimhood and other identities as a distinguishing feature.

Béland (2017) argues that identity and politics are closely entangled. The connection is revealed in dynamics of political framing and mobilization of collective identities. This framing of identities can be done by political actors. Mols (2012) describes these political actors as identity entrepreneurs. They are political actors who draw on, reframe and amplify existing identities. In doing so, they promote particular policy alternatives and political agendas. The fieldwork which I conducted for this thesis demonstrate that the acts and practices of social leaders are remarkable: social leaders engage with the political in multiple ways. One of them is by framing their identity to stress their and the government's political agenda. Bernstein (2005) is well-known for works on social movements. She argues that to act politically, all social movements need identity for empowerment. I do not mean to claim the presence of social movements per se as I do not focus particularly on social movements. What I do want to stress is the shared identity that is necessary for a collective's mobilization and that can be used to enter a political field. Bernstein (2005, 16) argues that identities can be "deployed strategically as a form of collective action to change institutions". In addition, expressing identity can enable the "terrain of conflict to become the individual person so that the values, categories, and practices of individuals become subject to debate (Bernstein 2005, 16)".

The conceptual framework developed above has enabled me to specify my own understanding of "political agency", and I used it to conduct my research. In the following chapter I elaborate on the methodology of the research.

Performing a Political Ethnography

INTRODUCTION

How to study the political self-organization of displacement victims in Bogotá? The political self-organization has a meaningful yet intangible character. The methodology I chose is based on ethnographic research as ethnography aims to understand sociocultural problems in communities and institutions. This chapter on the methodology of the research is structured as follows. First I briefly explain the relevance of political ethnography. Secondly, I expand on the methods I used during my field work, and continue with explaining my data analysis. Subsequently I discuss ethical reflections in this research. I conclude this chapter with personal reflections.

Van Hulst et al (2015) write that ethnographic research implies a way of knowing, a particular set of methods. Ethnographic research involves a long-term process and builds upon face-to-face interaction with people in the research community. An essential and relevant aspect of this type of research is twofold: first, as researcher you are "getting close to action", and second, it is about "making meaning". The latter is based upon my life experience as researcher. Ethnographic research helps to provide insights for both academics and people in the field. In addition, it allows to dissect State practices as well as how people make meaning out of the socio-political

environment in which they find themselves. A political insight enabled me to scrutinize how people are politically self-organized; or, more precisely, how they engage politically and express their voice in light of the Peace Agreement.

According to Wolford (2007, 19), a political ethnography refers to

"the politicized nature of ethnography as a method that is uniquely suited to examining and exposing the power relations that inflect all social life. At the same time, it refers to the need for (and practice of) ethnographic investigations of politics, where elections and states are no longer the privileged site of political life, rather people are."

With this quote in mind, I realized the importance of *people* in political life. My own interest in power relations that influence social life and how people operate in political life allowed me to perform this study through a political approach. In the end, what fascinated me most was how the people themselves used a political lens as well in their actions and language.

METHODS

In total I visited Bogotá for three months. The first three weeks I contributed to explorative fieldwork. My objective was to better grasp the situation by gaining first-hand information through semi-structured and informal interviews. By talking to six contacts at two different universities I gained a deeper insight of the overall context regarding my research topic. At the same time, I developed trustful relationships with social leaders and other displacement victims.
In order to perform a relevant political ethnographic study, I used a triangulation of qualitative research methods through participatory observation (PO) and direct observation, structured and semi-structured in-depth interviews, and informal interviews. The scope of these methods was oriented towards the 'visible' and 'invisible' language and actions of IDPs. The interviews covered eight life-stories of respondents, which helped to provide me with a broader understanding of the historical context around their political involvement. Next to the interviews, I obtained a better knowledge of the context through participatory observations and the observation of texts (on posters or images via WhatsApp). Echoing Bernard (2011), participatory observation gave me the opportuni-

ty to be part of the situation while simultaneously observing what was actually happening. By attending demonstrations or gatherings of organizations or movements, I got a first-hand sense of the acts and practices of social leaders. Demonstrations are a good example of visible political engagement. For the hidden part, I aimed to be alongside displacement victims when they gathered and discussed these demonstrations. Moreover, by visiting social leaders at their homes I participated in their life multiple times. This required the building of trust for a good and useful relationship.

Regarding the interviews, I developed a list of six categories of questions: basic information, obstacles faced by displacement victims in Bogotá face, ways of organizing, language used, actions undertaken, and victims' opinion about the Peace Agreement. Within these categories, I designed a list of more specific questions. During my interviews I did not strictly follow the categories or the list of questions, but I made sure all categories and questions were covered. This enabled me to stimulate a smooth and substantial conversation. Moreover, it allowed me to go more in-depth after a couple of weeks. It gave me the opportunity to ask about key issues and it simultaneously left space for the interviewee to cover additional and interesting issues. In the last month of my fieldwork I realized the importance of social leaders. Therefore I added a seventh category to my initial list : the acts and practices of social leaders. In my last week I sent a final message via WhatsApp to all the social leaders and most of the other respondents I had met with. WhatsApp, as I shall discuss more extensively hereafter, is an important communication method for social leaders and displacement victims. In this message I asked them a final question and suggested it could be answered either in written or oral form. The final message inquired about their perception of the acts and practices of social leaders within the Peace process, and their relation with the State and their community.

I intended to reach my respondents through a combination of snowball and quota sampling. First, I started with snowball sampling. After observing or talking to people, I asked randomly to get in touch with social leaders. In this way, I got to talk with approximately 15 social leaders. In total I interviewed 32 displacement victims, 4 government representatives, and 6 experts (from universities or large NGOs). I realized that snowball and quota sampling had limitations, for they entail a biased perspective. However, I realized soon enough that I was the only way to get in touch with them as in-

formal relationships are key in Colombia. I saw half of the identified social leaders on a regular basis, once every week or two. With these social leaders I had almost daily contact via WhatsApp. They would send me messages, pictures, and information about coming events, protests, and updates about the Peace Agreement. I also followed more narrowly two social leaders: we met every week for two and a half month, during private meetings and public reunions. I also spoke with six social leaders whom I met only once in person. However, with most of them I kept contact with via WhatsApp. In the months following my return home I kept receiving messages from social leaders keeping me informed about their actions of protest.

DATA ANALYSIS

All the information gathered was recorded in field notes. I intended to work efficiently by starting the coding process quite early, but I realized that understanding and insight were reached at the end of the fieldwork as well. Therefore I remained eager to recognize new perspectives on the topic. Back in the Netherlands, I developed a coding tree. After analyzing all my data I roughly defined four categories: 1. Current situation of social leaders, 2. Identity politics, 3. The creation of political space, and 4. Seeking alliances. Each category consisted of multiple subcategories.

At the beginning of my research I intended to apply a relatively new method in research; 'Video for Data Collection'. My aim was to collect visual footage that could contribute to my data. It can disclose aspects of (inter)action and document certain practices. Moreover, the use of video provides researchers with powerful 'microscopes' that greatly increase the interactional detail (Derry et al. 2010). Soon I realized the importance of privacy. As I described in the introduction, issues of security remain to be relevant in post-Agreement Colombia. Many social leaders face- threats and risks for assassination. Some social leaders operate under a 'nom de guerre'. This prompted me to finally decide against the use of video as privacy and safety were of the utmost importance. All of my respondents are anonymized and I did not take the risk of using visual data in my final report.

Throughout this thesis, I rely upon the personal life-stories of the social leaders I spoke with. In these personal stories, they recount why and how they have become displaced, and face threats and risks of assassination. My conversations with social leaders have been

worthwhile and provided me with valuable information for this thesis. Their personal life-stories are of high relevance to understand the acts and practices of social leaders. Some of the people I only introduce briefly at first, but I provide more details further in the thesis. This choice was made because I did not want to introduce all social leaders straight after each other. Reading so many personal stories right after each other would perhaps lead to confusion.

ETHICS

Before I start off with the ethical notion in this thesis, I would like to mention that all my interviews have been performed with informed consent of the people. For privacy and security reasons all names have been anonymized. All names of social leaders and displacement victims are fake in order to protect their identity.

The topics surrounding displacement victims are rather sensitive. Displacement victims often face stigmatization or discrimination, many have to deal with traumas (Shultz, García, et al. 2014). For a variety of reasons, sometimes victims strategically stay unregistered. An ethical dilemma that arises is on how to deal with this aspect while researching this thesis' topic. I always intended to be aware of the ethical dimension. What to do with the gathered information and how to deliver the gained insights are important issues to be considered. Therefore it was important to always have informed consent when with the respondents. Being aware of the security issues, I was mindful of the need to protect the identity of the people I spoke with. I chose to not use film or photography and did not speak with others about my contacts. I would save In-depth questions for private moments. For me it was important to build a two-way relationship and to be self-reflexive. By asking questions and participating, I was only extracting information. I dealt with this by giving information about myself as well: big questions as "who am I?" and "where do you come from?" as well as small information regarding my favorite food and musical preference. To make the two-way relationship fair, I communicated with my respondents about the information I obtained. I have promised to send a summary of my thesis, in Spanish, to the movements I followed and to the respondents who indicated that they would welcome such a document.
To be aware of the personal situation and safety concerns of the respondents was paramount. Moreover, I believe that being empathic

and kind, bringing in a smile and humor, will always contribute to build a trustworthy relationship.

REFLECTIONS

The process of conducting fieldwork can be compared to the flow of a river. Wild and chaotic sometimes, calmer and rested at other times. Sometimes the river dries up and few opportunities are seen to proceed. I experienced a similar "drought" after a couple weeks in my research. I was actually aware of the desiccation of my metaphorical river, but still had hope – or maybe blind dedication – that the project I was pursuing would eventually work out. After one week in Bogotá, I was informed about a project of the Javeriana University, which was called *Vidas Móviles,* Mobile Lives. *Vidas Móviles* is a project that started in 2006 to deal with psychological issues, health and emotional problems faced by IDPs. The objective was to guide and accompany forcedly displaced people in Bogotá. With my own research objective in mind I quickly became enthusiastic about this project and applied to run along the project's managers. My application unfortunately did not pass as I did not have an official agreement with the university. Neither did my home university. At the end I am grateful for the new opportunities that have crossed my path. I perhaps would not have realized the importance and relevance of social leaders in the current peace process. If I would have joined *Vidas Móviles* I would have participated in health services. As recalled above, much attention has already been paid to that topic. Now, as I acted more autonomously, I could really focus on the political. This allowed me to find out how political self-organization is rooted and sprouted. It shows how a dry river can find new life and become powerful once again. To be honest, the denial of joining *Vidas Móviles* was the only 'real' struggle I had to cope with. I very much enjoyed doing ethnographic research and interactng with as many people as possible. These people included displacement victims, social leaders, and various experts. Actually, I sometimes had to temper my motivation to hold interviews. After an interview is registered, it still needs to be transcribed. Many interviews took a couple of hours which also led to many hours of transcribing.

Another struggle is the tendency I have to get overly enthusiastic when I come across new and interesting themes. I therefore had some difficulties to narrow down my research and its objectives. In these three months of fieldwork I felt that I could have started a doz-

en of also interesting researches. I had to be cautious to stay focused on my topic and not to include extracurricular theories. In my final theoretical framework I added one theory (on identity politics) as I found it relevant in the context. Despite of that, I stuck to my original choice of theories.

In the field work, I always endeavored to be self-reflexive. I believe it is, certainly in doing research, of utmost importance. In this I echo Galani-Moutafi (2000); self-reflectiveness involves an awareness of oneself and of the importance of giving due credit to the voice of the Other. For me as researcher it was of great help I could speak Spanish. People would rapidly and easily open up as soon as they understood that language was not an issue. However, in spite of my practicing Spanish, I remained seen as an outsider. Social leaders always legitimized my presence in their house and protests by telling others I was one of them. However, I was always portrayed as *el Holandés,* the Dutchman, who was there to see what was happening. People positioned me as a controlling and monitoring actor. In addition, they saw me as someone who could tell their story to the outside world. It always amazed me that people would tell their intimate and emotional stories. My being an outsider actually proved useful. Usually, displacement victims would no rapidly tell others about their personal ordeals, afraid as thay are of talking to the same party who made them flee in the first place. My identity as a "Spanish speaking white foreigner" allowed me to easily get in touch with people, to get along with them and to listen to their stories. In addition, my being a man presumably also affected my research. Although I did not *feel* it helped me in achieving results and gaining respect, I do think it impacted on my work. Colombia, as many South-American countries, is a masochist society and it is crucial to keep in mind that men are often in the majority when speaking about functionaries and higher officials. However, in my fieldwork I met many, if not more than men, inspiring women who expressed empowerment and authority. Still, many decision-making positions are filled by men. I am aware that should I been a woman, I would have faced other difficulties. On the other hand, I know that women can extract from men more information. Sometimes female researchers are given certain information: providing information can have a dual meaning. After all, I think that the fact of my being a white foreigner researcher played a more significant role than my being a man. Gender does affect others' perception and may elicit a special treatment. However, in my case, I did not feel that it gave me either a big advantage or a big

disadvantage.

Interlude

A Brief History of Previous Self-organization by Occupying Public Space

Prior to exposing the experiences of displacement victims whom I have met, I would like to sketch a brief history of how IDPs have politically organized themselves. Through this section I hope to clarify the contextual background before I refer to my own empirical information and thoughts. The most famous example is the event that took place on July 31st, 2008. More or less 200 displacement victims had occupied Bogotá's 93rd Street Park (Zeiderman 2013). In a non-violent action, demonstrators protested against the government's failure to provide humanitarian assistance guaranteed by the law (Law 387) to displaced people. The park they occupied is one of Bogotá's major symbol of wealth and is located in the richest area of the city. A few months later, displacement victims again came into action. They felt that the government had not complied with the promises made after the first demonstration. In March 2009, displacement victims again occupied one of Bogotá's prominent public parks. Whereas the earlier protests only lasted one day, this one was meant to continue for an undefined period of time. Tents and shelters of scavenged materials turned the park into a visible refugee camp. Zeiderman (2013) explains that in two months, the amount of displacement victims had increased to 1,200 persons in the park. Their spokespersons entered into negotiations with both national

and municipal authorities.

Prior to this, there had been similar events that made use of occupying public space as a strategy for obtaining political recognition and visibility. They demanded the implementation of their basic rights and their entitlements to humanitarian aid and support. But in order to do so, they first had to be recognized as *desplazados* (Zeiderman 2013). By occupying a park, aimed at making themselves visible in public space. In addition, these actions intended to redefine their place in the city. These events show that IDPs occupied public space in order to ensure that their voices would be heard and to express themselves. No longer moved to the margins, they manifested their displacement by taking their place at the heart of the public space (Olarte and Wall 2012). Herein, I recognize Partha Chatterjee's (2004) concept of "the biopolitics of the governed": those with little recourse to State benefits negotiate the imperative of their livelihood. Today, there are still demonstrations and movements of protest taking place on a regular basis. The examples above show how displacement victims have organized themselves in order to engage with governance and authority structures. In addition, there is a broad range of movements and organizations working for displacement victims in Bogotá. These movements and organizations consist of IDPs and professionals in the field of social work, humanitarian aid, legal aid, health care, and more.

From the past to nowadays: in the following chapters I focus on the current situation of social leaders (chapter 4) and the ways how they, and displacement victims, are politically self-organized (chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8).

Chapter 4

The Current Situation of Social Leaders

"Many social leaders are recently getting killed. I really want it to be peace, all the victims seek peace. But they do not want peace. In our fight for peace we have lost our fear for death. We know it can happen every day to us. But if it happens, we can say that we have worked on peace for the people in need."
- Luciana, social leader.

[October, 31]

INTRODUCTION

When I talked with Luciana, we sat in the office she was given to by a befriended official. She later admitted that she fears to leave the building alone, as she is afraid to be threatened or even killed. 'They' in the second sentence of her quote above refers to the State.

The present chapter analyzes the current situation of social leaders of victims of the armed conflict in Colombia, and more specifically in Bogotá. The social leaders I spoke with all represent a community of victims of the armed conflict. In fact, most of these victims are displacement victims and have faced additional assaults such as sexual violence, homicides, *falsos positivos* – false positives[4], and forced

[2] The term false positives refers to the time of Álvaro Uribe, who was the president of Colombia between 2002-2010. Under his rule, soldiers were given financial

disappearances.

I first shall go into more details regarding the threats and risks of assassination often faced by social leaders. Safety remains a critical issue in post-Agreement Colombia. Second, I shall review the language and discourse that is being used by social leaders around the Peace Agreement. Finally, I shall focus on the acts and practices of social leaders in the context of the Peace Agreement and shall explain how these acts and practices are perceived and defined by themselves, their community, and the State.

THREATS AND ASSASINATIONS

In post-Agreement Colombia many conflicts are still ongoing. Currently, social leaders are still being threatened and sometimes even killed. The numbers on assassinations of social leaders differ. The UNHCR recorded more than 80 assassinations in 2017, while the Ministry of Defense only reported 54 cases. Civil society organizations however have documented more cases: '*Somos Defensores*, We are defenders' counted 90 killings and INDEPAZ, Institute of Studies for Development and Peace counted 137[5]. Most of those assassinated social leaders were communal leaders and *defensores de derechos humanos*, defenders of human rights, living in rural areas. As elaborated in the introduction, many gaps left by the FARC are now filled by other armed groups. These armed groups are *bandas criminales*, criminal groups, paramilitary forces, and/or former guerilla groups. Social leaders fight, and have always fought, against these groups and the government as the latter has committed human rights violations too. They have no official function like State functionaries but protect and take care of their community. They have delineated their territories and resources, and are representatives of their community. In doing so, they are a thorn in the flesh of the illegal armed groups as these groups want those lands for their own and for drug trafficking. The vacuum gaps obviously are located in Colombia's rural areas. The situation of social leaders in those areas, who are trying to protect their lands and their people, is therefore highly critical. These people have the same title (of social leader) as social

rewards and extra holidays if they were able to present a killed guerilla member. It became a business. Regular civilians, often the poor and those residing in poor neighborhoods, were killed and put on guerilla clothes in order to collect bonuses.

[3] https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/territorio/lideres-sociales-los-silenciados-y-los-que-resisten

leaders residing in Bogotá. The social leaders in Bogotá perhaps do not protect lands but certainly protect their people and stand up for human rights: they face similar critical circumstances There are no official numbers of social leaders assassinated in Bogotá (personal communication, Dulce María, 19-10) but many social leaders I met have expressed fear for their life. Luciana, an afro-Colombian social leader, explains why social leaders in Bogotá are threatened: "Because we say things about human rights and some people do not like that. The State does not provide us in security (October, 31)."

The 'they' from the Luciana's first quote, is heavy loaded. We talked in the office of a befriended government official. The official coordinates the CLAV we are in, and walks in every once in a while. CLAV stands for *Centro Local de Atención a Víctimas*, Local Center for Attention to Victims. It is the place where victims of the armed conflict can receive orientation, attention, and advice. Bogotá is the only city in Colombia that knows the system of CLAVs. In total, there are seven CLAVs which all have the responsibility to reestablish the rights of the victims. During our conversation, Luciana changes her way of talking every once in a while. This depends on when her befriended functionary is in the room or not. When she is present, Luciana whispers more, when she is away Luciana talks more freely and criticizes the State. When I entered the building to meet her I was controlled by a private security guard. This was irritating as you are controlled every single time you enter a building. But later I realized the importance. Luciana confided into me that she fears to walk outside on her own. It gives a certain understanding of her of endangerment. A feeling of endangerment arises when people constantly feel they are in danger. There might be no direct danger (e.g. someone pointing with a gun), but there is always the feeling of possible danger.

Another social leader, Ana Lucía, explained why she is threatened. She used to favor the guerilla groups because of their ideologies towards a fair distribution of land; because they fought for the rights of the people. When she became aware of the strategy of recruiting young children she "stood up for the human rights of these children" and criticized them. Soon she received threats from a group she used to support for their ideology. Ana Lucía currently runs a foundation that works for displacement victims in Bogotá and the restitution of land. "Now *I* fight for the people." She arrived in Bo-

gotá in 2012, after having been displaced three times before. In Bogotá, she started in Soacha but had to leave her house two times and had to move to other localities. She now lives in different places for security reasons. We talked in a four-room house which she shares with a group of sixteen people. Ana Lucía had the opportunity to return in an individual home to in Soacha with her children and ex-husband. But,

> "we are afraid that they will put a bomb if we return. There live both guerrillas and paramilitaries. How do we know from which side they are? We are not going to ask."
>
> [Ana Lucía – November, 20]

Asking means being suspected. People are often accused to work for the enemy by both sides at the same time. A common example of many victims of the armed conflict is that they are forced to provide help or resources like food and clothes to one side. The other side will then accuse them for collaborating with the enemy and treason. And the same happens the other way around. Ana Lucía faced a similar threat after helping in Soacha. Her ex-husband repaired a car for a group of people. A few days later the repaired car was returned to him, but by another group of people and filled with explosives. At first, Ana Lucía and her ex-husband had no idea of the background of both groups. The first group turned out to be guerillas while the second group was affiliated with paramilitary groups. Social leaders of victims of the armed conflict in Bogotá often stand up for the rights of the people and accuse other groups to threaten their community. People that are affiliated with guerilla or paramilitary groups subsequently threaten these social leaders and try to silence them.

The feeling of endangerment, based on insecurity, is also present in the following example. I talked with Jerónimo and Sebastián, who both work for the *Alta Consejería para las Víctimas, la Paz y la Reconciliación,* High Commissioner for the Victims, Peace and Reconciliation – often referred to as the *Alta Consejería*. They work in the team that coordinates the system of local roundtables for the victims in Bogotá. While Jerónimo operates freely in the *Alta Consejería*, Sebastián finds himself in a tougher position. At the same time he is a social leader, representing the Yanakona community in Bogotá. While Sebastián is talking I notice that he talks softly and

looks around all the time. Jerónimo, who is sitting right next to us, interrupts. He points to the walls and other people and suggest we should have a walk.

> "in Colombia, the walls have ears",

Sebastián sighs and nods affirmatively,

> "we will go to the square and then to my house. There I can tell you everything."
>
> [December, 5]

The examples of Luciana, Ana Lucía, and Sebastián show a feeling of endangerment. The possibility of getting killed is always present. In fact, knowing that this potential exists, has become 'normal', a fact of life. This feeling of endangerment has entered the everyday lives of social leaders. Luciana knows that she can be killed, as she says in the quote starting this chapter. She somehow accepted this in her everyday life and continues in her fight as *defensora de derechos humanos*.

LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE AROUND THE PEACE AGREEMENT

When Sebastián and I were having a walk, towards *Plaza Bolívar*, he explained that his people have a saying:

> "They wrote the Peace Agreement by hand in Havana. But they erase it with their elbows here in the congress. They talk about peace but do not work on the peace."
>
> [Sebastián, social leader – December, 5]

The "*they*" mentioned by Sebastián refers to the government of Colombia. Sebastián sophistically expressed a feeling that many victims of the armed conflict still have: the feeling of not believing in peace for they feel that the government still does not work on peace. Part of the discourse towards the State, in light of the Peace Agreement, refers to a feeling of abandonment. Social leaders say that they feel abandoned by the state:

> "The state abandoned us. There are a lot of words but no actions."
>
> [Fernanda, social leader – November, 8]

Chapter 4

> "The state abandoned us, they left us alone in the middle of the guerilla, paramilitaries, and the state itself."
>
> [Ana Lucía, social leader – November, 20]

Their words often tell that the government does not help the victims of the armed conflict. "We are tired of the State" and "the Peace Agreement is a *falsa*, a lie. The State does not do anything for us" are two general statements regularly made by displacement victims. For the latter statement, the word falsa is often replaced with swear words. The three quotes above all refer to the failures of the government. They refer to how authorities failed in providing humanitarian aid and structural support. How they failed in their responsibility to respect and protect their subjects. For this reason, displacement victims say that they feel abandoned, misunderstood, and not listened to. Many victims for instance disagree with the Nobel Peace prize awarded in 2016 to the current president of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos. They argue that the President only listens and/or speaks to the FARC, while victims of the armed conflict are one of the key targets in the Peace Agreement.
Displacement victims are distrustful of the State and feel abandoned. At the same time, they still consider the State to be the main responsible for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. They actively seek a connection with the State. Although they feel abandoned by authorities, they still need a relationship with the State. This relationship is being held alive by the State itself, as they classify victims of the armed conflict as targets of governmental intervention. Going more into depth, I recognize how this relationship is being enforced by the victims as well. The quotes above show the feeling of abandonment which displacement victims blame on the State. At the same time, they live in fear of abandonment. At first sight it seems to be a paradox. Saying that you are abandoned while you also fear of being abandoned. However, social leaders actively seek to rebuild the connection with the State. The connection they seek is built upon the perception of holding the State accountable for implementing the guarantees of the Peace Agreement.

I continued my conversation with Sebastián. Sebastián is a well-educated social leader and has a life-time experience in local politics. His way of expressing is profound. However, all the victims I talked

with for this research expressed similar thoughts:

> "The government is just not interested in developing a good public social policy. It is like giving candy to a child, just to keep him quiet. It is like giving a paracetamol to a gravely ill person. The medicine calms the person but does not cure the illness. The Peace Agreement is the candy, the paracetamol."

I asked him who should take care of the core causes of the illness, if the State does not do? I asked also if there are any other organizations people can turn to when they do not believe in the State:

> "People are tired of the state, people are tired of the official route. Examples are that people generate their own forms of organization. Or they seek assistance from international organizations, universities, the private sector. The official route takes too long and knows a lot of corruption."

But who is the main responsible?

> "The government. The state guarantees they will repair, but they do nothing."
>
> [December, 5]

With "other forms of organization" Sebastián refers, among other examples, to his own community. He belongs to the indigenous community of the Yanakona. Later in our talks he explains how his community has not received the psychological aid which was promised by the State in both the Victims law and the Peace Agreement. In reaction to that, they have established their own forms of psychological aid in the form of reunions where they sing together, share memories and party.

A conversation such as the one with Sebastián were frequent. People talk often about how the State has abandoned them. Then, when I asked whom they could turn to for aid and support, they would also often refer to the State. People have the feeling that they are not listened to. They "sense" that they are not included in the process as they feel that the State does not mind them. When we discussed the Peace Agreement, people often addressed how the State fails in seeing through the promises made to them. Still, according to the people, the State remains the main actor responsible for the imple-

mentation of the agreements. By claiming that the State is the main actor responsible for their implementation, social leaders enter into a relation with that same State. The victims first turn their back to the State by saying they feel abandoned. Yet, by addressing the government's failure and lack of compliance, social leaders re-tighten the connection that seemed to be lost. This first-sight paradox shows the antagonistic dimension that is always present in relations with governance and authority structures. Social leaders actively make this ever present relation visible. How they make this relation more visible is follows a threefold pattern: through identity politics, through the creation of political space, and by seeking alliances. The following three chapters will address in turn each of these approaches.

ACTS AND PRACTICES OF SOCIAL LEADERS

The perceived role of social leaders of victims of the armed conflict in the light of the Peace Agreement is ample. The people I met with would always talk about the *rol*, role of social leaders. By "role of social leaders", I refer to how victims and leaders perceive the acts and practices of social leaders. Later in this part, I also elaborate on how I perceive the acts and practices of social leaders of victims of the armed conflict. Many social leaders in Bogotá have been social – or communal – leaders in their place of origin. In the capital city, they have become social leaders of victims. In the past, they would often address topics as education, human rights, racism, and discrimination (personal communication, Samuel, 20-10). In Bogotá these topics are still addressed but are intermingled with their fight for victims of the armed conflict:

> "The role of a social leader is to express the voice of victims towards the government. It is like putting your hand in the fire for the community to express the voice of the people who have suffered displacement and the poverty we live here in our country."
>
> [Carlos, social leader – December, 16]

> "A social leader is anyone who defends the interests of victims and their rights. To make them aware of the governmental entities and the juridical processes that work as tools. A social leader is someone who is aware of the requirements of the community. A social leader is someone who stands up not only for personal gain but also for a group of persons that claim determined rights. Their mandate is to

ensure the implementation and compliance of the accords."
[Clara, social leader – December, 17]

According to themselves and their constituency, social leaders in Bogotá have a diverse set of responsibilities. How social leaders perceive their role generally overlaps with how victims of the armed conflict perceive their role. Interviews with social leaders and victims have enabled me to define four categories of responsibilities which people attribute to social leaders. First of all social leaders are together with the people:

"With our feet in the mud we work together with the victims."
[Ana Lucía – November, 20]

Second, social leaders express the voice of the people towards the government. They act as spokespersons and know what problems the victim have to cope with. Third, they are a bridge between the State and victims. They need to know the tools that can be used to claim the rights of the victims. Part of this is to provide their community with information and knowledge about the legal system and the peace process of peace; with other words: social leaders spread awareness. At last, social leaders have a role in ensuring that a true peace is enforced. It means that they need to monitor and control the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Fernanda, a social leader in Ciudad Bolívar, explains:

"For me personally, I fight, because my fight is to empower the people of Ciudad Bolívar in the process and to ensure they know what the peace process really means. And that is my role, I try to carry on with the local roundtable and to supply knowledge. More than anything for the women, who are the most affected by forced displacement. They have suffered sexual violence from all different groups.
[Fernanda, social leader – December, 16]

Social leaders are not recognized as political leaders by the State. Jerónimo, who represents the State as he works for the *Alta Consejería*, says that social leaders "do not have an official function in the State, but do protect their population." I however see how social leaders actively engage with the political. Their key act is to make the antagonistic relation with the State more visible. They do not defend given political ideas, although many rely on left-minded streams of thinking. Being a bridge between the State and its subject, social

leaders resemble a broker. Displacement victims can engage easier in the political through social leaders. Brokers are, according to Auyero (2001), persons who influence people to vote towards a particular client in exchange for political and economic benefits. Patron-client relations are extensively discussed (Auyero 2001; Lazar 2004; Koster and de Vries 2012), particularly in Latin-American studies. In Bogotá, most of the social leaders do not expect anything in exchange from what Auyero (2001), amongst others, calls "clients". There are examples of social leaders who abuse their power as authority. Displacement victims are extremely vulnerable, in particular when they are new to Bogota. Some social leaders misuse the victims' vulnerability. Most of them, however, work from an intrinsic motivation to protect their people and defend human rights. They often regard themselves as social leaders *and* human right defenders.

However, being a social leader is not easy. As mentioned before, social leaders face many threats to their safety and physical integrity. It is striking that after the signing of the Peace Agreement, social leaders are still being assassinated. When I talk with people they will always mention the 30 homicides of social leaders in the past three months; most of these crimes were perpetrated in rural areas, a couple of them in cities, like Bogotá. Newspapers covering the peace process frequently publish articles about the killing of social leaders. Hence, the risk of being a social leader is reasonably high and the benefit is reasonably low. This, and because of the fact that most of the leaders are victims of the armed conflict themselves, explain why many social leaders work from an intrinsic activist motivation. I do not see them as traditional brokers, rather more as spokesperson with a bridging capacity. Using the term broker in this context appeared to me superficial. On the one hand social leaders do have bridging features and are middlemen for displacement victims; on the other hand, the term 'political broker' portrays a passionless politician: social leaders are perceived otherwise by the people themselves. Contrary to the term social leader that portrays a person that works for and with the community, the term broker portrays a person that works to a large extent for outside politicians. Therefore I chose to use the word that IDPs in Bogotá themselves use, namely *líder social*, social leader.

Although they see themselves, and are seen by the State, as social leaders, I argue that they certainly behave politically. Identity politics is one of the roads used by social leaders make the antagonistic relation more visible. Mols (2012) introduces the concept of identity

entrepreneurs. According to him these are political actors that draw, frame, and amplify existing identities. The label of a *political* leader, according to many of the people I interviewed, belongs to an official functionary. The label of social leader, on the other hand, does not refer to any official function within the State. I do ascribe political elements to these social leaders as they actively and consciously operate within the *political*. Their main act is to make the *political* more visible. I continue with calling them social leaders, like they are nominated by their people and by themselves. I however see them as political leaders, and more specifically as spokespersons that have bridging elements and engage with the *political*.

CONCLUSION

In post-Agreement Colombia conflicts do still exist. Social leaders of victims of the armed conflict often face threats and there are many cases of assassination. The risk of being a social leader is high as they stand up for the human rights of the vulnerable. Most of these leaders are victims of the armed conflict themselves and work out of an intrinsic activist motivation. There are four categories of responsibilities people assign to social leaders. These categories overlap with how social leaders perceive their role. First, social leaders are together with the people. Second, they express the voice of the people towards the government and act as spokespersons. Third, they are a bridge between the state and supply knowledge to their community. Fourth, social leaders have a controlling and monitoring role considering the implementation of the Peace Agreement. They are not so much seen as political leaders, as they are not official functionaries. I do see them as political leaders, but in a more informal way. In specific, I see them as spokespersons that have bridging elements and engage with the *political*. The key act I recognize in social leaders is how they make the antagonistic relation with the governance more visible. This relation is always present but made more visible by social leaders. At first sight this relationship seems to be a paradox. Victims of the armed conflict have a certain feeling of abandonment. They feel left behind by the State and feel they are not listened to. At the same time they consider the State to be the main actor responsible for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. They feel abandoned but turn to the State at the same time. This connection, or relationship, is also being held alive by the State itself. Victims of the armed conflict are classified as targets of gov-

ernmental intervention; unfortunately, this intervention is not often successfully carried out. At first sight paradoxical, this relation is actually a tight connection built on conflict and actively being made visible by social leaders.

"Sí queremos la paz, pero no creemos en la paz"
"We do want peace, but we do not believe in peace"
[Social leader]

Chapter 5

Identity Politics

"I am an afro-Colombian negro. I am a leader. I am a defender of human rights and protect women. I am more than a victim of sexual violence. Before being victims, we are human beings."
- Luciana, social leader.

[October, 31]

"We as victims of the armed conflict are not put at heart of the Peace Agreement."
- Fernanda, social leader.

[November, 8]

INTRODUCTION

With the first quote I would like to demonstrate a triangulation of characteristics. The identities of victims, and their background are consciously used by social leaders as a basis and a frame to engage within the *political*. Also the fact of being perceived as a leader legitimizes a social leader in this process.
The quote shows a strong feeling of identity. Luciana uttered these words in a powerful and passionate way. The second quote illustrates how the identification as victim of the armed conflict is used as framing in order to change how current policies work. By stating to be a victim Fernanda says that, according to the Peace Agreement and the Victim's Law, she deserves aid and support. She continued by blaming the State for the fact that a victim has to wait an en-

tire night to apply for aid, and years to receive aid. She emphasizes that the victimizers do not have to wait and get their money straight away. Herein I recognize how Fernanda reframes her existing identity to try and change a policy or political agenda.

I show how identity intermingles with politics and echo Béland (2017) in his vision that identity and politics are closely entangled. This connection is made visible in the dynamics of political framing and mobilization of identities. First, I elaborate on state labelling. Second, I scrutinize acts and practices of self-labelling. Third, I conclude by arguing how identity and politics are connected and how the use of identity politics enables social leaders to engage within the *political*.

In this chapter I focus on the feeling of identity and the strategic use of identity. Identity politics is one of the three ways through which social leaders engage within the Colombian peace process and make the antagonist relation more visible. The other two are the creation of political space and the search for alliances. These three approaches generally intermingle and are often used at the same time and place.

STATE LABELLING

Before the Peace Agreement, several laws have been established specifically for displaced people and for victims of the armed conflict. In 1997, Law 387 was established. This law targeted *desplazados*, internally displaced people, and entitled them to food support, a basic subsistence kit, medical and psychological attention, living accommodations, and transportation. In this law, the national situation was described as a situation of violence and not as one of armed conflict. The law also only covered displacement. From 2007 onwards, a revision of the law forced the government to provide humanitarian aid in the first three months after displacement. Still, the law only covered aid to those who had been forcibly displaced by the violence. The Law 387 and its revision in 2007 add a humanitarian perspective to the context. In 2011, the government passed the *Ley de Víctimas*, the Victim's Law. With this new law, the government aimed to entitle all victims of the armed conflict to access to free shelter, food, education, and health care. The *Ley de Víctimas* broadened up its target groups from only displaced people to the broader

category of "victims". It allowed the government to zoom in on not only displacement but also on other types of victimization. Jerónimo from the *Alta Consejería* explains that because of this change they can offer special attention to the individual: victims of the armed conflict are not only displaced people. There are many other types of victims - including victims of sexual violence, falsos positivos, homicides and forced disappearances. The Peace Agreement builds upon the Victim's Law by placing the victims of the armed conflict at heart of the Agreement.

To be labelled as a victim, people have to apply for an official card which officially defines them as a victim of the armed conflict. Possessing this card is a prerequisite for applying to subsidies and employment. Controversially, the card also mentions the *estrato*, stratum (a combined area of neighborhoods) where victims reside. According to many victims, this system is prone to discrimination. When an employer sees the level of the *estrato*, he will know the reputation fo neighborhood where the victim resides. Depending on that, he will often decide whether to employ the victim or not. People who live in neighborhoods with poor reputations are often refused by employers.

When I talked to victims of the armed conflict I often asked what type of assault they have experienced. They always start with "*soy víctima*, I am a victim" and most of the times it is followed by "*soy desplazado,* I am displaced". Many victims have experienced different kind of assaults. A displaced person is often displaced because of these assaults. Displacement has become a basic layer of victimhood in the label of '*víctima*'.

Before the Victims Law, displaced people would organize themselves and frame themselves as *desplazados*, because the State would only provide aid and support to those who had been displaced (personal communication, Valeria, 03-10). After 2011, with the *Ley de Víctimas* in mind, people have to label themselves as victims in order to receive humanitarian aid or structural support. Hence, *desplazados* changed their identity into *víctima*, victim, as this position was supported by the government. They self-nominated themselves differently in order to benefit from a new status. I consciously use self-nomination as victims use this word as well (*autonominación*). By declaring themselves as victims, displaced people enter a stronger position of negotiation and dialogue.

The Colombian Government has played an important role in the

formation of a broad category of victims of the armed conflict. Besides, the government also emphasized three other 'vulnerable' categories: indigenous people, afro-Colombians, and women. For each of these categories the government has created a special *mesa local,* local roundtable. Only a leader who is himself a victim of the armed conflict *and* belongs to one of the three additional categories, can enter the roundtable.

To summarize, there is a two-way relationship between the state and the displacement victims. This relationship consists of both top-down processes of 'being made' or being targets of governmental intervention, and of bottom-up processes of 'self-making' or self-labelling. In these processes, identity and the use of identity play a key role. I moreover recognize the symbiotic relation as explained by Betts (2009) in the policy transformation of the Colombian government from focusing on *desplazados* to the focus on *víctimas*. He stated that due to legal and or quasi-legal definitions of refugees and internally displaced people, forced displacement has a symbiotic relationship with the State. I argue that this symbiotic relationship can be and should be disputed. Both top-down and bottom-up processes of making/self-making and labelling/self-labelling co-exist and impact on each other. I however argue that though being symbiotic, the relationship is strongly mutually opposed. The framing of identity is used in the *political* and enforces the antagonistic dimension. Social leaders actively use and frame identity to make the relation between them and governance structures more visible.

SELF-LABELLING

In Colombia, the feeling of belonging to a particular group of people is strong. Above all, people identify themselves by reference to their community. When displacement victims talk, they always mention their place of origin and their cultural background. People self-nominate themselves as indigenous, campesino, afro-Colombian or woman. The quote in the introduction of this chapter shows how different and strong identities overlap.

With regard to the concept of self-labelling, I would like to continue with a short story. When I met Sebastián, we left the official building where his office was. We walked to the *Plaza Bolívar* and waited together for his girlfriend. It was a Tuesday afternoon and she just fin-

ished a workshop. They are going to marry around Christmas and he really looks forward to it. Usually the people of his community, the Yanakona, choose people from their own community to marry. He met his fiancée here in Bogotá and both of them have been displaced from other areas of the country; "that's the one good thing of the war." In his home village in the municipality of Sutará, he was nominated as president. In this function he coordinated the region. His focus point was the fortification of the Yanakona identity. The FARC did not like the fortification process of Indigenous people:

> "The *Resguardo*[4], including I, talked about autonomy, and the FARC wanted our territory for their own."
>
> [December, 5]

The attacks started; the FARC killed his partners and threatened him gravely. He fled to Bogotá and after a couple of years he was announced as *cacique*, governor of his people in the capital. After a while, he quitted this position but remained as a social leader of his people. He currently represents 120 families of the indigenous community of Yanakona in Bogotá. When I asked him how he sees himself, he answered that he is Yanakona, then a social leader, and finally a victim of the armed conflict.

The self-nomination as *líder socia*l is worthwhile to scrutinize. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the position as a leader brings along many responsibilities but also legitimates engagement with governance and authority structures. I once participated in the peaceful occupation of an official building. During this occupation, I was allowed to join meetings between social leaders where they would discuss how to continue with the protest. During these meetings, social leaders of all different communities were present. They all represented victims of the armed conflict, most of them displaced persons. While they took the floor to speak, they would often refer to their identity of indigenous, *campesino*, or afro-Colombian. This legitimization to speak is also expressed in the next example. In the final week of my fieldwork I attended an event on the balance of the implementation of the Peace Agreement. The event was organized by 74 different organizations of the Colombian civil society. The discussion and the panel I attended covered the topic of integral policy

[4] A resguardo is a collective property title of the land for the indigenous, as a legal form that protects both the territory as their cultural and political autonomy.

for human rights and included representatives of the presidential council. At the end of the panel, when people could ask questions, an indigenous man stood up. He was dressed in a suit, had a pony tail and spoke politely:

> "I am a social leader and for my community I beg you the favor to elucidate on the process of land restitution."
>
> [Mateo – December, 12]

The identity as a social leader allowed Mateo to stand up and speak out. He pointed to the members of the panel and demanded to know more about the allocation of funds and subsidies meant for the restitution of land to victims. The entire room was quiet, while before people started talking loudly when they wanted to ask a question. After he asked his question he walked away. The representative of the presidential council started to answer Mateo's question but was interrupted. According to a woman, he did not go into Mateo's question: "He is a social leader, answer what he asked!" Social leaders receive authority from their constituency. At another demonstration, organized by the *Ruta Pacífica*, I got introduced to Oladis by Isabella, "a victim of the war and afro-Colombian social leader". Something similar happened when I got introduced to Sebastián by Jerónimo who "is a victim of the armed conflict and an indigenous social leader, he is leader of the Yanakona." The triangulation of characteristics, victim/background/leader, is used as a frame to engage with the *political*.

Social leaders draw on existing identities to stress the government's political agenda. During the aforementioned occupation of the official building, this action of drawing on existing identities was used as political framing and as mobilization of collective identities. The occupation was initiated by more or less fifteen social leaders and soon they spread the word to the present victims of the conflict. They told them that together, as victims of the armed conflict, they should occupy the building. They would not leave the building until they could speak to higher functionaries and participate in policy-making. Their shared identity as victims of the armed conflict enabled the social leaders to mobilize the group and, subsequently, to engage with the political. I have often seen how social leaders draw on, reframe and amplify existing identities to promote particular policy alternatives. Another example: a demonstration organized

by the *Ruta Pacífica* focused on sexual violence. They would first call attention by framing themselves as victims of the armed conflict and subsequently amplify their identity to women who have experienced sexual violence. With the strong sentence that follows the women demanded the government for change. "We used to be the mothers of the war, but want to be the grandmothers of the peace" I argue that social leaders use identity to make the relation between the victims of the armed conflict and the government more visible. When this connection is more apparent, the government can be held accountable.

In Chapter 4,'the current situation of social leaders', I discussed the language of social leaders in the light of the Peace Agreement. Part of this discourse refers to a feeling of abandonment. By expressing to be a victim of the armed conflict and to represent victims of the armed conflict, social leaders seek the connection with the State. Before 2011, social leaders would frame the community they represent as desplazados, while now, they represent víctimas. I echo (Mols 2012) when I recognize how political actors draw, reframe, and amplify existing identities to promote particular policy alternatives and political agendas. *Desplazados* always have been victims, and after the policy change into *víctimas*, would still call themselves displaced. In addition, in discussions and reunions, people will often refer to their cultural background. However, towards the government and in public space, social leaders frame their existing identity as such that it fits within the label of governmental intervention.

Awareness of oneself and gender as part of identity

> "We as victims should be repaired. We had to learn the Ley de Víctimas to come up for our rights. We have the right to housing, humanitarian aid, and reparation."
>
> [Ana Lucía – December, 20]

For the foundation she runs, Ana Lucía is very much aware of the ins and outs of the legal system. Her foundation focusses mainly on return and relocation of displacement victims. She explains that Law 902, which was established in march 2016, elaborates on land restitution. Building upon law 902, the restitution of land has been made pivotal in the Peace Agreement: the first key point covers *Reforma Rural Integral*, integral rural reform. Ana Lucia explains that she al-

ways carries around a small book with 100 questions and answers about the agreements and guarantees in the Peace Agreement. While we talked she often referred to the book. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, awareness of the rights of the victims belongs to the role social leaders have, according to their own opinion and that of the victims. I see how it is used as part of the identity of Ana Lucía: by being a victim she has the right to housing, humanitarian aid, reparation (and more) as written in the Peace Agreement. The system of reform however remains complex and Ana Lucía showed me piles of legal paperwork she needs to study.

Awareness of one's rights is a significant part of identity forming. Awareness of oneself and the other is also very much expressed in discourses of gender. The use of gender is a relevant example of how identity is drawn, reframed and amplified. Many female social leaders actively use their own identity and their community's identity as women in their discourse. Gender is strongly present in the political organization of victims of the armed conflict. Many social leaders are female, around 50% in Bogotá (personal communication, Jerónimo, 03-11). Though the armed conflict has marked both men and women, they have experienced different kinds of violence. Homicides, forced disappearances, and *falsos positivos* have affected more men, while women have experienced more sexual violence. They do not differ in cases of displacement (personal communication, Christina, *Unidad de Víctimas*, 17-11). It is interesting to see how women who participate in the political use a discourse of gender. They often described themselves and the people they represented as *mujeres víctimas*, victimized women. The organization *Ruta Pacífica* for instance has been founded because "everybody talked about the war and victims, but nobody about women being victims" (personal communication, Dulce María, 19-10). Also in other protests, such as the occupation of the official building, women were strongly present and took the lead. Gender is often used as a strong part of the identity of victimized women.

The quote below belongs to Teresa and her partners from Bosa, a locality in the southwestern part of Bogotá, where many displacement victims reside since it has many neighborhoods of lower *estrato*. Teresa is a social leader and active in the *Casa de la Mujer*, best translated as House of Woman. The *Casa* is a center for victimized women from where they organize workshops and protests. At a meeting I

attended, Teresa explained that she often marches together with her partners in the streets in Bosa. All together they repeat what they say, almost sing, while they march:

> {expressed in poetic form} *"Las mujeres víctimas de Bosa decimos: ni una más ni una menos. Vivas nos queremos. Debemos valorarnos. Mujeres, no podemos callar.* The victimized women of Bosa say: not anyone more, not anyone less. We want to live. We should value ourselves. Women, we cannot be silent."
>
> [November, 16]

When I talked with Fernanda about her role as social leader she said that her role is to provide knowledge and answer needs. But:

> "…more than anything I continue my work in the local roundtable for the women. Women are the most affected by forced displacement. Because they suffered sexual violence from all different groups."
>
> [December, 16]

When Fernanda spoke out the words above, she spoke fiercely. Herself had to flee for the armed conflict and has suffered sexual violence; at home, while she was on the flight, and here in Bogotá. Fernanda's place of origin is Putumayo, a department in the south of Colombia bordering Ecuador and Peru. She cannot return to Putumayo out of fear. "When you return they will ask you about your family and start asking around about you [December, 16] ." She misses the countryside and self-nominates herself proudly as a *campesino* from Afro-Colombian descent. Back home, she and her family had a *finca*, piece of land with a cottage, and their habits. When she arrived in Bogotá, fifteen years ago, they had nothing. Now she lives in a three-room house with her four children, two grandchildren, and her ex-husband. She and her ex-husband still live together as it is too expensive to afford different accommodations. She has no savings and is still waiting for her applications for aid and support to be granted. To make a living, she sells self-made items such as trays and statuettes from recycled paper and metal.

The following story of Luciana explains more extensively why female social leaders feel a responsibility as woman to act as social leader:

> "Displaced women have faced a lot of sexual violence. It happened in their home place, that is why they fled. It happened in the rural areas while they walked away. It happened next to the rivers they passed. In the city when they arrived here. It happened by the guerrillas, by the paramilitaries, by policemen, by government officials. Women do not like to talk about it. Not in court or with entities. For shame they do not want to go to a new social network. In their families they do not talk about it is a taboo."
>
> [Luciana, October 31]

Gender is often used in the discourse of social leaders of displacement victims. It forms part of their identity and is used as part of their identity. Next to the awareness of being a victim of the armed conflict and the awareness of having rights, the awareness of gender enables women and social leaders to engage with the *political*. The connection between gender and politics is consciously drawn by social leaders. In the framing of gender they address political agendas and highlight the connection with the State and its policies.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I argued how identity intermingles with politics and herein I echo Béland (2017) who states that identity and politics are closely entangled. This connection is made more visible through the dynamics of political framing and the mobilization of identities. Identity politics is used by social leaders to engage within the *political* and come up for their own and their community's rights. In the dynamics of identity politics I recognize a two-way relationship between the State and displacement victims. The State plays a remarkable role in top-down processes of 'being made', by making victims of the conflict targets of governmental intervention. After 2011, with the establishment of the *Ley de Víctimas*, people are required to label themselves as victims when they apply for humanitarian aid or structural support. Before, applying for both could only be done when you were displaced. By declaring themselves as victims, displaced people hold a stronger position of negotiation and dialogue and therefore actively self-nominate themselves as such. The dynamics of the latter are processes of 'self-making' or self-labelling. *Desplazados* always have been victims, and after the policy change into *víctimas* will still call themselves displaced. However, identities are emphasized differently in order to acquire aid and support. Social leaders draw on existing identities to stress the government's

political agenda. Besides the 'main label' of being a victim of the armed conflict, other identities are enforced by social leaders. The cultural background is often strongly presented. Moreover, the issue of gender is often used in addressing political agendas. The identity of a social leader entitles her/him to engage with the *political*. In fact, anyone can do so, however, an identity of social leader enables a person to engage with the political in an easier way. By being aware of their role as social leader and being aware of their rights, they use their existing identity to promote their claims.

Due to legal and or quasi-legal definitions of displaced people, forced migration has a symbiotic relationship with the State. I herein echo Betts (2009) but would like to add the strongly mutually opposed character of this relationship. The framing of identity is used in an antagonistic way as it is based on conflict. Social leaders actively use and frame identity to make the relation between them and governance structures more visible. Hence, they can hold these governance structures more accountable for their lack of compliance in implementing the Peace Agreement.

Chapter 6

The Creation of Political Space

"This is a political space. A space of resistance, of memory. A space of peace and reconciliation, of fraternity. It is about the violence we have lived, which has blend in our skin and blood. People should not be here for the money, it is about the heart."
- Valentina, social leader.

[November, 24]

Policemen: *"Leave or we make you leave. This is not a political space."*
- "No! If anything is a political space, it is this. Victims come here to apply for help but never receive true attention!"
- Fernanda, social leader

[December, 11]

INTRODUCTION

The above quotes justifies the title of this chapter: 'The creation of political space'. The first quote is from Valentina, whom I introduced before. She comments on the movement she has founded. Her movement consists of a variable number of people, most of them victims of the armed conflict. The goal of her movement is to construct an autonomous space where victims of the armed conflict can talk and discuss with each other. Valentina consciously turns the places where they gather into a political space by repeating it often.

The second quote is from Fernanda, who represents a group of victims in Ciudad Bolívar and is a member of the *mesa local*, local roundtable of Ciudad Bolívar. She is a coordinator. While she answers the policemen, Fernanda, together with 15 other social leaders and more or less 100 victims, is in the process of occupying the CLAV 'Rafael Uribe Uribe' in the neighborhood San Cristóbal. They demand speaking time with higher functionaries and will not leave the building before their request has been satisfied. By occupying an official building, the group of social leaders turn the place into a political space. They directly address the government and demand speaking time with higher functionaries in order to talk and negotiate about policies.

I became fascinated by the concept of "creation of political space" not by reading literature but after hearing several social leaders repeatedly talking about it. They talked about political space and how a space can be turned into a political space. The second quote at the beginning of this chapter basically demonstrates that claiming a certain place to be a political space can help in creating a space to engage with the *political*. Anand (2011) argues that the marginalized can be recognized as people with agency through social claims. Both quotes show how social leaders engage with existing governance and authority structures. In this chapter I elaborate on why and how social leaders create political space. I understand political space within the thoughts of Chantal Mouffe (2005). Based on her way of thinking, I consider a political space as a space through which one can engage in the *political*. In other words, a space wherein one enters an antagonistic dimension in the relation with governance and authoritative structures. I understand the antagonistic relation as one of opposing and conflictual character. I hereby will make a distinction between the creation of political space in direct and in indirect relations with the Colombian State. I argue that sooner or later, all occurrences of creating political space end up in relations to the state. In his book The Politics of the Governed (2006), Chatterjee has defined the interaction between the marginalized (the governed) and the state (the governor) as an arena. In this arena, or what I consider as a political space, the governed negotiate their livelihood with the governor. I see that through emotion and passion, social leaders play a remarkable role in the engagement of displacement victims with the State.

I open this chapter with a deeper insight of why social leaders create

a political space. I argue that a sphere of mistrust directed to the 'incapable State' and a lack of confidence inspire social leaders to become active. Secondly, I describe how the State has created places where social leaders can engage with the *political*. Third, I expand on how social leaders create political spaces. These spaces are alternative to the State but in the end will always be in relation to the State, either in a direct or in an indirect way. Within these alternative creations, I provide two classifications; visible and invisible political spaces. The former can briefly be described as the occupation of public space. The latter is more inwards focused on movements and communities. Fourth, I end this chapter with concluding remarks.

A SPHERE OF MISTRUST IN THE 'INCAPABLE STATE'

Why is the creation of political space of importance? According to victims of the armed conflict the State is still responsible for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Despite a sphere of mistrust and a lack of confidence, the State is held accountable. The creation of political space addresses that accountability. Herein, social leaders are very passionate about this and play a remarkable and leading role in this process.

In chapter 4 above, I elaborated on the language used by social leaders. Most of the language that addresses the State, or government, features a sphere of mistrust. People are *cansado*, tired of the State. A quote that I often heard is:

> "*si queremos la paz, pero no creemos en la paz,* we do want peace, but we do not believe in peace".
>
> [September – December]

The part of not believing in peace mainly applies to the 'incapable State'. For the interest of the victims of the armed conflict, the State has passed the Victim's Law and enacted the Peace Agreement. The latter's official mandate puts the victims of the armed conflict at heart of the Agreement, however, not many people see how the promises in the Peace Agreement are fulfilled. Luciana, a social leader from afro-Colombian descent argues that

> "the state is the first responsible to provide help, by law. Therefore

> we address them and go to court and write letters to the government."
>
> [October, 31]

Just before, Luciana heavily criticized the State for their failure, errors, and state crimes. Luciana originates from Tumaco, a port city on the Pacific coast near the Ecuadorian border. In 2007, the armed conflict made her flee to Bogotá. Two years later she was attacked by two armed men near her house, in her locality Soacha. They took her with them and sexually abused her. While telling this story she looks away and lowers her voice. Events such as the one recounted by Luciana have led to a mistrust in the State. Luciana feels abandoned. Yet, she feels that the State remains the main responsible to provide her with help and repair.

Another social leader, Ana Lucía, goes a step further in expressing her opinion towards the State:

> "The only thing that is left is that we arm ourselves and go fight. The state robbed us, took away their militaries from the villages so illegal armed groups could enter. The state left us alone with the guerilla and the paramilitaries."
>
> [November, 20]

Ana Lucía had to flee multiple times, but it all started in Sumapaz, Tolima – a department south of Bogotá. She takes a pen and paper and draws a line: "In Sumapaz they are both guerrillas and paramilitaries [November, 20]." The first time she fled was because of threats by the *Águilas Negras*. The *Águilas Negras* is an extreme-right illegal armed group or groups that emerged in 2006 after the official demobilization of paramilitary umbrella organization *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC), United Self Defense Forces of Colombia. I ask her what interpretation of *lucha*, fight she means. *Lucha* is a word that is often used in these kind of verbal expressions, when people speak about social justice and the State. Literally translated it means '(to) fight'. Most of the times it is not meant in a physical way, but rather, it expresses the struggle or battle people feel towards the State. Although Ana Lucía generally talks about pacific routes to build peace and always claims to seek alliances with the State, she means the physical interpretation of *lucha*. Although she is sad to say this, she argues that if theState keeps failing their guarantees, keeps being corrupt, they will have to take up arms. Her ex-hus-

band, who also joins the interview and still lives in the same house as Ana Lucía, adds that they do not want to, but maybe have to take up arms in the future.

Many victims point to the State as the main responsible in providing aid, support, and assistance – despite having little confidence in that same State. By creating political space, whether in direct (e.g. via protests) or indirect (e.g. movements) relation with the State people emphasize the role and responsibility of the State. People want to interact and work together to construct peace but feel that the State remains is the primary responsible. Part of this feeling relates to the state crimes that were committed during the armed conflict, in *La Violencia*. People often refer to *La Violencia* when they talk about to the armed conflict. Besides the basic plight of the State to respect and protect its subjects, the State also has to repair and compensate for the victims' suffering. This is illustrated by Clara, who resides in Ciudad Bolívar and is an active social leader:

> "In this Peace Agreement, the participation of victims of the armed conflict has never been taken into account. It is in this gap where social leaders arise and are necessary to make a bridge between the state and the people. One of the principal duties for social leaders of peace is to ensure the implementation and compliance of the Peace Agreement by the state."
>
> [Clara – December, 17]

Through her words, Clara emphasizes the monitoring and controlling function attached to socials leaders. Inherently this means that she sees the State as the one responsible for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In other words, she holds the State accountable and she, as social leader, is there to monitor and control the State. These functions are expressed in multiple ways. In the following part I elaborate on different paths followed to create a political space. This creation is done as a tool to engage with governance and authority structures and tighten the accountability relation with the State.

THE STATE - LOCAL ROUNDTABLE

> "The protocol in Bogotá for the *mesas locales* mandates the authority to create space where victims can gather. In addition, they should provide technical assistance, like computers, so that victims can get

> organized. Thirdly, they should provide a system of help in which all the entities work together for the victims. The law obliges the state to create space for victims to participate in politics. Through roundtables victims can participate, these people should be representatives of a group of victims or an organization of victims."
>
> [Jerónimo, November, 3]

A *mesa local*, a local roundtable is the prime example of engaging directly with the Colombian State. Jerónimo is speaking on behalf of the *Alta Consejeria para las Víctimas, la Paz y la Reconciliación.* Together with a team of four persons he coordinates all the 22 local roundtables in Bogotá. For each of the 19 localities in Bogotá there is a roundtable. Above that, there are roundtables that target specific vulnerable groups: Indigenous people, afro-Colombians, and women. The system of roundtables – including local, district, municipal, departmental, and a national roundtable – is hierarchical. There is no direct connection between the national and the local roundtable. Decisions about the Peace Agreement can only be made at the national roundtable.

The social leader of the indigenous Yanakona community (I discussed him in the previous chapter), Sebastián, is a colleague of Jerónimo. Sebastián finds himself in a tough situation. Together with Jerónimo, he forms part of the coordination team of local roundtables. At the same time, he is a social leader and represents an indigenous community in the city. He used to take part in the local roundtable of his locality. He explains:

> "I have been on the other side as well, as victim of the conflict. I was displaced. And now I work for the state it is difficult. There are no resources to assist the victims. There are no housing possibilities, there are no resources to work on return or relocation. There are no funds for transportation for victims when they need to participate in the roundtables. The only thing we can do (now he speaks as social leader) is to keep complaining, keep fighting."
>
> [Sebastián – December, 5]

When we are away from the formal environment of his work and find ourselves in a more private setting, Sebastián starts talking from the point of view of his role as a social leader. He explains how the elaborate structure of the indigenous community in general has permitted them to survive the war as a people. To keep engaging

with the *political*, the indigenous community continuously 'produces' new social leaders.

> "Every year we have new leaders, and every year they kill our leaders. It is not as with the campesinos. When a campesino leader gets killed, the fight of the community stands still until a new leader stands up. Our structure ensures that there are always social leaders and that we always are creating leaders. So if one gets killed there are others to stand up."
>
> [Sebastián – December, 5]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sebastián is part of the Yanakona community. The indigenous community in Colombia is extremely diverse; however, they have organized themselves and are inter-connected. They are all familiar with the 'production' of social leaders, as explained by Sebastián. Hence, the creation of social leaders is not only done by the State when the *mesas locales* were established. Many communities and groups of victims create their own social leaders who then operate as spokespeople and bridge with the State (as explained in previous chapters).

The *Mesa Local de Participación Efectiva de Víctimas,* Local Roundtable for Victim's Participation was established to fulfill decree 035. This decree was added to the *Ley 1448,* Law 1448 in 2015. The objective was to realize an informative assembly for victims of the armed conflict who reside or work in the locality. The local roundtable aims to promote the participation and organization of the victims and effectiveness in public policy. The *Ley 1448,* the Peace Agreement, and the decree 035 are all examples in which the marginalized, in this case the displacement victims, are classified as targets of governmental intervention. Following Chatterjee (2006), it brings the marginalized into a 'certain political relationship with the State'. Being targets of the State, they are brought into a political relationship with the State.

The system of local roundtables is an existing political space through which social leaders can engage with governance and authoritative structures. In a conversation we had, Fernanda mentioned that the mesa local of Ciudad Bolívar wishes to establish a *Casa Local para las Víctimas del conflicto armado*, a community center for victims of the armed conflict. Fernanda is a social leader and represents a

group of seven victims of the armed conflict, better said, seven victimized families. Six of them have been displaced and have experienced other assaults too, like sexual violence, forced disappearances and homicides.

> "There is a Casa para la Mujer, a Casa para el Niño, a Casa para afro-Colombianos, and what more. But we want a local community center in our neighborhood where victims of the armed conflict can talk with functionaries of the municipality."
>
> [Fernanda, November 8]

The system of roundtables and the system of CLAVs was established especially for the interest of the victims of the armed conflict. Fernanda argues that a CLAV is not seen as a political space by the local functionaries. For Fernanda, a political space is where she can discuss and negotiate with representatives of the State. You can only enter a *mesa local* if you are considered to be a leader and represent a certain amount of people. Hence, victims who are not seen as leader cannot directly enter such a roundtable. A *Casa Local* would be a place where everybody can interact with officials and municipal functionaries. This demand illustrates how displacement victims want to engage with existing governance and authority structures. The explanation of Sebastián as to why indigenous communities keep 'producing' social leaders is of similar nature. While they are already brought into a political relationship with the State, social leaders still act strategically and autonomously. Participation in a *mesa local* is not beneficial (enough) and therefore they engage in alternative creations of political space. They feel a necessity to enter Mouffe's *political* and do so by claiming a space where they can engage directly with State representatives.

ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF CREATING OF POLITICAL SPACE

Social leaders have a leading role in the creation of political space. I discussed before various examples of acts and practices that involve existing governance structures: the local roundtables and the CLAVs. In the following paragraphs, I concentrate on alternative acts and practices. This is what I call the alternative creation of political space. I recognize a distinction between visible and invisible creations of political space. The visible creation can be described as the occupation of political space. The invisible creation is more *in-*

side a movement or community. Herein, social leaders for instance define a meeting as a political space. In the end both classifications are meant to engage with the *political* and to ensure that the victims'voice is heard.

The *Costurero de la Memoria: Kilómetros de Vida y Memoria* has been founded by Valentina, who describes herself and is described by others as a social leader. Her father was a political leader and was assassinated twenty years ago because of his communist ideals. Valentina had to flee her place of origin and arrived in Bogotá. Here, one of her brothers became a *falso positivo,* a false positive. Her movement has been established to create a political space where stories about justice, truth, and reparation can be told. Coser means "to stitch", *costurero* refers to "a group of people that stitch". The mandate of the movement is to (metaphorically) sew together memories through talking and remembering. Literally, the movement stitches fabrics to create visible memories. Many of the members of the Costurero have been displaced years ago, a couple of them just recently. In addition, most of them are victim of different types assaults: sexual violence, *falsos positivos,* state crimes, forced disappearances, mining companies, and multi-national companies (MNCs). There are many examples of mining companies and MNCs that enter land grabbing practices. Although the *Costurero* does enter a relationship with the State, they often operate outside the State. They seek alliances (as I elaborate on in the next chapter) with other movements and organizations, but not so much with the State. They consider themselves as a political space. Valentina, the leader and founder of the Costurero, will always repeat this definition during meetings and events. They assemble every week to discuss and talk. Every last Thursday of the month, they gather at the *Plaza Bolívar* in the center of the city. Together with anyone who joins that day, they sit together and create their own political space at the main square. "This is the most important area for political Colombia," Valentina says, "this square is bordered by the Congress, the Palace of Justice, and the mayor's office. Decisions that affect all of us are taken here." By saying this, Valentina shows the awareness of the political. The square is of great importance in the political perception of the people.

The first quote introducing this chapter was uttered by Valentina as a response to an emotional discussion during one of the week-

ly meetings. The discussion inflames when two people start talking about a miscommunication about money. Deeper feelings come to light and people passionately start shouting. When a person takes the floor, often she starts with their personal history. They tell what they have experienced in the armed conflict. At first, Valentina silently undergoes the discussion while some women are in tears. Then, she speaks up and describes how she sees the *Costurero*. As a political space, a space of resistance, memory, peace, reconciliation and fraternity. During this meeting and the heated discussion, she is the only one talking about the *political*. The others, behind their tables with sewings and fabrics, talk about an open space of transformation. Valentina has a great authority when she talks and she has influence. As they prepare the stage for n event focused on female victims of the armed conflict, two representatives of the *Costurero* confide:

> "We are a group of women that experienced different forms of violence within the armed conflict. We are a political space. We write memory about everything that has happened, and we write it in fabrics. About all victims of all conflicts."
>
> [Sandra – November, 11]

Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres

The *Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres* is a national feminist movement and means Women's Peaceful Route. On a higher level they are an advocacy network, on the grassroots level they provide juridical and social assistance to those women in need. The movement was established in 1996 during a time where everybody talked about the war and victims, but not about women being victims. Nowadays, they are a national movement with international connections. Just recently they have founded an office in Bogotá in order to help and assist the victims of the armed conflict that reside in the capital. The woman I met with, Angélica, has been a victim of the armed conflict as well. She was not displaced but has experienced sexual violence and in some members of her close family had to flee as a result of the conflict. Angélica is an energetic woman who benefits much respect from the women she leads. When I attend metings and protests, mentioning that I had been invited by Angélica made people smiling immediately and very willing to talk. At the grassroots level, the *Ruta Pacífica* organizes meetings for groups of more or less 10-

Weekly gathering of the Costurero at Plaza Bolívar. The fabrics on the square are being stitched.

15 women. These groups are led by women who are regarded as social leaders. In these meetings, women talk about their experiences in the armed conflict. In addition, they discuss how they can get organized and participate in the political society. Another strategy to create a political space which was led by Angélica is occupying public space. Every week the movement organizes *plantones*, peaceful protests. A *plantón* can be done silently or in a loud way with people shouting for their rights. They are always performed on busy squares where people who pass by can engage.

Occupying CLAV 'Rafael Uribe Uribe'

I touched upon the idea of (pacifically) occupying public space when I described the two movements which I followed for three months. These occupations did not take long and were performed on main squares. Anybody could still pass by and was free to join or leave. In the next part I want to illustrate another example of occupying public space. The second quote in the introduction of this chapter refers to an exciting expression of protest. In the morning of December 11th, I got several voice messages from Fernanda. I was in the final week of my fieldwork, had completed my interviews and was only intending to to attend a two-day event about the balance of the implementation of the Peace Agreement, later that week. The voice messages were chaotic. Fernanda was telling me that she and other social leaders were starting a *toma*, an occupation, of the CLAV 'Rafael Uribe Uribe'. The CLAV is located in San Cristóbal, the fourth locality of Bogotá. She invited me over to

> "see what is going on and to see how the state does not cooperate with us and does not help us"
>
> [December, 11]

Half an hour after I arrived. Meanwhile the police had showed up in front of the building. The atmosphere in the building was tense. Social leaders and victims who were already inside demanded to talk with high functionaries about their failure to provide aid for the victims. They said that they would not leave the building before these functionaries had arrived. The police, who carried guns and shields, would not let anyone enter or leave the building. They shouted that the CLAV could not be used as a political space. The leaders disagreed and reacted that this center was particularly political as vic-

Plantón of the female victims of the armed conflict at *parque de los Hipis,* Hippy's square organized by la *Ruta Pacífica* [November, 29]

tims asked for consideration but never received the promised attention. By occupying this official building, they turned a public place into a political space.

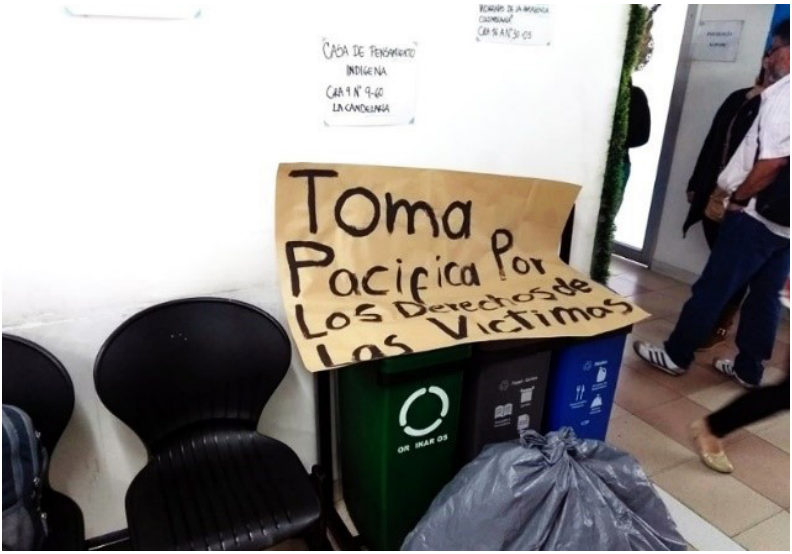
During the occupation, the social leaders held meetings on how to operate and act during this occupation. I was invited to join these meetings too. During one of them, the leader of the group said the occupation should be carried out peacefully,

> "to show how it is ought to be done, and not in a violent way as the state is used to do herself."
>
> [Camilo – December, 11]

The occupation was organized by social leaders of the *mesa local* of Ciudad Bolívar. Other participants at the meeting were representatives of the localities of Bosa, San Cristóbal, Suba, Soacha, and Usme. A reason why I was allowed to attend the meeting of social leaders is that, according to Fernanda, I am one of them:

> "él es con nosotros, él es apoyante, he is with us, he supports us."
>
> [December, 11]

The discussions during the meetings of social leaders were always emotional. Eight leaders were to be appointed to enter the expected negotiations with the functionaries. The leaders of Ciudad Bolívar wanted to be the *voceros*, spokespersons. Other leaders agreed but argued that they also wanted to be represented. They wanted the problems of the locality they represent to be addressed as well. Everybody wanted to be included, as they stood for their community's interest. Tensions rose high when people did not agree with each other. When a leader took the floor to speak, often he or she would commence with a personal story. Highly emotional, they would tell the others who they have lost and why they were displaced from their place of origin. A lot of passion was involved in the discussions. Fernanda stepped in and said that they should not fight against each other, but should make one fist and l*ucha contra el estado*, fight the State. When the meetings closed all leaders calmed down quickly and many started laughing and smiling again. This gave me the opportunity to speak with them, as I did not know most of them before. Later, when we went back to the building's lobby where demonstratators had gathered, this relaxed ambiance rapidly transformed



'*Toma Pacífica Por los Derechos de las Víctimas*, pacific take for the rights of the victims'

into a tense one. A representative of the *Unidad de Víctimas* had arrived, together with a human rights lawyer and representatives of the organization of human rights. The latter two were heartily welcomed while the representative of the *Unidad de Víctimas* enraged the leaders. They were offended as they expected a higher representative from the *Unidad*. The representative misspelled the name of Camilo, the leader of the group. Camilo is among the most common names of Colombia, which makes you think that it is rather hard to misspell it. In addition to his misspelling, the representative thought that Camilo was from Suba. Suba is a marginalized locality in the north of the city while Camilo represents Ciudad Bolívar, located in the south of Bogotá. Later on, in an assembly organized to inform their community, Camilo used this miscommunication as an argument to point out the ignorance of the government. In his speech he referred to the *Ley 1448* and the Peace Agreement and how guarantees are not being fulfilled. He talked about the assassination of social leaders and said that in spite of the security concerns they should organize themselves:

> "It is sad to see more police present than functionaries. We want a space to discuss and negotiate. By unification we are stronger and we will wait here until the secretary arrives with bread and cheese. We want concrete measures. This is a social conflict."
>
> [Camilo – December, 11]

At the end of the day, I could leave the building, after a short discussion with the guarding policemen to whom I explained that I was only a researcher. The social leaders and victims remained inside the building for 48 hours. Eventually they obtained what they wanted, namely speaking time with higher functionaries. Three days later I received a WhatsApp-message from Fernanda. She wrote that the first three of their eleven points got approved by representatives of the *Alta Consejería* and the *Unidad de Víctima*s. These three points dealt with facilitating meetings of victims in their neighborhood, a higher sum of money for families, and more recognition for female victims. They said they would keep pressuring for the remaining negotiation points.

What the above story is meant to reflect is how social leaders consciously create political space. The meetings, for instance, showed how deliberations amongst social leaders and victims allowed them

to engage with the *political*. The occupation embodies the metaphorical bridge social leaders are. Performing as spokespersons for their community, they demand State representatives to implement the guarantees of the Peace Agreement. They disagree with the progress of the peace process and create a political space to engage with State authorities. In the building they have declared as political space, they seek to negotiate with the governor. Emotions and passion are often involved in discussions and statements. By expressing personal experiences of the armed conflict social leaders legitimate themselves as social leaders through emotions – they are as victims of the conflict too – and through passion – they are defenders of human rights.

CONCLUSION

In the current dynamics of the peace process, social leaders play a remarkable, passionate, and leading role. In this chapter I elaborated on why and how social leaders create political space to engage with existing governance and authority structures. The Colombian State brings them in a political relation by establishing rules of law and policies. Examples are the *Ley 1448*, the Peace Agreement, and *mesas locales*. In this relation, or what Chatterjee (2006) calls "arena", the governed (social leaders) negotiate with the governor (the State). Through the creation of political space, social leaders autonomously enter the *political*, or the antagonistic relation with the State. The creation of political space is achieved in both direct and indirect relation with the State. Soon or late, all instances of creation of political space end up in relation to the State as these spaces always address the State. An example of direct engagement with the State is a *mesa local*. Meetings organized in private places are consciously defined as political space. Occupying public space can be construed as a direct and an indirect relation with the State. By claiming a public place as a political space, social leaders transform the former in the latter and hence engage with the *political*. In this opposing and conflictual relation social leaders behave in a passionate way. Examples of creation of political space are peaceful protests such as the occupation of official buildings. By claiming a space to be political, they hold the State accountable for the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Chapter 7

Seeking Alliances

> *"People also generate their own forms of support. They get tired of the official route and leave this state system and seek assistance from international actors, universities, the private sector."* Why are they tired? *"They are tired because the official route takes too long and because of corruption."*
> - Jerónimo
>
> [November, 3]

INTRODUCTION

In the introduction to this thesis, I listed the many obstacles victims of the armed conflict face in their route for aid and support. Many of them are tired of the State, its bureaucratic policies, and its unwillingness and inability to see through its promises: assuring what is promised. This why social leaders actively to seek other alliances. They establish links at the international level and with alternative actors such as NGOs, universities, the church and the private sector.

In this chapter, I contribute a first section to the links at the international level and a second section to about the links with alternative actors. Third, I discuss how social leaders remain active in seeking alliances with the State. Although they mistrust the State, criticize its lack of compliance, and sometimes bypass the state for the international level, social leaders still pursue a connection with the

State. In this I recognize what I have stated in previous chapters: social leaders make the antagonistic relation between the State and its subjects, the victims, more visible. By making links at the international level and with alternative actors, the State is being monitored, controlled, and put under pressure. Social leaders hold the State accountable for what it has done and what it has failed to do. Fourth, I elaborate on the use of the WhatsApp application as the main mean of communication for social leaders. Thereafter, I also comment on the relation between social leaders and individuals. Though not being traditional brokers, social leaders have similar features as bridge between politics and citizens. I do not go as far as to describe patron-client relations, however, I discuss comparable actins and practices. To summarize, this chapter is about how social leaders seek alliances and are engaged within the *political* through this search process.

THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

I became aware of the pertinence of the international level for the first time when I spoke with Valentina, social leader of the *Costurero*. After she briefly explained her movement and her background, she invited me for an event on the 24th of October, United Nations Day. This day marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter in 1945. Valentina was invited to speak on stage and her movement had been working for weeks on fabrics to present. On this day, Valentina says, they "will work on memory, tell stories about the war, and make fabrics. Because the UN has programs we can work with." I ask her how she got in touch with the UN representatives in Bogotá, "I called them and explained the *Costurero*". A couple days later I attended the event and listened to Valentina's speech. She used big words (referring to the Sustainable Development Goals) and talked about sustainability, equality, and one united world. Then she made a link to the *Costurero*, through which she wants to improve the country:

> "We have kilometers of memories of the war. We have kilometers of dreams. We have kilometers of activities. We can only improve if everybody can participate, if everyone is included. It is about human rights, my human rights and our human rights. We all want the dream of the Peace Agreement to be implemented. We ask to be respected in civil society. We want to work together and participate

in the construction of peace."
[October, 24]

When the speeches were finished, most of the public left the event. Few people stayed and watched how members of the *Costurero*, including myself, worked on a fabric symbolizing the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals. Related to this, I attended several – either silent or loud – *plantones*¸ protests organized by the *Ruta Pacífica*. Every single one of them was opened by a speech of Isabella or another social leader. They would always refer to the UN Charter or to universal women's rights as conceptualized by the UN. Before the *plantón*, every attendant would receive a copy of the part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the center of the day's event.
In making this link to the international level, I see how social leaders not only supply knowledge to their community but also stress their rights. The rights that should be enforced by the Colombian State yet are not complied with, according to many social leaders. By rising to the international level¸ I recognize how they emphasize the relation between the victims of the armed conflict and the State. They show how this relation is not equally balanced and address the tensions within this relation. Basically, they make the relation more visible, and do so in a conflictual manner. It does illustrate the antagonistic character of this relationship.

The international level is also seen as controlling and monitoring actors. Ana Lucía helps victims of the armed conflict through her foundation. One man she is helping for the moment has been displaced by the guerilla, the paramilitaries, and the State. All three conflict's actors have had him incarcerated and tortured. During the conversation I had with Ana Lucía, the man in question entered her house and joined into the conversation. He personally told me what he had gone through, with many details, and had tears in his eyes when he explained how he was almost killed several times. Ana Lucía is helping him with his application for reparation at the *Unidad de Víctimas*. In this quest she is searching for a lawyer that might help her with the legal work,

"but we are looking for a non-Colombian lawyer. Otherwise he will be betrayed and expelled to the armed groups. And, because he has been a victim of state crimes we need an international lawyer, oth-

erwise human rights get violated."
[November, 20]

Although being only one of many examples, it reveals the feeling of mistrust and abandonment I discussed in chapter 4. Social leaders mistrust the State and skip them in their search for aid and support. For many of them, it is difficult to turn to the State as it is the symbol of those who made them flee or killed their family or friends. It is difficult for victims to forget. Therefore many of them seek alliances with international actors (personal communication, Jason, 26-10). Additionally, the State is reluctant to confess state crimes.
Social leaders bypass the State and reach out to the international level for controlling and monitoring reasons. I personally experienced this small-scale controlling and monitoring function. When I joined Fernanda and her fellow social leaders in their occupation of the CLAV, I attended their meetings. At one point they were to elect representatives for the expected negotiations with higher functionaries. Some of the social leaders turned to me and suggested that I should participate in these negotiations; "he is from the Netherlands and should monitor what *they* promise". At the end, the others disagreed as they wanted to be on the table themselves. I felt lucky – how was I going to represent these people without a similar background? – but I understood my potential role as an outsider designed to control and monitor the State. The social leaders did agree with each other that in future negotiations, which will include representatives of *all* localities, they want to involve the international level. Suggested international actors were the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Norwegian Council (Norway is actively present in the peacebuilding process in Colombia), and the *ACNUR* (UN High Commissioner for Refugees). If international stakeholders are present "the government will then have to comply with its promises [December, 11]."

THE ALTERNATIVE ACTORS

Besides the search for alliances at the international level, social leaders try to make connection with other movements and organizations closer to home. The *plantones*, protests, that are organized by the *Ruta Pacífica* often attract multiple organizations, movements, and social leaders from all around Bogotá. The different organizations and movements gather and combine forces to demonstrate for

the general goal they stand for: the rights of the victims of the armed conflict. Within this general goal, the movements and organizations do address their own specific themes, for instance the restitution of land, sexual violence or forced disappearances. After a month in my fieldwork, I realized how the *Costurero* and the *Ruta Pacífica* were interlinked as well. Some members from the *Costurero* were also affiliated with the *Ruta Pacífica*. When I pointed out to Valentina these connections, she nodded and stressed the importance of cooperation and the exchange of knowledge. Many social leaders are active in different movements. At one of the plantones organized by the *Ruta Pacífica* I meet Oladis, an afro-Colombian social leader who originates from Santa Marta. In her home town she was active in local politics and when she had to flee to Bogotá, she got engaged as social leader with the mesa local of her locality. She explains that she is active in the *Ruta Pacífica* and other movements in Bogotá, but still has ties with Santa Marta. From a distance she coordinates projects and activities. Oladis calls herself a social leader and defender of human rights.

During a couple of the meeting I attended at the *Costurero*, representatives of various universities in Bogotá presented themselves and offered support. Valentina would always introduce them as supportive people and underlined the importance of working together with such universities. Though I did not speak to people who sought aid and support from other actors like the church or the private sector, many people refer to them as a possibility.

ALLIANCES WITH THE STATE

Thus far I have discussed several actions of seeking alliances, outside the State. The following quote, however, emphasizes the relationship in which the State and victims are still connected:

> "The state is the first responsible to provide help, by law. Therefore we address them and got to court and write letters to ask help. We go to other entities too and get help from the International Committee of the Red Cross and other NGOs like *Casa de la Mujer*. But it is not their responsibility to help us, it is the state's."
>
> [Luciana, social leader – October, 31]

By bypassing the national authority, the State, and turning to the

international level and to alternative actors, Luciana actually reflects the existing relation between her and the State. She holds the state accountable and argues that they should do the work carried out by other actors. Social leaders hold the state accountable for what is has done and for what it has failed to do. The links are made for different reasons. First, to provide the aid and support for victims which is not delivered by the state. Secondly, because these links, and in particular those at the international level, are used as controlling and monitoring means.

I reflected on how Ana Lucía directly goes to the international level in her search for aid and support by bypassing the national authorities, or the State. She does not operate like this all the time. On the contrary, at the same time she seeks a connection with the State too:

> "I don't fight with the institutions, I make friends. We have a big affinity with the Agency for Restitution of Land."
>
> [November, 20]

In the previous chapters I discussed how social leaders engage with the State through identity politics and the creation of space. Both approaches result into a more visible relation between victims of the armed conflict and the State. A relation that is based on conflict but still is being built upon. This chapter about seeking alliances reflects on this antagonistic relation. By consciously making the link to the international level and alternative actors social leaders on the one hand obviously turn their back to the State. On the other hand, less obvious, they still seek the connection by holding the State accountable. A more obvious way of seeking the connection is by seeking alliances within the State by approaching governmental entities or officials in a more informal way. The latter I elaborate on in the next section.

WHATSAPP AND THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Most of the social leaders I met, held their mobile phone in their hands almost twenty-four-seven. Constantly they were in contact with a variety of people, sending texts and voice-messages. The technology of the mobile phone was often the main communication method used by social leaders. Herein, the use of the WhatsApp application cannot be underestimated. All contact go via WhatsApp and it is used as the communication method for groups. When I

was at Fernanda's home, representatives of a Canadian NGO visited her to discuss development programs. When the NGO left, Fernanda immediately started to inform her contacts-list via WhatsApp. Sharing information and/or giving immediate feedback is part of the responsibilities a social leader has, according to themselves and according to their community. Another example is a WhatsApp message I received from Sebastián:

> [16:53, 10-12-2017] *Sebastián: Hoy 10 de diciembre, día en que la humanidad conmemora la Declaración Universal de los #DerechosHumanos; sigue el asesinato de líderes sociales en Colombia ante el silencio del Gobierno e indiferencia del pueblo. #NoMásLíderesAsesinados.*
>
> [16:53, 10-12-2017] Sebastián: Today, on December 10th, the day humankind commemorates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the assassination of social leaders in Colombia continues with silence of the government and disregard of the people. #NoMoreAssasinatedLeaders.

The message is a combination of subjects. As I described earlier in this chapter, social leaders often make the link with international law and international actors. This message was sent to me privately, like to many other contacts of Sebastián. Social leaders often send such messages to their entire list of contacts: WhatsApp is used as platform to supply knowledge and gather people. The day of the occupation of the CLAV, I also got several messages via WhatsApp inviting me to join the protest. During the occupation I saw how Fernanda, and other social leaders, would keep informing people by recording WhatsApp voice messages. These messages were sent to individuals and to groups. The platform of WhatsApp is a two-way relationship; people ask social leaders for their contact too. Nancy for instance, who acted as my guardian angel during the occupation, asked several social leaders for their number to be kept informed of future protests and the continuation of the negotiations.

WhatsApp is also a method of communication used by social leaders to connect with State representatives in an informal way. Ana Lucía explained to me that she did some formal applications last week at the *Unidad de Víctimas.* The *Unidad de Víctimas* responded negatively and did not accept her applications. She reacted by sending a WhatsApp message to someone she knew personally in the *Unidad*. The man responded by saying that the grant she applied for

did not exist anymore. It made her furious because a friend of hers did receive that grant less than one month ago. To prove herself she showed me the lists of history of the chats.

Although it might seem a bit out of context, I see similarities of "clientelist" relations in the use of WhatsApp and the relation between social leaders and the individuals. In the theoretical framework of my proposal I dedicated half a page to the concept of clientelism. To clarify, I was curious whether displacement victims join in clientelist relations to engage within the *political*. Sometimes I felt I was steering too much in that direction, trying to find informal relations or client-patron relations. In some way, the relation between social leaders and victims can be seen as client-patron relations. Social leaders actually operate as brokers as they act as a bridge between victims and the state. I argue that social leaders have similar features as brokers as they function as a bridge between politics and citizens. However, I do not go as far to describe these relations as patron-client relations. Relating back to the chapter on the current situation of social leaders, I argue that many social leaders work from an intrinsic activist motivation based on two reasons. First, because the risk of being a social leader is reasonably high and the benefit is reasonably low. Second, because of the fact that most of the leaders are victims of the armed conflict too which gives them commitment.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I described how displacement victims, under the guidance of social leaders, actively seek alliances. This is directed to the State, but also to non-State actors. Social leaders often bypass the State and seek links at the international level (international actors and international law and rights organizations) and alternative actors. The making of links answer two considerations. Firstly, social leaders seek aid and support. Secondly, social leaders seek controlling and monitoring leverage. Alternative actors refer to other movements, organizations, universities, other social leaders, or the private sector. Seeking these alliances is seen as worthwhile as cooperation is regarded as necessary to stand united towards the State. I recognize that, by bypassing to the international level and collaborating with alternative actors, social leaders emphasize the relation between the victims of the armed conflict and the State. They show how this relation is not equally balanced and address

the tensions within that relation. Nonetheless, social leaders remain making connections with the State as well. By seeking connections with relevant State entities, they still hold the State accountable for complying what has been promised in the Peace Agreement. A way of connecting with the State is through WhatsApp. WhatsApp is used as a platform to share information and to gather people. It is also being used to connect with State representatives in an informal way. It does suggest that, being a bridge between victims and the State, social leaders can be defined as brokers. Rather than being traditional brokers, however, I see them as spokespersons with bridging aspects.

Altogether, with this chapter I aimed at describing how social leaders seek alliances with the international level, alternative actors, and the State. I argue that the action of seeking alliances is undertaken in order to make the relation between victims and the State more visible; this relation that is based on conflict, and hence shows the antagonistic dimension, but is still being built upon.

"La paz es para todas y todos"
"Peace is for every woman and man"
[social leader]

Chapter 8 | DISCUSSION

Deliberating Political Agency: it is about People

INTRODUCTION

I have engaged into this thesis with the goal to understand the political self-organization of displacement victims in Bogotá, Colombia. Internally displaced people, the city/the urban marginalized, politics at the grassroots level, and peace processes: each of these fields are genuinely fascinating. The blend of these fields triggered me even more to travel to Bogotá and talk with the people. When I started to conduct initial research for my proposal, I was surprised about the lack of information of the political opinion of the people at the grassroots level. Many (Western) scholars have touched upon health care, housing, and violence (Ramírez et al. 2003; Olarte and Wall 2012; Shultz et al. 2014; Shultz, Ceballos, et al. 2014; Berney 2011; Zeiderman 2013; Albuja and Ceballos 2010), but few of them have discussed the political participation of victims of the armed conflict. Adding up, I found little common ground on the concept of political agency. I understand political agency as the engaging practices of people at the grassroots level with existing authority and power structures. Due to earlier experiences in Latin America and my fascination for Colombian literature, I was already aware of the strong political sense many people have. In its entire history, Latin America has seen many transformations and armed uprisings inspired by strong political opinions and feelings. In this discussion I want to strengthen the idea of political agency of people at the

grassroots level. I echo Lazar (2004) by saying that political agency is about citizens that make themselves as political subjects. I follow Partha Chatterjee (2008) in his idea of Politics of the Governed. He states that in an arena consisting of the governed and the governor, the governed will always discuss and negotiate their livelihood. Through my main findings I strengthen the idea of political agency as a meaningful theory to address the ability *and* motivation of the marginalized to engage in the *political*. In particular, I find the willingness of victims to engage in politics and policy-making remarkable. My main findings– the use of identity politics, the creation of political space, and seeking alliances – are examples of political agency and fortify my idea on political agency.

I first begin this discussion on an elaboration of my main findings and how I find them worthwhile to include in the theory of political agency. Going beyond Western literature, I refer and build on non-Western academics. Then I expand on the relationship between displacement victims and the State. As third, I discuss the concept of brokers. A key concept in this thesis, the acts and practices of social leaders in the peace process, slightly touches upon the concept of brokers. Social leaders have similar features as they function as a bridge between IDPs and the State. Fourth, I argue the academic and practical relevance of a political ethnography. *People* that originally are put central in the Peace Agreement, are affected by politics and incompliance of politics. By performing a political ethnography I argue the necessity to listen to those who are not listened to.

STRENGHTENING THE IDEA OF POLITICAL AGENCY

I chose a political agency lens to scrutinize the political involvement of victims of the armed conflict. In general the Western idea of political agency often refers to the ability to vote and to electoral politics, Levy (2014). By participating in electoral politics you then engage in the *political*. This idea is built upon a traditional understanding of citizenship. The traditional understanding of citizenship was introduced by T.H. Marshall in 1950. Marshall introduced three elements that together form citizenship: the civil, the political, and the social. The civil stands for the rights which are necessary for individual freedom. The political adheres to the right to participate in the exercise of political power. The social is about all the rights which are required to live the life of a civilized being according to

the standards prevailing in the society (Marshall 1950). These three concepts combine many aspects of citizenship in a sophisticated way. Yet, they are built upon the formal status of members being part of a community. Political agency is often based on that formal participation in what I call the political. I go beyond this traditional idea and institutional and bureaucratic perspective on political agency. I echo Anand (2011) who describes social claims as part of citizenship. Through self-mobilization and the application of social claims, marginalized people can be recognized as people with agency. In addition, through this process, they demonstrate the ability to derive benefits from resources. Hence, citizenship goes beyond its legal status and so does political agency. Rather more, I argue the relevant presence of acts and practices outside the voting and electoral system. In Colombia, a small amount of people participates in electoral politics, voting rates always fluctuate around the 50%.

The concept of political agency has a bottom-up character, which allowed me to truly focus on people at the grassroots level. It shows how those with little recourse to State benefits still negotiate the imperative to protect the lives of vulnerable populations. By demanding rights to protection, housing, and employment, social leaders in Colombia first have to be recognized as victims of the armed conflict. The strategies of the social leaders, which I organized in three categories, show the politics of the governed, how they discuss and negotiate in the *political*.

Simultaneously, political agency entails the relation with governance and authority structures. It shows how governance and authority structures impose a certain kind of behavior (for instance the institutionalist environment in Colombia). Therefore, political agency permits to take an overview and look at more structural dynamics, like governmental policies and historical events. In order to understand how and why people engage with governance and authority structures it is of importance to include these same governance and authority structures in your understanding.

Through identity politics, the creation of political space, and the search for alliances, social leaders show how they are very much aware of what they do and what is needed. In the chapter on identity politics I discussed how State labelling and long-term policies affect displacement victims in a certain way. At the same time, social leaders use identity in particular ways to engage with the *political*. In the creation of political space it is fascinating to recognize the awareness

of social leaders. They consciously turn a public or private place into a political space. Valentina set the perfect example. When we were at *Plaza Bolívar,* together with other Costurero members, she walked around the group. She would point to each side of the square and call every building by name: the *Palacio de Justicia,* Palace of Justice, *la Cámara de Representantes,* House of Representatives. She loaded her expressions with an emotional voice and spread her arms to capture the magnitude of political power. Through these expressions, she showed the importance of the square. This is the place where decisions are made and this is the place where the *Costurero* creates a political space to engage with the decision-makers. It describes the calculated acts of these same people. Although I acknowledge influence of macro dynamics on the behavior of actors on the ground, I argue that social leaders are aware of this and consciously engage with the political. As a final comment I therefore refer to Sally Falk Moore (1973). She introduced the concept of semi-autonomous social fields in which agents are substitute to external influences but also able to find and develop new rules. In this thesis I recognize the external influence however I argue how agents are also able to find and develop new rules.

How people at the grassroots level exactly engage with the *political* varies. Political agency allows to zoom into these engaging acts and practices, yet, these acts and practices depend on the context. In my research it came to the fore that examples of such can be identity politics, the creation of political space, and seeking alliances. In this case these examples were leading, however I do not present them as a blueprint for use elsewhere. I nonetheless suggest to include identity politics in political agency as a relevant subject. I echo Béland (2017) that identity and politics are closely entangled. Identity is a fundamental element of politics across time and space. For Sian Lazar (2012) political agency is about citizens that make themselves as political subjects. Identity is used by people in dynamics of political framing and political mobilization (Béland 2017). I argue that identity politics is inherently connected to political agency. Furthermore, by recognizing identity politics one can gain powerful insight on how actors understand themselves and are seen by others. It enables to formulate the impact of identities on engagement with governance and authority structures.

MAKING THE ANTAGNOISTIC DIMENSION MORE VISIBLE

By being the targets of governmental intervention, displacement victims and social leaders are inherently in a political relation with the State. This can be seen as a two-way or symbiotic relationship of the State and displaced people (Ong et al. 1996; Stepputat and Sorensen 2001; Betts 2009). Ong et al. (1996), Stepputat and Sorensen (2001), and Betts (2009), however tend to not include a sphere of conflict in this relationship. As I discussed before, victims of the armed conflict and social leaders feel abandoned by the State. They mistrust the State and have no confidence in it. Social leaders say the State abandoned them, but at the same time they still hold the State accountable for what it has done and for what it should comply with. This is done in three ways. First, through identity politics where social leaders use identity (e.g. of a victim) to claim rights promised by the State. Second, through the opening of political spaces. Often in a pacific though conflictual manner, social leaders engage in the political by self-creating a political space. Third, through the search for alliances. By seeking alliances both outside and with the State, social leaders tighten the connection with the state. The relationship between the state and displacement victims is of a two-way direction. However, in this relationship there is a strong conflictual character. In the Colombian case, many rights (to humanitarian aid and structural support) were promised but not delivered by the State, causing conflict. Therefore I would like to add a conflictual note in the symbiotic relationship as explained by Betts (2009). In this, I include insights from Chantal Mouffe (2005) who elaborates on the antagonistic dimension that is always present in relations with governance and authority structures. The opposing acts and practices of social leaders carry a conflictual character. These acts and practices not only contribute to the antagonistic dimension, rather more, make dimension and relation between State and victims more visible.

BROKERS WITHOUT BENEFITS

In the theoretical framework of my proposal I dedicated half a page to the concept of "clientelism". Or, put differently, to the informal relations that people seek with the State. Sometimes I felt I was steering too much in that direction, trying to find informal relations of and client-patron relations. Actually, patron-client relations can be ascribed to social leaders as some might say they operate as brokers.

I found it troubling to use this term, "broker", in this context. On the one hand social leaders do have bridging features and are middlepersons for IDPs. On the other hand, the term 'political broker' portrays a politics without passions. This contradicts with how the term of social leader is understood by displacement victims. A social leader portrays a person that works for and with displacement victims – often being a victim too. This contradicts with the term broker, which portrays a person that works for a large extent for outside politicians. An interesting observation about different types of social and political leaders is made by Koster and de Vries (2012) who conducted research in the slums of Recife, Brazil. They argue that a political broker relates to electoral politics whereas a community leader relates to slum politics. Although community leaders are also involved in electoral and governmental politics, they represent the needs and aspirations of the slum. Auyero (2001), who can be seen as the pivotal author on patron-client relations and brokers, does not make such distinctions between people who act as bridge between the *political* and their community. Encouraged by (Lazar 2012), I dissociate the term of a social leader in this context from the term political broker. The population of displacement victims produces an array of social leaders who stand for the community and represent a variety of needs. In addition, they operate out of emotion and passion. Emotion because most of the social leaders are displacement victims themselves. Passion because, despite of threats and assassinations, they fight for their community and their rights. As social leaders stand with their community more then with outsiders, I describe them as spokespersons with bridging features. At the end I decided to use the definition which displacement victims used themselves: *líder social*. In a social leader, I see how people have political agency. Social leaders engage with governance and authority structures. At the same time, displacement victims engage with the political via social leaders.

THE RELEVANCE OF POLITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Before I formulate conclusive reflections, I would like to briefly summit a personal note. I mentioned before that via this thesis I wanted to express the voice of those who are not being listened to. Displacement victims often say the State has abandoned them and that they are on their own. Before I traveled to Bogotá, I read many articles and newspapers about the Peace Agreement that was signed

in December 2016. In general, most of the information had a positive note; the Peace Agreement was the "most progressive", "innovative", and "ambitious" Peace Agreement in the history. These optimistic words were not taken over by a large part of those who are the target of that same Peace Agreement, namely the victims of the armed conflict. Although the accord was signed between the FARC-EP and the Colombian government, most of the pillars addressed the people of and, more in specific, the victims in Colombia. Myself, I arrived optimistic in Bogotá, and I left Bogotá with an optimistic mind. In my opinion, a discourse of peace is already more positive to live in compared to a discourse of war – though the armed conflict has not ceased entirely. I spoke enough people who were 'the glass is half full' kind of person to make me believe in peace. Nevertheless, how can peace be achieved when a large part of the targets of this peace do not believe in it? Therefore I stress the importance of ethnographic investigation of politics at the grassroots level. Because these political ethnographies are about the people, about people who are affected by politics. It is highly important to talk with people who are targeted by governmental intervention. They *want* to collaborate, to build peace. But they do not believe in peace as they are not listened to. Academics have the responsibility to express these voices. And not only academics, the entire community and politics have the same responsibility.

Conclusion

The Political Voice of Social Leaders

I have highlighted in this thesis that relations between displacement victims and the State are complex and to some extent paradoxical. Decades of armed conflict have resulted in a damaged relationship characterized by mistrust and lack of confidence. Nowadays, despite the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, conflicts are still ongoing. In post-Agreement Colombia, IDPs continue facing many difficulties, obstacles, and threats. Victims feel abandoned, left behind by the State and not listened to. At the same time, they consider the State to be the main responsible for their well-being and future. This connection is being maintained by the State itself as they classify victims of the armed conflict as targets of governmental intervention. At the same time, many policies that are in place are unsuccessful in providing aid and support for their targets, the victims.

In thesis I reflect upon the political voice of victims and social leaders of victims in light of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement. This thesis is an attempt to provide more understanding of the political engagement at the grassroots level in Bogotá, Colombia. Therefore I have formulated the following main research questions.

"How do displacement victims residing in Bogotá organize themselves politically?

"How do they make use of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement's

provisions to further their cause?"

Based on my theoretical framework I have developed two sub questions out of the main questions. The concept I put central in this thesis, political agency, builds upon *actions* and *language*. The sub questions aim to study these actions and language of displacement victims in relation to the Peace Agreement and in their dealings with governance and authority structures. Sub question 1 covers the *actions* of displacement victims:

"How do displacement victims engage with governance and authority structures in light of the Peace Agreement?"

With this question I aimed to understand how, where, and when displacement victims engage with governance and authority structures. More specific: which acts and sets of practices are performed. In this, I make a distinction between visible (e.g. demonstrations) and invisible actions (e.g. using patron-client relations). The dichotomy between the 'visible' and the 'invisible' relates to Goffmann's dichotomy between front stage and back stage (1959). The second sub question relates to *language*:

"How do displacement victims express themselves in light of the Peace Agreement?"

This question covers the ways of framing that are being used by displacement victims and how they recognize themselves in the Peace Agreement. Similar to the first sub question, I note a distinction between visible language (e.g. language in public space or in open negotiations) and invisible language (e.g. language in bars, at home, at the street in a neighborhood).

I have answered (part of) these questions in the different chapters of this thesis. I emphasize the distinghuished acts and practices of social leaders. In this thesis I understand social leaders as political leaders as those with bridging capacities, who are seen as spokespersons and a voice for the victims, and who operate as controlling and monitoring actors. As I described in chapter Five, on Identity politics, social leaders reframe, draw, and amplify their identity. By doing so, they engage with the *political* and come up for their and their community's rights. Identity and politics are closely entangled,

which is illustrated by the dynamics of political framing and the mobilization of identities. In the dynamics of identity politics I describe the two-way relationship between the State and displacement victims. Both top-down processes of 'being made' and bottom-up processes of self-labelling are strategically used. The state plays a remarkable role in top-down processes of 'being made' by making victims of the conflict targets of governmental intervention. After 2011, with the establishment of the *Ley de Víctimas*, people are required to label themselves as victims when they apply for humanitarian aid or structural support. Before, applying for both could only be done when you were displaced. By declaring themselves as victims, displaced people hold a stronger position of negotiation and dialogue and therefore actively self-nominate themselves as such. The dynamics of the latter are processes of 'self-making' or self-labelling. Social leaders draw on existing identities to stress the government's political agenda. Besides the 'main label' of being a victim of the armed conflict, other identities are enforced by social leaders. The cultural background is often strongly presented and gender is predominantly used in addressing political agendas. All together, identity entitles a social leader to engage with the *political*. In fact, anyone can engage with the *political*, but the identity of a social leader enables a person with the *political* in an easier and more legitimate way. By being aware of their role as social leader and being aware of their rights, they use their existing identity to promote their claims.

In chapter Six, I make the argument of the creation of political space. Following Chatterjee (2006), the relation between victims and the State can be described as an arena, consisting of the governed and the governor. In this arena, the former still negotiate with the latter. Through the creation of political space, social leaders autonomously enter the *political*. Social leaders are very much aware they create a political space. They consciously perform their acts and practices and call the space they operate in, whether public or private, a political space. The creation of political space is done in direct and in indirect relation with the State, for instance, through roundtables (direct), meetings (indirect), and by occupying public space. Occupying public space can be construed as a direct and an indirect relation with the State. By claiming a public place as a political space, social leaders transform the former in the latter and hence engage with the *political*. In this opposing and conflictual relation social leaders behave in a passionate way. Soon or late, all instances

of creation of political space end up in relation to the State as these spaces always address the State. Through the creation of political space, social leaders hold the State accountable for what has been done, for what has not been done, and for should be done: the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

As I demonstrate in chapter Seven, displacement victims, under the guidance of social leaders, actively seek alliances. These alliances include both the State and non-state actors. Social leaders often bypass the State and seek links at the international level (international actors but also international lawyers and human rights' defenders) and with alternative (national) actors. Alternative actors feature other movements, organizations, universities, the church, other social leaders, or the private sector. Seeking alliances at the international level and with alternative actors is prompted by two motivations: first, to seek the provision of aid and support, and second, to seek controlling and monitoring leverage. I recognize that, by bypassing to the international level and collaborating with alternative actors, social leaders emphasize the relation between the victims of the armed conflict and the State. They show how this relation is not equally balanced and address the tensions within that relation. Despite the mistrust and the lack of confidence in the State, social leaders still pursue a connection with the State too. By seeking connections with relevant State entities they hold the State accountable in complying with the promises contained in the Peace Agreement.

To summarize and fortify my arguments from the chapters: displacement victims actively engage and express themselves. In their *actions*, displacement victims engage with governance and authority structures through social leaders. These social leaders, who are victims themselves too, in turn do so through three types of actions: pursuing identity politics, creating political space, and by seeking alliances. These three approaches generally intermingle and are often used at the same time and place. Displacement victims perform these actions too, however, their actions are channeled through social leaders. For their *language*, I would say that the expressions of displacement victims are inherently intertwined in all their actions. Displacement victims and social leaders consciously express themselves as victims of the armed conflict to gain legitimacy and ask for attention. They do not want to put themselves in new roles of victimhood, on the contrary, often they are active and do not want

to be seen as a victim. However, by expressing to be a victim, they emphasize the role and responsibility of the state. The expression of being a victim has started with the Victim's Law and continued with the Peace Agreement, which entails a focus on victims of the armed conflict too. In their expression, they express themselves with a discourse of being tired of the state and having a lack of confidence and mistrust in the state. At the same time, they express the responsibility of the state to help and repair them. They express the state to implement the promises of the Peace Agreement.

A the beginning of this research process, my attention was centered on the political self-organization of desplazados. When reflecting on my main research question, "How do displacement victims residing in Bogotá politically organize themselves in light of the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement?", I realized how complex and diverse political self-organization is. I am aware of many forms of engaging practices as there do exist many examples of individuals, organizations, and movements of displacement victims. In order to narrow down my scope for answering my main questions, I first and foremost stress the important and remarkable *actions* and *language* of social leaders in this political self-organization. In the dynamics of the Peace Agreement, they make the antagonistic dimension in the relation with the Colombian State more visible. Through their *actions* and *language*, social leaders actively seek to rebuild the connection with the State. This connection is symbiotic but also of a conflictual character. In this conflictual relationship, social leaders behave in a passionate way. By pursuing identity politics, creating political space, and seeking alliances, social leaders engage with the political to claim their and their constituency's rights. In understanding the *political* I follow Chantal Mouffe (2005) who argues that an antagonistic dimension is always present in relations of governance and authority. The connection represented by social leaders is built upon the perception of holding the state accountable for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Next to these bridging practices, social leaders are also a voice for their people and operate as controlling and monitoring actors. Though they are not regarded so much as political actors by themselves and their constituency, I do recognize the *political* in the social leaders, but in a more informal way. In specific, I see social leaders as spokespersons that have bridging elements and engage with the *political*.

Conclusion

In their political self-organization, social leaders use the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement as a proof of their rights and as a controlling and monitoring leverage, to further their cause. Although IDPs are tired of the State and feel abandoned, the State is still held accountable for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. The latter is innovative, progressive, and comprehensive, on paper at least. The beneficiaries of this Peace Agreements are willing to implement it: it now is up to the State to join them.

Listen!

I would like to complete this thesis with a special part on recommendations. One of my objectives in this thesis was to express the voice of people at the grassroots level. The voice of displacement victims, people who are often centralized in top-down discussions but are barely listened to. In post-Agreement Colombia, with a damaged trust relationship between State and victims, a continuation of the conflict, and upcoming elections that can make or break the Agreement, there are enough challenges to be tackled.

I strongly stress two recommendation. First, there is an urgent need to listen to the people. What I stated before in discussing the importance of a political ethnography, many people feel not listened to. I often heard how difficult it is for victims to enter the bureaucratic system in order to get humanitarian aid and structural support. There are roughly eight entities where victims of the armed conflict can apply for aid and support. Within these entities there are 56 sub-entities. Each entity covers a different topic yet are not interlinked. For victims, this "structure" creates many problems as it takes days to pass and visit each entity, especially as they are spread out through the entire city. Transportation is pricy and time-consuming. In addition, taking a day off means one day less at work and consequently a reduced salary. A suggestion is to assemble the entities and make them more efficient. Many people say they have been asking for this for many years, however, they were and are not

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listened to.

Second, I would like address the role of the international community. National and local organizations as well as individual victims of the armed conflict often make the link to the international level. Often they refer to international human rights law and seek alliances with international actors. For help, as humanitarian aid and structural support does not reach many of victims. But also, and no less importantly, in order to have a controlling and monitoring power. Victims of the armed conflict do not trust the State and seek an objective actor. For example, political parties feel the pressure of the United Nations and the European Union which might help in enforcing the Peace Agreement. This is absolutely necessary if one wants to avoid the repetition of what has happened two times in the past; namely the falling apart of a Peace Agreement and the return to yet another period of civil war and armed conflict. The international community therefore has a responsibility to get involved with the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Earlier attempts to secure peace in Colombia have failed over time. It is thus of the utmost importance that the international community does not disengage from the peace process.

Outro

De la Guerra a la Paz

For those who understand Spanish, I have copied the lyrics of the song "*De la guerra a la paz*". When I visited the *Centro Nacional de Memoria Historica,* National Centre of Historical Memory in Bogotá, they gave me a cd: *Tocó cantar*. The cd has been prodcuced to recognize, visualize, and spread the work of local and regional composers whose music relates with the memory of the armed conflict. One of these songs is *"De la guerra a la paz,* from war to peace".

"De la guerra a la paz"

- (Joropo) Simeón Noguera Mayorga | Bogotá

"Aaaa… con arpa cuatro y maracas representando a mi llano Voy a cantar este joropo, a mi pueblo colombiano, Para contarles la historia del gran conflicto armado Que desde hace cincuenta años, nos tiene aterrorizados, Por culpa de la inconsciencia Colombia se ha desangrado Nuestro bello tricolor de sangre se ha manchado, Es la sangre que entre hermanos por años se ha derramado, Donde ha caído el guerrillo, el paraco y el soldado, Y tanta gente inocente que ha muerto por todo lado, Dejando desolación y a mi pueblo desplazado, No hay por donde caminar, nuestro campo está minado, De bombas que le dan muerte, aquel que va descuidado; Llora la

madre y la viuda con llanto desconsolado, Cuando recibe a su hijo o a su esposo destrozado, Por las balas asesinas que este conflicto ha regado; En lo ancho de Colombia se oye el trueno retumbado, Es el avión de la muerte con el misil apuntado, Que deja llanto y dolor allí donde se ha lanzado; Hay pavor en todo aquel, que se encuentra secuestrado, Su familia se lamenta, porque está incomunicado, De su suerte no se sabe, si está vivo o enterrado, Es horror y tiranía que el hombre se haya inventado, No hay como justificar, todo esto que ha pasado, El niño que es inocente, también sale involucrado, Huye nuestro campesino, a ese pueblo abarrotado De miseria y de injusticia, dejando abandonado, Donde años trabajó para dejar un legado De esfuerzo y de sacrificio, del hombre que ha sido honrado

Aaaa… qué guerra tan fratricida hasta dónde es que ha llegado, Quiero llamar la atención, a todo este pueblo hermano, Pa' que todos nos unamos y se dé por acabado, Este conflicto macabro, que tiene el pueblo enlutado; Y se abrace el guerrillero, el paraco y el soldado, Que por falta de justicia, por tanto tiempo han luchado, Le den consuelo a esa madre, después que tanto ha llorado, Se dé ya la libertad, a aquel que fue secuestrado, El niño que está en la guerra, de allí salga desarmado, Y no haya ya más dolor, que ese fusil sea olvidado; Nuestro campo colombiano, que tanto fue atormentado, Se vea reverdecer y esté lleno de ganado, Vuelva pronto a su región, aquel que fue desplazado, Y se acabe el narcotráfico, que al hombre tanto ha dañado, Que en cambio de que haya odio, quede todo perdonado, El canto de paraulata, se escuche con el carrao; Ese ruido de las bombas, pronto quede silenciado, Le brindamos nuestra ayuda a todo el desamparado, Venga a reinar la justicia, en este mi pueblo amado, Se acabe la corrupción, que mucho ha perjudicado, A esta bella nación, donde tanto hemos luchado, Para estar un día libres, del traidor y del tirano, Esta patria soberana, sea un ejemplo admirado, Donde un día hubo guerra todo sea pacificado, Démosle la bienvenida al muchacho reinsertado, Y nuestros himnos y cantos se escuchen por todo lado, Que se levante la voz, con todo el pueblo abrazado Entonando con gran júbilo, la guerra se ha terminado."

Músicos:

Zahira Noguera Cárdenas (Cuatro) Simeón Noguera Mayorga (Declamado) Elvis Díaz Piraban (Arpa) Iván Vacca Tarache (Bajo) Fernando Torres Ramírez (Maracas)

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Annex

1. LIST OF TOPICS AND QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

1. INFORMACIÓN BÁSICA basic information
- ¿Qué, quién, cómo, hace cuándo? What, who, how, since when [referring to armed conflict/displacement]
- ¿Para y por quienes? What for and for who? [referring to role/function]
- ¿Quienes están involucrados? ¿Cuántos? ¿Qué quieren? Who are involved? How many? What do they want? [referring to organization/movement]
- ¿Dónde vive? Where do yo live?

2. OBSTACLES obstacles
- ¿Cúales son obstacles para desplazados y víctimas? What are the obstacles for displaced people and victims?
- ¿Problemas? What are the problems?
- ¿Registración? How does registration come along?
- ¿Agenda humanitária? Humanitarian agenda
- ¿El temor? Fear, anxiety
- ¿Discriminación/estigmatización? Discrimination/stigmatizaion

3. MANERA DE ORGANIZACIÓN way of organization
- ¿Cómo están organisado? How are you organized?
- ¿Oficiales/functionários? Who are the functionaries and how do they work?
- ¿Cómo han involucrado? How have you become involved?
- ¿Cúal es la relación con el gobierno y con otros movimientos/organizaciones? What is your relation with the government and other movements/organizations?

4. LENGUA language
- ¿Cómo se expresan, que palabras usan visibles/invisible? How do you express yourself?
- ¿Cómo se autonominan? (Desplazado/víctima/campesino/bogotáno?) How do you auto nominate yourself? Displaced/victim/campesino, from Bogotá
- ¿Protestas? Que quieren decir? What do you want to say in protests and demonstrations?
- Cúando está con amigos/familia, como se expresa? When you are with friends and family, how do you express your self?
- ¿Cúando está con, o políticos, o otros autoridades/oficiales cómo se expresa? When you are with politicians, authorities, officials, how do you express yourself?

5. ACCIONES actions
- ¿Qué acciones hacen? (Visible/invisible) What kind of actions do you do? Visible and invisible
- ¿Qué acciones hace para sobrevivir, o sea, para reclamar sus derechos? What actions do you perform to survive, or to claim your rigths?
- ¿Cómo es la relación con políticos, otros autoridades/oficiales? What is your relation with politicians, authorities, officials?
- ¿Acciones en la casa? What actions do you perform in house/private space?
- ¿Acciones en espacio público? What actions do you per form in public space?

6. ACUERDO DE PAZ Peace Agreement
- ¿Qué piensa sobre el Acuerdo de Paz? What do you think about the Peace Agreement?

- ¿Es sú agenda? Is the Peace Agreement your agenda?
- ¿Cúal es su relación con el Acuerdo? What is your relation with the accord?

#7. LÍDERES SOCIALES social leaders

- ¿Amenazas/assesinados? Threats/assassinations
- ¿Relación con el estado? Relation with the state
- ¿Relación con la comunidad? Relation with the community
- ¿Rol en el marco del Acuerdo de Paz? Role in the light of the Peace Agreement

2. CODING TREE

	CATEGORY	CODE
	Current situation social leaders	situ
o	Assassination/threatening social leader new victims	situ_assa
o	Experience in place of origin	situ_expe
o	Issue of security & fear of return	situ_secu
o	Language around Peace Accord	situ_lang
o	Negative side of social leaders	situ_nega
o	The role of social leaders	situ_role
	Identity politics	iden
o	Self labelling/auto-nomination	iden_self
o	Victim of armed conflict	iden_self_vict
o	Other, afro/campes/etc	iden_self_othe
o	Líder social & defensor DDHH	iden_self_lide
o	State labelling of social leaders	iden_stat
o	Awareness of (universal) human rights	iden_awar
	Creation of political space	poli
o	Mesa local/roundtable	poli_mesa
o	Alternative	poli_alt_
o	Movements/organization	poli_alt_move
o	Other	poli_alt_othe
o	State	poli_state
o	Occupying public space/protest	poli_occu
o	Mistrust in 'incapable' state	poli_mist
	Seeking alliance	alli
o	International actors	alli_inte
o	Antagonistic state	alli_stat
o	Other movements/organizations	alli_move
o	The individual	alli_indi
o	Communication/WhatsApp	alli_comm

	Introduction	intro
o	Post-accord ≠ post-conflict ("what peace?")	intro_post
o	Causes of displacement	intro_caus
o	Obstacles for victims (e.g. registration, health care, informality)	intro_obst
o	Displacement vs victimhood (ley de Víctimas)	intro_disp
	Personal story	pers_stor
o	Live history	pers_stor_life

El objetivo del proceso de paz: **Terminar el conflicto**

FASE 1
(exploratoria)
Febrero – Agosto 2012

En esta fase secreta se establecieron las condiciones e intercambiaron visiones sobre la terminación del conflicto con el fin de realizar las conversaciones

Se firmó el documento "Acuerdo General para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera".

Esta hoja de ruta estableció cuál sería el propósito de este proceso, las condiciones y las reglas de juego.

Posee una **agenda** concreta **alrededor de 5 puntos específicos y un punto de implementación, verificación y refrendación.**

ESTA FASE TERMINÓ CON LA FIRMA DEL ACUERDO GENERAL

FASE 2
(fin del conflicto)
Octubre 2012 – Agosto 2016

Se instaló la Mesa de Conversaciones en Oslo (Noruega) el 18 de octubre de 2012 y luego los diálogos en La Habana.

Los diálogos se llevaron a cabo de manera directa, con Noruega y Cuba como países garantes y Chile y Venezuela como países acompañantes.

La sociedad civil envió sus propuestas a la Mesa de Conversaciones.

Se llevó a cabo bajo las siguientes reglas de juego: no hubo despejes de territorio ni tampoco cese de operaciones militares; las sesiones de trabajo de la Mesa fueron reservadas y directas para garantizar seriedad y discreción; las conversaciones se realizaron bajo el principio de que "nada está acordado hasta que todo esté acordado".

ESTA FASE TERMINÓ CON UN ACUERDO FINAL QUE PONGA FIN AL CONFLICTO

FASE 3
(construcción de paz)
10 años

Se termina la guerra y **comienza la construcción de paz.**

La paz la construimos entre todos los colombianos luego de la firma de un Acuerdo Final.

Será una Paz Territorial en la que participen todos los ciudadanos y las comunidades en torno a su construcción, que impactará positivamente los derechos de las víctimas y que tendrá que asegurar garantías para todos.

¡Tú construyes la paz!

NOTA: EL SIGUIENTE RESUMEN NO REEMPLAZA EL ACUERDO FINAL.
PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN, CONSULTE EL ACUERDO FINAL EN **WWW.MESADECONVERSACIONES.COM.CO**

Así han participado los colombianos en el proceso

66.098
APORTES* RECIBIDOS
hasta junio de 2016

FOROS

FORO AGRARIO
7.982 aportes *
Bogotá
DICIEMBRE 2012

FORO PARTICIPACIÓN POLÍTICA
4.342 aportes *
Bogotá
ABRIL 2013

FORO DROGAS
4.213 aportes *
Bogotá & San José del Guaviare
SEPTIEMBRE 2013

FORO VÍCTIMAS
22.146 aportes *
Villavicencio, Barrancabermeja, Barranquilla & Cali
JULIO Y AGOSTO 2014

FORO FIN DEL CONFLICTO E IMPLEMENTACIÓN, VERIFICACIÓN Y REFRENDACIÓN
4.460 aportes *
Bogotá
FEBRERO DE 2016

¿QUIÉNES HAN PARTICIPADO?

60 víctimas
DEL CONFLICTO ARMADO

visitaron La Habana con el fin de expresar sus **testimonios, sus propuestas y sus expectativas frente al proceso de paz** y la implementación de los acuerdos ante las dos delegaciones en la Mesa de Conversaciones.

Las víctimas que visitaron La Habana coincidieron en resaltar la necesidad de ponerle fin al conflicto armado

** Aportes es la categoría usada en la clasificación, sistematización y análisis de las propuestas por parte de la Delegación del Gobierno Nacional, teniendo en cuenta que cada propuesta enviada puede tener más de un aporte.*

Reforma Rural Integral

Hacia un nuevo campo colombiano

Este acuerdo sienta las bases para la transformación del campo, revirtiendo los efectos del conflicto y las condiciones que han facilitado la persistencia de la violencia en el país y creando las condiciones de bienestar y buen vivir para la población rural.

Busca la erradicación de la pobreza rural extrema y la disminución en un 50 % de la pobreza en el campo en un plazo de 10 años, la promoción de la igualdad, el cierre de la brecha entre el campo y la ciudad, la reactivación del campo y, en especial, el desarrollo de la agricultura campesina, familiar y comunitaria.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA QUE LOS HABITANTES DEL CAMPO**

1. Tengan tierra
2. Tengan cómo poner a producirla y vivir
3. Participen en la planeación de sus regiones

VER PÁGINA 8

Participación Política

Apertura democrática para construir la Paz

Este acuerdo busca ampliar y cualificar la democracia como condición para lograr bases sólidas para forjar la paz.

Busca una ampliación de la democracia como camino para tramitar los conflictos de manera pacífica y el compromiso definitivo del vínculo entre política y armas, así como abrir la puerta para que en Colombia nos integremos a una cultura de reconciliación, convivencia, tolerancia y no estigmatización.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA QUE**

1. Haya más voces diversas en la política
2. Más ciudadanos participen en los asuntos públicos
3. Nunca más se mezclen armas y política

VER PÁGINA 12

Fin del Conflicto

Este acuerdo establece los términos en que se dará el fin de las confrontaciones con las FARC y el fin de las hostilidades de las FARC hacia la población civil, mediante un cese al fuego y de hostilidades bilateral y definitivo así como un cronograma preciso para la dejación de todas sus armas en 180 días y el inicio de su reincorporación a la vida civil.

Naciones Unidas -a través de un proceso técnico, trasable y verificable- recibirá la totalidad de las armas de las FARC y le garantizará al pueblo colombiano su dejación completa e irreversible.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA QUE**

1. Las FARC dejen sus armas
2. Las FARC se reincorporen a la vida civil
3. Haya garantías de seguridad para todos

VER PÁGINA 16

Solución al problema de las Drogas Ilícitas

Encontrar una solución definitiva al problema de las drogas ilícitas es necesario para construir una paz estable y duradera, por lo que este acuerdo propone una nueva visión que atiende las causas y consecuencias de este fenómeno.

Le da un tratamiento especial a los eslabones más débiles de la cadena del narcotráfico, promoviendo la sustitución voluntaria de los cultivos de uso ilícito y la transformación de los territorios afectados y dando la prioridad que requiere el consumo bajo un enfoque de salud pública. Al mismo tiempo, se intensificará la lucha contra las organizaciones criminales que controlan el negocio.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA QUE**

1. Los cultivadores se pasen a una actividad legal
2. Los consumidores sean tratados y rehabilitados
3. Se combata toda la cadena del narcotráfico

VER PÁGINA 20

Víctimas

Este acuerdo busca -a través de los cinco mecanismos y medidas que integran el Sistema Integral de Verdad, Justicia, Reparación y No Repetición- lograr la satisfacción de los derechos de las víctimas, asegurar la rendición de cuentas por lo ocurrido, garantizar la seguridad jurídica de quienes participen en él, y contribuir a garantizar la convivencia, la reconciliación y la no repetición, como elementos esenciales de la transición a la paz.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA**

1. Verdad sobre lo ocurrido
2. Justicia por los crímenes en el conflicto
3. Reparación para las víctimas
4. Garantías de que no se repitan los hechos

VER PÁGINA 24

Implementación, verificación y refrendación

Este acuerdo señala que con la firma del Acuerdo Final y su refrendación ciudadana, se da inicio a la implementación de todos los puntos acordados.

Asimismo, habrá un sistema robusto para hacerle seguimiento y verificación al cumplimiento de la implementación, incluyendo un acompañamiento internacional.

ESTE ACUERDO **BUSCA QUE EL ACUERDO FINAL**

1. Sea votado por los colombianos
2. Se implemente y se haga un seguimiento a ese proceso
3. Tenga acompañamiento internacional

VER PÁGINA 28

10 ideas para entender el Proceso de Paz

1.Terminar el conflicto para construir la paz

El acuerdo tiene por objetivo terminar el conflicto armado y con ello comenzar una fase posterior de construcción de paz entre todos los colombianos.

2. Las víctimas están en el centro de este proceso

Los Acuerdos tienen el propósito de promover, proteger y garantizar los derechos de todos los colombianos, en particular las víctimas. La terminación del conflicto armado es la mejor garantía para que no haya nuevas víctimas.

3. Las conversaciones resuelven temas concretos, no solucionan todos los problemas del país

Para terminar el conflicto se acordó discutir una agenda de cinco puntos sustantivos y uno de garantías. Si se logran verdaderas transformaciones a través de éstos, se podrán superar las condiciones que han permitido la prolongación del conflicto armado.

4. Fin del conflicto para que no haya nuevas víctimas

La satisfacción de los derechos de las víctimas, junto con la implementación de todos los puntos del Acuerdo Final y la consolidación del Estado social de derecho en todo el territorio nacional, son la mejor garantía de no repetición.

5.El contenido del Acuerdo Final es público

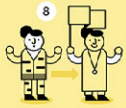
Los avances en cada tema del Acuerdo han sido publicados por la Mesa de Conversaciones a medida que se concluía cada punto. Asimismo, la Oficina del Alto Comisionado de Paz ha elaborado distintas publicaciones que facilitan su entendimiento.

6. La ciudadanía participó en todo el proceso

Desde el inicio de los diálogos hasta junio de 2016 los colombianos habían enviado 66 mil aportes a las delegaciones en La Habana. Además, para garantizar la transparencia y legitimidad de los acuerdos, los colombianos tendrán la última palabra al momento de refrendarlos. Así se acordó en el Acuerdo General y lo han reafirmado la Mesa de Conversaciones y el Presidente de la República.

7. Este es un proceso con justicia

El Gobierno Nacional y las FARC acordaron en los 10 principios sobre víctimas que no iban a intercambiar impunidades.
Por eso se creó un Sistema Integral que prohíbe la concesión de amnistías para crímenes internacionales y graves violaciones a los derechos humanos, y crea un Tribunal Especial para la Paz para investigar, juzgar y sancionar, y asegurar la rendición de cuentas por los crímenes más graves y representativos.
Para acceder y mantener cualquier tratamiento penal especial de justicia será necesario contribuir a la verdad, la reparación de las víctimas y la no repetición.



8. Con este proceso, las FARC dejan las armas y se reincorporan

La terminación del conflicto incluye obligatoriamente la dejación de armas y la reincorporación a la vida civil, social y política de las FARC, condición necesaria para acabar el conflicto y poner en marcha todos los acuerdos, pero no es suficiente. Construir la paz implica eliminar de raíz las condiciones que han permitido la prolongación del conflicto armado en los territorios y reversar sus efectos.

9. La paz pasa por la participación de todos y todas

Una vez terminado el conflicto, la construcción de la paz requerirá de una activa participación de la gente en los territorios en ejercicios de discusión sobre la forma de implementar los acuerdos.
Este proceso pasa por aprovechar las capacidades existentes en los territorios y reflexionar desde allí acerca de las transformaciones que se deben dar con el objetivo de cerrar las brechas entre el campo y la ciudad, para tener una paz estable y duradera.

10. Se abre la puerta para la convivencia pacífica y la reconciliación

La implementación de los acuerdos requerirá nuevos espacios de participación en los territorios, para que los diferentes sectores de la sociedad -incluyendo a las víctimas, las autoridades, las organizaciones sociales y también a quienes participaron en el conflicto- se encuentren, discutan y construyan una visión conjunta de cómo se debe construir la paz en su territorio. Esos espacios de deliberación son también espacios de reconciliación.