The Contested Promise of Peace:
Social Representations of Peace and the *Posacuerdo* Citizen-Subject in Colombia

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Colombian President Santos's government and the leftist guerrilla group, the *FARC,* have led three years of peace negotiations to end the half-century long internal conflict. Not surprisingly, "peace" and its significance have emerged as loci of debate in all sectors of political and social life. This work draws on hegemonic discourses and ethnographic research among conflict affected actors in the department of Caquetá in order to analyze a core site of contestation: *the sequencing* of peace in relation to other domains of sociopoliticial and economic well-being. I find that the state articulates these other areas of citizen life as contingent upon achieving peace, while citizens believe that peace will only come once there are changes in these other domains. I argue that competing representations in this domain comprise the processes through which key state actors work to set the terms for a very particular kind of Colombian *posacuerdo* subject.

As this article goes to publication, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos's government has persevered through a tumultuous three years of peace talks with the largest remaining guerrilla group, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) in an effort to negotiate an end to the country's half-century long war. That the talks have retained impressively consistent levels of public support/public confidence has certainly not stopped citizen, state, and media constituencies from politicizing the significance of *peace* and leveraging its promise towards variable, and sometimes fantastic, imagined futures. And yet, despite suffering from the deleterious effects of generations of armed conflict, public opinion in favor of a negotiated end to conflict has been, at times, lackluster. In part, concerns about FARC member impunity dominate critiques of the process (Nussio, Rettberg, & Ugarriza, 2015).

In order to deepen our understanding of the underlying substance and significance of contests over peace and its promise, I analyze the social representations of peace among various state and civilian conflict-affected actors – or those actors who have had direct experiences related to the conflict (e.g., ex.-FARC members, victims of conflict violence, and displaced persons).

This article draws from five months of ethnographic research conducted in 2014-2015 in Caquetá. Building from theoretical and empirical work on social representations, it extends present theories to include a Foucauldian analysis of

subject formation and governance. I find that citizen and state actors differ in *the sequencing* of peace in relation to other domains of sociopoliticial and economic well-being: the state articulates these other areas of citizen life as contingent upon achieving peace, while citizens believe that peace will only come once there are changes in these other domains. These contrary positions reveal what's at stake in the post-conflict transition, as well as key governance mechanisms for state actors and institutions. Namely, state leaders utilize the *promise of peace* as a means to direct political momentum, set the terms of governance in the future, and frame the conditions of the ideal *posacuerdo* ("post-peace accord") citizen-subject.

THE TRAUMA OF A HALF-CENTURY OF WAR

For many, 1948 and the assassination of popular liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán marked the start of Colombia's internal conflict. In the last 60 years, various armed actors including leftist guerrilla movements, right-wing paramilitaries, and the official armed forces have traumatized the country's population of roughly 48 million: 5-6 million people have been forcibly displaced by violence, 220,000 killed, nearly 40,000 kidnapped, and 51,000 disappeared, among others (Nubia Bello, 2013). Concurrent peace talks, a strong international development presence, and tensions from armed actors of a variety of allegiances contribute to complex sociopolitical dynamics. Everywhere, however, "peace" emerges as a locus of debate: private sector megaliths advertise their commitments to peace; international development and aid agencies crowd conversations in the nation's capital; NGOs ready multi-year *posacuerdo* plans to submit to donors; and citizens otherwise affected by the conflict debate the possible impact – or lack thereof - that an accord would have on their daily lives.

Much policy work on peace is grounded in Johan Galtung's (1964, 1969) seminal distinction between negative and positive peace. Negative peace refers to the lack of war and direct physical harm, while positive peace removes structural oppression and root socioeconomic and political causes of the conflict. This work foregrounds contests over key components of positive peace (United Nations, 1999): education, reconciliation, socioeconomic inequality, transparency and accountability in government, and sustainable economic and social development. Citizen representations of peace and its promise reflect expectations of reduced corruption, dignified wages and labor opportunities, and improved basic education. Government actors have also address these topics. For example, Law 1732, Decree 1038 (May, 2015) required positive peace curriculum in all state-sponsored educational institutions by December 31, 2015. Separately, the Colombian Agency for Reintegration (ACR) demands 80 hours of community service from all demobilized combatants with the express purpose of "generating spaces for reconciliation between demobilized persons and the community" (ACR, 2015). While a core aspect of negative peace (the absence of violence) remains problematic in the face of entrenched and

emerging organized crime groups, the government's contemporary focus on the peace accord does not preclude longer-term goals to build a national culture of peace.

While such initiatives suggest an optimistic upturn in events, the scale of loss – both human and capital – related to the conflict remains staggering. Citizens frequently struggle with the effects of both individual traumas, and the collective traumas they have endured as a nation.

To the extent that individuals and groups within Colombian society desire to heal their nation and work towards a more peaceful future, we need to better understand how those who bear the greatest burden of a post-conflict transition to peace make sense of the past, and how those processes co-constitute forces shaping the terms of imagined political futures. Beyond the physical damage suffered by victims of violence, large-scale trauma works on both psychic and symbolic levels (Robben, 2000). Given this dual, mutually constitutive pairing of the psychological and the social, I turn to social representations theory in order to frame an analysis of conflict-affected actors' discursive renderings of the significance of *peace,* which alternately (and often ambiguously) references a peace accord in Havana and/or a positive peace in society, in which access to justice and guarantees of human rights prevail.

SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS AND MEMORY

Colombia currently occupies what some have described as a pre-postconflict moment (Theidon, 2007), in which the government attempts to implement transitional justice mechanisms while the conflict continues. Social representations theory argues that changes in the socioeconomic and political climate influence the way in which citizens categorize and make sense of the world around them (Wagoner, 2015), which is an ideal framing for analyzing sense-making within Colombia's transitioning society. Social representations are the means by which individuals, groups, and societies make familiar the unfamiliar, locating psychological activities in social life – i.e., through discourse and interaction (Moscovici, 1981). Classical definitions grounded in Moscovici's work assert that social representations comprise those systems of values, ideas, and practices which establish order and allow individuals to orient themselves, and which enable communication and consistent means of classification among members of a group – in this instance, conflict-affected actors in Colombia.

Social representations are multiple, distinct, and mutually constituting of the symbolic traces left by group members. First, they are *multiple* in that individuals draw simultaneously from group memberships and frameworks (e.g., ex-combatant, father, farmer) in variable ways in order to make sense of the world around them. Second, representations are *distinct* due to the confluence of individual experiences, group memberships, and particular sociotemporal milieu. Finally, representations *mutually constitute* the symbolic traces left by individuals whereby those traces alter the frameworks in turn (Liu & Hilton, 2005).

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Such dynamic and dialogical frameworks necessarily co-implicate practices of remembering, identity, and sense-making (Wagoner, 2015). Contemplating peace in a pre-postconflict Colombia requires intensive retrospection into how to reconcile with the often still-open wounds of the past and ongoing insecurity. Throughout this, tensions readily emerge between dominant, state-based discourses, and those of civilians who have been directly affected by the conflict. Prior work has posited the presence of such dominant and subordinated forces in social representations (Joffe, 1995; Wagoner, 2015) and noted the normative nature of such projects (Tileagă, 2009).

GOVERNANCE AND SUBJECT-FORMATION

Less understood, however, is the *work* that establishing dominant modes of representation does beyond determining the content and form of official histories. I thus undertake to examine the role of competing social representations of peace in enabling governance and the production of post-conflict subjectivities. The following analysis interrogates key sites of struggle over meaning and sense-making in order to determine what it at stake in this transitioning society. In his 1982 essay, "*The Subject and Power,*" Foucault posits relations of power as actions deployed upon the actions of others. These governing actions (in the broadest sense of the term) explicitly work to set the bounds of conduct and possibility for their intended subjects, and can include processes such as surveillance and punishment. The following work posits hegemonic attempts to govern the actions of the Colombian citizen-subject through a more innocuous, though potentially no less efficacious medium: the promise.

By promising a particular kind of socioeconomic and political future contingent on a peace accord in Havana, government actors shape Colombian *posacuerdo* subjectivity in key ways: first, they set the terms for the kinds of actions successful citizen-subjects may undertake. Second, they position state actors and agencies as the ideal governing mechanism through which such promises may come to pass. And third, they extend a totalizing claim on citizens' subjectivities by calling for a sympathetic citizen who feels both the pain of his compatriot and a sense of responsibility for rebuilding Colombian society. I will expand on each of these points in turn in the following sections.

METHODS

This work draws from five months of participant observation and interview data with victims, ex-combatants, displaced persons, and other community members collected between 2014-2015 in and around Florencia, Caquetá. The department remains a long-time bastion of the FARC and sits between the trailing base of the Western Andean mountain range and the beginning of the Amazon region. It is an ideal site to investigate pre-postconflict themes due to its concurrent guerrilla, organized crime, narcotrafficking, armed forces, and peacebuilding organizations (McFee, 2015).

Additionally, certain features of the sociopolitical history lend to its richness as a chosen field site. First, the state has a long history of extraction, exploitation, and violent displacement at the hands of government and private interests beyond the initial 16th century colonization by Spanish Conquistadors and other nationally shared characteristics (e.g., the arrival of illicit crop production in the 1970s): namely, the rubber boom at the turn of the 20th century, and the current mining, oil, and mineral extraction efforts (Wilches, 2014). Caquetá has been a strategic stronghold over its history for all major armed actors, including the FARC, the M-19, and the paramilitaries. Additionally, waves of migrants dating back to the beginning of the 20th century flooded the territory from nearly all sides, typically displaced by violence from their home region. Between 2008-2012, the department of Caquetá consistently ranked either High (4 years) or Mid-High (1) on key vulnerability and violence metrics when ranked *comparatively* with the rest of the country's departments (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2015), and remains a region with high concentrations of victims, displaced persons, and (de)mobilized combatants.

More idiosyncratically, the northeastern municipality of San Vicente del Caguán comprised one of the five municipalities within the tragically violent Zone of Distention (November 1998-February 2002); the other four municipalities belonged to the neighboring department of Meta. Then President Andrés Pastrana intended the region to contain the FARC during a failed round of peace negotiations, which instead gave the guerrilla time to regroup, rearm, and retrain for the subsequent offensive, with regional conflict-related violence skyrocketing in 2002 (Consejería Presidencial para los Derechos Humanos, 2013).

The department also hosts many high-profile conflict incidents, including the kidnapping site of presidential candidate Íngrid Betancourt in 2002. As recently as May, 2015, the notorious Teófilo Forero Castro column of the Southern Block of the FARC attempted to transport a car bomb made up of one ton of ANFO (high-order explosive) and ammonium nitrate - sufficient to destroy up to one square kilometer of land - before being intercepted by the national army (Farc, Carro Bomba, 2015). Large quantities of seized illicit drugs and cocaine production facilities appear daily in local periodicals, and directions for day-trips to the rivers – a common pastime – sometimes come with addendums on what areas to avoid due to remaining unexploded landmines. In such an environment, it stands to reason that promises of peace meet with a particularly tenacious brand of cynicism. Certainly the combination of so many acute factors distinguishes this region of the country. Nonetheless, many of these factors also exist in varying degrees and combinations throughout Colombia.

I carried out the majority of my field work in a community with notably high concentrations of conflict-affected actors from all sides, *Las Delicias[1]*. Ethnographic methods are ideal for such contexts in which high levels of distrust and insecurity require a strong relational foundation between the researcher and individuals in the given context. Such methods are also sufficiently capacious to accommodate the variety of semiotic processes inherent in complicated, dynamic settings – critical for the focus of this particular investigation.

Within *Las Delicias* lies a service center of a Bogotá-based NGO addressing transitional justice practices (i.e., truth-telling and reconciliation). I taught English classes through the service center six days a week, and I met most of my interlocutors through this role. I also lived directly in the community; thus, my ethnographic work includes interactions beyond the walls of the foundation. I interacted with ex-FARC, ex-AUC, displaced persons, and other victims of armed violence, in roughly equal proportions, as well as with several key community leaders and the three employees of the center.
The following sections present a discourse analysis of state-based and civilian representations of peace and its significance. I triangulated thematically coded semi-structured interview data with my field notes, and juxtaposed this content with that of presidential speeches and those of other government leaders at the time. The thematic category of the timing and ordering of a peace accord and other social changes emerged most frequently and across all actor categories.

A few points of clarification are in order: although I employ ubiquitous group categories such as "victim" and "ex-combatant," I hold along with other scholars that such identity categories are multiple, fluid, and by no means mutually exclusive (Nelson, 2009; Nussio, Rettberg, & Ugarriza, 2015). Additionally, it is not my argument that all victims or all ex-combatants think or behave in the manners presented here. I concede that certain nuances are lost in the aggregation of discrete actors into such broad categories as "government actors" and "civilians," but hold that such groupings in this instance are appropriate given the consistencies in the discourses and the focus of this analysis on competing, differential representations of peace in a pre-postconflict Colombia.

RESULTS

Both political discourses and social representations leverage time as a resource and a means to structure practice (Tileagă, 2009). It is thus unsurprising that temporal discourses are both deeply salient and contested in this particular setting. In this instance, the *ordering* of key events related to establishing peace differs markedly and consistently between state actors and those living in receiving communities. Namely, the state represents peace as the precursor to other positive social changes – typically,

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[1] To protect the anonymity of my interlocutors, and for reasons of personal security as I still conduct research in the area, I have changed the name of the barrio and organization within which I work.

though not exclusively framed in economic terms – whereas the civilian members of receiving communities conveyed a peaceful future as first contingent on significant changes in other areas of society.

Peace first

Santos and his government consistently articulated the potential of peace in economic, capital market, and productive terms. In a speech to the Forum on France-Colombia Affairs, President Juan Manuel Santos asserted that "many economists calculate that peace in Colombia would signify an additional 2% annual economic growth – in some zones of the country, between four, five, or six percent...I will give you an example of how the end of the conflict would have positive economic results into the future...One of the highest costs for economic productivity has been precisely the war" (Santos, 2015a). The promise of economic growth often accompanies state calls for support for the peace process: for the presumably uncontested goal of maximizing national economic growth potential, the war must first end. At best, the country remains encumbered in its development trajectory.

A development teleology often undergirds descriptions of a *posacuerdo* Colombia, as evinced by a particularly laden national analog to the First, Second, and Third World, a metaphor that was arguably created by the post-World War II international development apparatus (Escobar, 2011). National Planning Department (DNP) Director Simón Gaviria articulated the main objectives of the 2014-2018 "reformist" plan for development. There are, Gaviria asserts, "three Colombias," which his plan attempts to unify so that all citizens may effectively enjoy their rights. The First Colombia is a thriving, globalized country with >5% annual growth. The Second Colombia has a basic minimum level of productivity for development but lacks "productive functionality." Finally, he characterizes "poor Colombia" (Third Colombia) as predominantly rural and in which the citizen is not able to fully enjoy her rights (Reconciliación Colombia, 2015). Poverty, productivity, economic growth, and global connectivity thus constitute core descriptors related to peace in Colombia.

In a speech to the mining sector, Santos argued, "I know that the best input, that the best support, the best stimulus that the mining sector could have in our country is one word with only three letters: PAZ" (Santos, 2015b). By rendering peace as an input, a stimulus, Santos has, by definition, positioned maximum economic gains in the mining sector as contingent upon a peace accord.

These discourses do not occur in a vacuum nor are they uniform. Santos and Gaviria address multiple audiences, including critics of the peace process. Nonetheless, dominant cross-context consistencies in the president's and state representatives' framing of the significance of peace emerge: peace promises greater economic

prosperity, as well as a people freed to realize their fundamental rights as citizens, including their maximum productive potential.

Peace as the contingency

The espoused productive potential of peace, however, failed to resonate with those in the "Second and Third Colombias" in my field setting of Florencia, Caquetá. This is easy to understand given that they live in communities in which there are nearly twice as many children as seats in the local public schools, in which local corruption stanches whatever trickle of economic infusion might leak down from the capital, and in which the images on the front pages of local dailies are a macabre mix of dead bodies and agricultural cargoes swallowed by near- and, on these days, ultimately-impassable mud roads. Instead, other social changes must prevail before peace is possible.[2]

A community leader explained the security landscape of the community one day as we stood on the porch of the community center, describing the different sections of *Las Delicias* in turn. Gesturing into the hills, which extended upwards one illegal settlement at a time, she said to me, "Up there are thieves, armed groups, and informants for the FARC. Why? Bad education." Interlocutors commonly deployed "bad education" (a phrase also used to describe those with poor manners, such as children screaming late at night on a residential street) as an explanatory mechanism for the persistence of egregious forms of victimization, and as a significant impediment for peace:

> *To achieve peace, we must first have education, but not the education that we have today. What kind of education? An effective one - for everyone.* (Victim)

> *Education here is horrible. It's a joke. How can we build peace when we don't have education? But if you're studying, how do you earn money to eat?* (Victim)

Additionally, conflict-affected civilians represented peace as antithetical to persistent hunger, symbolic of greater poverty. As one victim of forced displacement asserted, "When the people are hungry, there will be no peace." Another ex-combatant from the FARC confirmed this sentiment on another occasion: "Spend one night hungry," he said to me, "then you will see why there will never be peace while there is hunger."

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[2] This finding was generously confirmed by data collected in the context of a study during the same period (Ugarizza & Nussio, 2015).

Religious, community, and NGO leaders all echoed the same sentiment, linking poverty causally to the lack of peace. Similar sentiments include the following:

> *People are unemployed, homeless, and hungry. As long as this [is the case], there will not be peace.* (Ex-combatant)

> *If we have work, sufficient food, and education, then there will be peace.* (Victim)

While an in-depth examination of the persistence of extreme poverty is beyond the scope of the present analysis, lack of employment certainly exacerbates security challenges for those living at the socioeconomic margins. And though ex-combatants experience significant stigmatization in the labor market (McFee, 2016), such challenges are not limited to the ex-combatant population: unemployment, informal, and exploitative contract labor dominated daily economic efforts in the area in which I conducted my research, as did understandably attractive opportunities in the cocaine production and trade pipeline.

Just a few kilometers outside the city, as the dense clusters of informal housing began to give way to private parcels of cultivated land, small farmers attempt to organize around the state in order to connect to the development apparatus governing the country's purported growth potential. The leader of an 80-100 family coop, explained to me that, "People here don't believe in the government: in part, because the government doesn't pay attention to this [rural] place." He continued, revealing his politics: "The guerrillas have done a lot for the people; they are fighting for the people. If there is no work, they give you work. If you have no food, they give you food." They reportedly protect the peasants in this area from paramilitary violence. Would a peace accord help to stabilize the region? "No. If there is a peace accord, then the paramilitaries will feel free to just come in and rob people. With peace there will be more war." Echoing this rural leader's sentiments about the relationship of government to peace prospects are the following understandings of corruption:

> *How can we achieve peace with a government as corrupt as this one? These peace talks are a distraction from all of the real problems. We have "Olympic" levels of corruption here [in Caquetá].* (Ex-combatant)

> *All of these state agencies for peace are just symbolic. They say that victims can get this and victims can get that, but when the time comes, there's nothing. They don't do anything. They're so corrupt.* (Victim)

These commentaries are not idle conspiracy theories. In July 2015, the mayor of Florencia, her husband, two secretaries, and 10 city council members were arrested after a protracted investigation into corruption charges (El Líder, 2015). The belief that a peace accord will simply bring either new forms of the same physical and

structural violence or simply no change at all is pervasive in this particular context. Among those civilians living in communities most proximally affected by the conflict – both in terms of time and geography – economic changes must *precede,* rather than *trail* claims of pacific society. Worryingly, at least at the local level, the state institutions ostensibly charged with leading a postconflict transition are the very same as those whose corrupt practices stymie a political economy conducive to substantive peacebuilding gains.

DISCUSSION

The above findings reveal the terms of contestation regarding the prospect of peace in Colombia, at least between key government leaders and those living in communities bearing the greatest burden of building peace in their daily lives. While both implicitly link a peace accord to changes in similar areas of society, they diverge in the understanding and experiences of how these conditions order and align. This disjuncture reveals significant gaps and competing expectations between the two loosely grouped sets of actors.

The work of waiting

Victims groups will certainly have their own repertoire of social representations differing from those of ex-combatants, and variability derived from individual experiences, multiple group memberships, and contemporary contexts render each group itself heterogeneous. Nonetheless, consistent competing social representations of the timing and contingencies of peace confound citizen-state interaction. In part, the citizens hold a deep cynicism and mistrust of a state that they perceive to be, at best, ineffective at meeting their basic physical and cognitive needs. At worst, the government wages its own offensive against its citizens through corruption.

While traces of representations may emerge materially, I focus here on the discourses and practices that comprise contested attempts to represent a particular reality through structuring specific forms of government intervention. For example, callers into a local radio show daily lament government agencies failing to meet their mandates. Additionally, taken-for-granted assumption prevails that new laws and initiatives are facile. Outright public marches and protests feature citizen groups who pile onto the front patio of the governor's office in Florencia bellowing into loudspeakers, "Get out. Get out. Get out, you corrupt politicians."

For their part, President Santos and other state officials' representations of "peace first" in classic development terms – productivity, economic growth, greater global connectivity – accomplishes several ends. First, by constructing peace as the drawbridge beyond which prosperity lies, these discourses direct frustrations to the future. Such direction increases the sense of urgency behind supporting whatever accord might materialize out of Havana. Santos has staked his presidency on these

peace talks, and there has been, at times, a palpable fear in the nation's capital that the forceful winds of public opinion will work against an accord. Second, foregrounding peace also creates a necessary and unfulfilled contingency, somewhat explaining the economic and other social woes of the more marginalized populations outside of Colombia's handful of major cities. Third, by promising to unify the "Three Colombias" as security conditions stabilize in a *posacuerdo* country, state actors further bind the population to state actions keeping the people "like dogs on the leash of *Papa Estado*," as one local Catholic priest vividly described to me: enough to keep them unproductive, and not enough to actually help them advance in any meaningful way. This is not to say that the government is not currently doing anything for social issues; however, by placing the conflict squarely in front of the other political and socioeconomic ills of the nation, the state is channels political attention to the peace process, and, perhaps, buys itself some more time to come to account in other arenas.

Whose peace?

Transitional agency leaders also call on various sectors and all Colombian citizens to share the burden of building peace after more than a half-century of internal conflict. Former Director of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration of Persons and Groups in Arms (ACR), Alejandro Eder, addressed global Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program leaders and international donor agencies in the First Global DDR Summit in December of 2013 (Eder, 2013):

> *We [have] learned [...] that a level of co-responsibility is needed. The reintegration program cannot be administrated simply from an office in Bogotá, only by the public sector, or by the government. We need a level of co-responsibility that involves the local governments, the private sector, and also the international communities and NGOs...if we leave [the implementation process] in the hands of the government exclusively, it will not be an effective process.*

In this opening speech for the multi-day summit, Eder implicates institutional actors both within and beyond Colombia's borders in a clear call to assume a shared responsibility for Colombia's efforts to reintegrate its former paramilitaries and guerrillas.

Despite subsuming many actor categories under the banner of "co-responsibility," the government still wields ultimate control over the direction and boundaries of how this co-responsibility might take shape. For example, President Santos reaffirmed his decision to continue the peace talks despite ongoing violence and the much critiqued absence of a unilateral cease fire on the part of the FARC at the time (Santos, 2015b).

> *We were going to [negotiate] in the middle of the conflict...I was aware of the difficulty that this [decision] would bring with it. The people didn't*

understand how the war continued but we were negotiating peace. How we spoke of peace and continued the war, and still there is much confusion…But this was a conscious decision, deliberate that was eventually to protect and is to protect Colombians. […] I know exactly where I want to arrive; I know exactly what our red lines are, what I can accept and what I cannot accept, so that this country can live in peace for the rest of the generations.

Santos gave this speech in the context of rapidly declining public support for the peace talks after a particularly deadly skirmish between the FARC and the Army that left many dead on both sides. Thus, it is not surprising that the President took the opportunity to reassert his commitment to and control over the process. Nonetheless, the paternalistic tones are striking: the state has the knowledge that the people lack. It is the protector – *he* is the protector – of Colombians, and he knows (and we must trust that he knows) where we are going and how to get there. With regards to loci of responsibility, the president makes clear his executive authority over the peace process.

I found that those involved in organizations related to conflict-affected actors – an admittedly biased sample - tended to take seriously the call for individual responsibility for peace-building. Less agreed upon was the extent to which the state and its institutions might figure as thought or policy leaders in this endeavor. Some affected civilian actors with whom I spoke laid bare the shortcomings of the state in meeting its perceived responsibilities. However, with the exception of several ex-combatants who spoke very highly of their interpersonal interactions with the service providers of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration, not a single interlocutor among this population conveyed the sense that state agencies or local government were equipped to manage the realities of peace-building in day-to-day life.

Such skepticism on the part of the citizenry does not dampen the president's efforts to extend the mandate for shared responsibility into the interiority of the citizen-subject. In a 2013 ceremony at the Presidential Palace commemorating the release of the official history of the conflict by the National Center for Historical Memory, Santos asserted the following (Santos, 2013):

As Colombians, the moment has arrived for us to construct the memory from truth, the truth that liberates. And that responsibility is not only mine, nor the government's, nor the victims', nor the victimizers'. No. It's an issue for everyone. Of everybody's. Because it would not be fair to continue ignoring the pain of hundreds of thousands of Colombians. I think that would be unforgivable. We have to know their experiences to help them rebuild their lives.

In this account, it is not sufficient for only those with direct involvement to commit to rebuilding the social fabric of the country: instead, all Colombians are implicated. Not sufficient to simply be physically present, Colombians must also *know* the pain of their fellow citizens. It is worth noting that there are two verbs in Spanish that mean "to know." One (*saber*) tends to refer to knowledge, facts, or information about something. The other (*conocer*) signifies being acquainted with a person, place, or object. In this instance, President Santos deployed the latter verb – *conocer* - suggesting that he is calling on citizens not just to learn facts, but to understand and know on a more intimate level the experiences of those directly involved in the conflict. As such, the Presidential mandate extends into the interiority of the individual subject, who, presumably desiring abstention from the "unforgivable" condition of ignoring the pain of the conflict's victims, must familiarize himself with their suffering. In this way, Santos sets the conditions for subjectivity in a transitioning society.

Diffusing responsibility for peacebuilding accomplishes several things for national government leaders. First, sharing responsibility with the private sector, international organizations, and citizens significantly unburdens the state with regards to the mechanics of peace-building in day-to-day life. Second, by positioning national leadership as the model for peace politics, state leaders create and maintain inroads for future governance over related affairs. Thus, albeit with lingering paternalistic overtones, the state produces the conditions of its own absence by advancing the "co-responsibility" paradigm. Finally, by placing on each citizen the responsibility not just for peace-building, but also for *knowing* the pain of their victimized compatriots, state leaders call for a new kind of empathetic post-conflict subject, while still maintaining the state's role as ideal pedagogues for delivering such qualities of citizenship.

REPRESENTATIONS, POWER, AND GOVERNANCE

Approaching this analysis through the lens of social representations enables us to draw in the role of memory (actors' identities vis-à-vis their past experiences with the conflict), the symbolic, and other traces of representations (citizen-state relations, patterns of economic behavior) as we locate the psychological in the social. Through this process, we find that clear tensions between differentially empowered conflict-affected actors emerge. State pedagogies work to form the discursive contextual conditions in which its citizens make sense of a transitioning society, while those same citizens combine in different ways these and other potentially competing discourses with personal histories in order to represent peace in various terms. However, more than just locating the site and content of discrepant representations of the promise of peace, Foucault's analysis of the way in which relations of power comprise actions upon the actions of others allows us to elevate our understanding of what these contested understandings accomplish for those implicated.

Those individuals who accept responsibility for peace-building clearly work within the field of possibilities set forth by the state and NGO actors. Those who resist state ordering of peace-before-all-else nonetheless do so on the same terms as the state leaders cited here – economic, cognitive, affective, and in relation to the institutions that govern them. Even accounts of deeply personal embodied suffering in the form of persistent hunger connect physical conditions to economic and educative ones in broader society. As such, sufficient work has already taken place in shaping the language of peace so that the contests occur not around the stakes themselves, but within already established domains of governability (e.g., labor, education, the body). Relations between actors in contexts such as this one are far more nuanced than a mere dominant-subordinate rendering may suggest. Rather, resistance and adoption co-occur and may even mutually constitute one another: and both comprise the work of governance upon the citizen-subject and the reproduction and contestation of this governance.

By calling on citizens to be sympathetic to the experiences and suffering of their compatriots and advance towards the "First Colombia," state leaders directly lay claims on the subjectivities of their citizens and work to produce a very particular form of productive, empathetic, and formally employed (and thus more governable) subject. In a society in which institutional distrust is the norm, what are the means available for state institutions to engender in their subjects a drive to occupy a particular kind of *posacuerdo* subjectivity? I argue that, instead of the threat of arms, economic disparities, surveillance, and rules that Foucault posits as the principle means by which states demarcate the field of possibilities (Foucault, 1982), Colombian state leaders dominate through a more subtle, and potentially far more coercive means: the promise.

In this context, the promise exemplifies Foucault's theory on governmentality, which avers, in part, the "conduct of conduct" through the government's extension into the subjective realm, and an explicit turn away from theories of rule by brute force (Foucault, 1991). The above sections posit a clash between understandings of the signification of peace. I suggest here that these contestations first comprise an ideal historical moment to investigate themes of governmentality and assignment of responsibility for individual governance to the citizens themselves. Second, they reveal problematic state attempts to reconfigure a reality-in-transition in a way that erases the reconfiguration and renders it taken-for-granted – i.e., to ultimately govern the behavior of its subjects through the promise of changes to come.

By consistently placing a successful end to negotiate a peace accord in Havana before optimal gains in other areas of socioeconomic life, President Santos and other state agency representatives create the conditions for conformity to the idealized *posacuerdo* Colombian citizen-subject. With this accord will come a better, more prosperous, inclusive, productive, and globally connected Colombia – one that ameliorates the glaring inequality eroding the *tejido social* (social fabric) of society at

present. This act of promising subsequently shapes the realm of possibilities for citizens' actions now and into the future.

In his National Mining Congress speech, Santos claimed that "the world has to know, for example, the importance of coal to Colombia, and how supporting coal, Colombian coal, supports peace and supports development of our country" (Santos, 2015b). In an address to a regional music festival, he averred that "with peace, [the Department of] Cesar will be bigger, our [folkloric music] will shine more, and it will be the accordions and not guns that are heard in the villages of our beloved nation" (Santos, 2015c). The promise of peace is expansive: economic growth, a more globalized economy, more robust development, a stronger mining sector, and, apparently, better sounding music.

CONCLUSION

This work argues that social representations of peace among different groups of conflict-affected actors in Colombia differ notably with respect to the timing and contingency of peace and change in other areas of socioeconomic and political life. President Santos and other government agency leaders argue that with peace will come greater economic prosperity, national growth, global inclusivity and connectivity. Juxtaposed with this, citizen actors with whom I spoke instead called first for poverty alleviation, reduced corruption, and better education. The latter domain comprises both technical capabilities required for employment as well as social values concordant with a peaceful society. Additionally, the government calls on its citizens, among other sectors, to share responsibility for peace-building in their areas of influence, to look to the state for leadership, and to know intimately the suffering of their compatriots. For their part, at least a portion of directly affected individuals have decided to take on this responsibility, and are intimately familiar with their own suffering, and perhaps the suffering that they have caused – though their turn towards state agencies to support such processes may be partial and filled with anticipated disappointments.

The above analysis posits that dominant narratives that render broader societal changes as contingent upon peace accomplish three things: they funnel valuable political energy and positive public opinion towards ratifying whatever accord emerges from the peace talks in Havana; they explain away the present shortcomings in many areas of the country outside the major cities; and they further bind the populace to the leadership of state institutions in anticipation of future change. In this and other ways described throughout this article, the state creates and maintains the field of possibilities for its citizens through the use of the promise – that of future bounty and well-being.

Regarding leadership and diffusing responsibility for peace-building, engaging multiple actors increases the technical bandwidth of the state to accommodate millions of victims and citizens in transition, as well as frames the problems in terms

of the states' capabilities to address it, while simultaneously creating multiple inroads for governance and subject-formation, both in the exterior machinations of citizen's daily lives, as well as into their very interiority and experiences as citizen-subjects. Peace and its promises are thus rendered not as a new and novel turn in the history of a nation, but instead as an all too familiar domain of contest and claims-making, mutually constituted and shaped by both citizen and state forces.

This case study in Florencia, Caquetá has demonstrated what is at stake for various conflict-affected actors. Colombia varies greatly in its economic, sociopolitical, and security conditions; nonetheless, insecurity, corruption, extreme poverty, lack of proper education and health care, and strained citizen-state relations all emerge in other marginalized areas of the country. Additionally, the centralized patterns of governance assure that national peace-building projects radiate out from Bogotá in consistent ways to these marginalized areas as well. Further research should build on these methods to examine how national policies and objectives are contested, appropriated, and transformed in other local contexts.

One limitation in a qualitative study of this kind lies in the positionality of the researcher and what she might potentially signify in terms of resources to her interlocutors. I have no doubt that my identity as a female doctoral student from the United States influenced the way in which individuals formed their responses (e.g., I was at times asked directly for contacts in international aid and development organization, and even for cash for independent startups). It is my hope that the various conditions under which these commentaries emerged – institutional encounters, everyday life, and community organizing groups – help to mitigate these potential positionality effects. Additionally, as noted in the findings section, data collected by a research team including male Colombian nationals confirms one of my principle findings (Ugarizza & Nussio, 2015), which also works to alleviate some of these concerns.

Among those who have experienced gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, it becomes critical to examine various affected actors' sense-making of their individual and collective traumas. Social representations of peace and its promise are but one avenue into understanding how a society and its state leadership rebuild, especially under the conditions of a transition in which some perpetrators of these rights violations do not undergo dismantling, such as is the case with the Colombian government, and in which former victims and their aggressors must learn to live together after war. It is my hope that this work may contribute to our understanding both of contemporary politics of peace in Colombia, and to the importance of analyzing relations of power in both competing and convergent social representations between various groups of actors.

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