War and Peace in Colombian History Schoolbooks

Tatjana Louis / Jennifer Cantillo

In 2018, a group of students of the Peacebuilding Masters' Programme at Universidad de los Andes was given in a seminar the following exercise: One group should elaborate a history of war in Colombia, the other group should prepare a history of peace. They had 15 minutes to finish the exercise.[1] During the next 15 minutes, the students of the war group were very busy drawing timelines and filling in the multiple violent events Colombian history has to offer, and the space on the piece of paper clearly was not enough. The students of the peace group on the contrary had to think for quite some time before they finally came up with a proposal. Their piece of paper, however, had a lot of empty space.

Colombian history is commonly seen as a history of war. In fact, multiple civil wars during the 19th century and, in spite of a peace agreement in 2016, the still ongoing internal armed conflict, that covered a large period of the 20th century, have shaped this impression. With this context, it was not that easy for the students to unthink this way of seeing their past and to find a different approach of telling the story.

It is not very difficult to find reasons for this perception. The ongoing violence is part of most Colombians' daily experience, and it has been like that for decades. Violence has become a circular memory where the present and the past merge into one reality (Sánchez, 2006). In addition to personal or family experiences, the topic of violence is omnipresent in the media, in art, in educational institutions and is thus produced and reproduced as a social discourse.

The school as a formal educational institution plays a central role in shaping world views and the perception of realities. What is taught and learned in school is the (minimal) consensus of a society on what the next generation, its future citizens, should know so that society can endure. It is primarily the so-called ideological subjects such as history, politics, ethics or social sciences in which social discourses and postures are taught (von Borries, 2008).

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1 This exercise has been adapted from Seixas & Morton, 2013.

The perception of Colombian history as primarily violent is a social discourse whose development is examined in this text. We analyze how the concept of peace and its opposite, war, have been defined within the framework of history teaching and how they have changed in the last 70 years, time that is contemplated when talking about the armed conflict. We review the objectives of the teaching of history in the respective laws and curricular guidelines as well as their translation into school reality. The basis for the analysis of this last aspect are school texts that we understand as sources of social historical consciousness at a given moment (Schönemann & Thünemann, 2010) and that enlighten us on how the concepts of peace and war have been understood and represented over time. With this analysis we want to make a contribution to the current debate around the teaching of history, its scope and its limits.

School history books as a research object

Textbooks still play a central role in teaching materials for classroom instruction and act as a mediator between the state curricular guidelines and their implementation in the classroom. In doing so, they not only convey knowledge to, but are themselves products of the society surrounding the education community. In this respect, textbooks can be analyzed in two directions: On the one hand, with regard to the knowledge offered to the next generation, and on the other hand, with regard to the social negotiation processes that preceded the production of the book and which led to the content being presented in a certain way (Fuchs, Niehaus & Stoletzki, 2014).

They are therefore excellent sources that provide a snapshot of the ideas, discourses, values and imaginaries that were dominant in society at the time of publication. Textbooks and the world views they convey have long been the focus of research. Already after World War I, inflammatory and prejudiced representations in textbooks were identified as drivers of nationalist tendencies and war propaganda. For this reason, textbook commissions were formed as early as in the interwar period to examine manuals in terms of the extent to which they contributed to the idea of an open, tolerant, and peaceful world (Korostelina, 2013). In 1932, the International Committee on Intellectual Co-Operation, founded in 1925 within the framework of the League of Nations, published for the first time the handbook "School Text-Book Revision and International Understanding",

which provided guidelines to the revision of schoolbooks (Pingel, 2010).[2] This practice, interrupted for several years by World War II, was resumed soon after the end of the war and has since become an integral part of reconciliation and history policies worldwide. The German-French as well as the German-Polish Textbook Commission can be mentioned as examples. In both cases, a bi-national history textbook was developed, in which the divided history is presented in a common narrative.[3] The Israeli-Palestinian efforts also produced a remarkable suggestion of how the past of this torn region could be presented in a way that takes into account the opposite perspectives.[4] In South Africa, within the framework of the Reconciliation and Truth Commission, the curricula for history lessons were subjected to a careful revision (Hues, 2014).

In Colombia too, history and what is to be learned about it has become the subject of discussion in the peace process. In September 2019, for example, a commission of historians was set up to advise the national Ministry of Education on issues relating to the teaching of history (Decree No. 1660 of 2019). Nevertheless, a comprehensive revision of history textbooks and curricula has not yet taken place.

The teaching of history in Colombia and the production of schoolbooks

Currently, in Colombia there is no subject History in school education. History is taught within the Social Sciences, a subject that also covers Geography, Economics and Civic Education. The specific content of the subject History is today little regulated. The curricular guidelines merely provide rough thematic lines, which can be filled in very differently from case to case.

During the first half of the 20th century until the 1970s, history teaching was primarily in the service of the unity of the nation and was taught in a subject called "Historia Patria", the contents of which were influenced by the Catholic Church on the one hand and the conservative Colombian Academy of History (*Academia Colombiana de Historia*, ACH) on the other (González 2014). Before the impression of the numerous civil wars of the 19th century, history lessons in the early 20th century were intended above

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2 This handbook is now available in its second edition: Pingel, Falk (2010). UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision. Paris, Braunschweig: UNESCO.

3 Histoire / Geschichte, 2006ff., Europa – Unsere Geschichte, 2016ff.

4 Learning Each Other's Historical Narrative: Palestinians and Israelis, 2003.

all to awaken and strengthen the love for the country and fill children with pride in the deeds of its important men (Decree No. 491 of 1904, Art. 57).

In this context, and also against the background of the upcoming celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Colombia's independence, in 1909 the conservative government launched a competition for a school history textbook that would contribute to the consolidation of the project of nation and hence for a peaceful coexistence. As a result of this competition, in 1910 (Decree No. 963), one of the most used texts of Colombian history during the 20th century to teach history, by the authors Jesús María Henao and Gerardo Arrubla, was approved by the archbishop of Bogotá and adopted for public schools (Melo, 2010).

Even if the language used in this book sounds patriotic-nationalistic from today's perspective, this book is perceived as a call for political moderation and defense of the public good (Melo, 2010). The fact that school education was considered to have a decisive influence on peaceful coexistence can also be seen in the fact that in 1936, within the framework of the VII International American Conference, Colombia signed an agreement on history education in which the country, along with other Latin American states, undertook to revise its school textbooks in the spirit of the League of Nations. In the same year, the Law No. 72 was enacted, which explicitly addresses the importance of textbooks for peace education.

This commitment to the importance of history teaching did not, however, change the view of history as *Historia Patria*. Any controversies that questioned the unity of state and nation were ignored. This even went so far that the subject of *Violencia*, the traumatic internal conflict of the late 1940s and 1950s, disappeared completely from the history books in the 1960s (Schuster, 2009).

A turning away from exemplary history lessons, in which loyalty to the state and nation is to be promoted primarily through examples that are worthy of imitation or deterrence, did not occur until the 1970s with the liberal governments and the end of the *Frente Nacional*[5] (Graffe & Orrego, 2013). The so-called New History (*Nueva Historia*) called for a problem-oriented approach to history that went beyond a primarily political history to include socioeconomic aspects. A series of decrees defined as new goals of civic education critical, analytical and methodological skills that students should acquire (Decree No. 1419 of 1978). Loyalty to the state to ensure

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5 The *Frente Nacional* (1958-1974) was a political pact aimed at ending the violence of the 1940s and 1950s by alternating government between the conservative and liberal parties.

the unity of the nation was not completely replaced, but it was described in a more contemporary way as *Education for democracy, peace and social life* (Decree No. 239 of 1983).

In this context, the influence of the church and the ACH on the narratives and content of history lessons diminished. On the one hand, this was due to the need to establish more public schools, especially in rural areas, as a result of population growth. On the other hand, the National Ministry of Education increasingly exercised its normative function with regard to curricula and schools. Although the schools continued to have a great deal of autonomy with respect to content, educational plans now had to be approved by the state.

To the extent that the Ministry emancipated itself from the concepts and ideas of the ACH, the generation of new publishing houses and textbooks was encouraged. An important example of this change in control over texts is reflected in Decree No. 1264 of 1981, through which the *Concurso Nacional de Obras Didácticas* (National Contest of Didactic Works) "Educador colombiano" was established. This contest sought to stimulate the production of pedagogical literature in different areas. Thus, began the generation that González (2014) would call Problematized History (approx. 1985 - 1994), probably the generation of school texts where history was taught with greater depth of social problems and better characterization of political actors and contexts. Finally, in 1987 the National Textbook Commission was established under Law No. 24.

This commission had an evaluative, but not a normative function. It was not an authorizing body. The decision on which books to use in the classroom depends on the school itself, in accordance with its Institutional Education Project (*Proyecto Educativo Institucional*, PEI) (Law No. 115 of 1994, Art. 102). Since 2003, the National Ministry of Education has maintained a textbook catalog[6] that includes evaluations (Uribe, 2005), but these often coincide with the descriptions provided by publishers. The normative functions of the ministry are therefore limited to the preparation of curricular guidelines and the approval of PEI. There is no approval of the specific content or the way it is presented in books.

Only recently has there been a renewed, more concrete official interest in the content of history education and its possible outcomes. Decree No. 1038 of 2015 established the Peace Lecture (*Cátedra de la Paz*), the mandatory teaching of peace culture, the teaching of historical memory being one of its strategies. Law No. 1874 of 2017 identified the teaching

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6 www.colombiaaprende.edu.co.

of history as a key element for peace education, and Decree No. 1660 of 2018 established a Commission of Historians, which has an advisory role regarding the revision of the guidelines for social sciences.

Even if textbooks in Colombia are little regulated, they are still a product of the surrounding society and its political constellations. One constant that can be observed across all changes is the goal of social cohesion. This can be expressed as a patriotic education, as well as an education to become a responsible citizen, goals that in the end do not differ much. How this goal is achieved discursively, however, varies.

In the following, school history textbooks from different moments will be analyzed with regard to how they semantically represent and discursively connect moments of social cohesion as well as threats to the same, i.e. "war" and "peace". For this purpose, a corpus of textbooks published in the period from 1951 to 2016 was created. Specialized corpora form an essential source base for the study of opinions, positions, and worldviews and their discursive implementation (Hunston, 2002). In a first step, terms that can be considered synonyms with war and peace were defined and the frequency of their occurrence was determined. In a second step, these terms were considered in their context under the following questions: What events are described? Who are the actors and what responsibility is attributed to them? How is a state of war or peace ended and by what semantic means is this expressed? Finally, how does this connect to the political context?

The Corpus

For the present analysis, four textbooks were considered, which are part of a larger corpus of 13 books in total.[7] On the one hand, the selection considered books from the different generations. On the other hand, the selection was made under the pragmatic criterion of availability. The use of textbooks in school was only a secondary criterion, as it is an information very difficult to get. Textbooks are not systematically collected in

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7   Historia de Colombia (1951), Historia Socioeconómica de Colombia (1985), Historia de Colombia. Educación Básica y Secundaria (1986), Tempo 9 (2009), ZonActiva 9 (2009), Hipertexto Sociales (2010), Ejes Sociales (2012), Sociales 9 (2013), Proyecto Sé Ciencias Sociales 8 y 9 (2012), Enlace Sociales 10 (2014), Estrategias en Ciencias Sociales 9 (2010), Los Caminos del Saber 9 (2013), Proyecto Saberes Sociales Ser Hacer 10 (2016).

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Colombia, nor is the extent to which they are actually used in schools recorded.[8]

The discursive changes are hence explored in greater depth with the help of the following books: *Historia de Colombia*, by Rafael Granandos (RG), *Historia Socioecónomica de Colombia*, by Carlos Alberto Mora and Margarita Peña (HSC), *Ejes Sociales* by Mireya Díaz, Germán Antonio Granada Osorio and Luis Fernando Ortiz (ES) and *Proyecto Saberes ser hacer Sociales 10*, by Iván Parra and Mauricio Riveros (PS). It is important to note that the first two books focus primarily on the history of Colombia, while the last two books cover not only topics of world history, but also other areas of the subject of Social Sciences, such as economics, geography and civics. The chapters related to Colombian history make up only a smaller part of the books.

Historia de Colombia, published in 1951, was written by the Jesuit father and teacher of the Jesuit school San Bartolomé la Merced in Bogotá, Rafael Granados. It can be counted among the books that were strongly influenced by the *Historia Patria* and ecclesiastical positions. *Historia Socioeconómica de Colombia*, published in 1985, is a well-known text of the *Nueva Historia*, with a strong emphasis on social movements and conditions.[9] The difference between the two more recent books, *Ejes Sociales* (published in 2012) and *Proyecto Saberes* (published in 2016) lies in the fact that *Ejes Sociales* is influenced by the administration of Álvaro Uribe, who was Colombian president between 2002 and 2010. *Proyecto Saberes* was published during the administration of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) in a moment where the peace negotiations of Havanna already were taking place, but had not yet concluded. Both administrations have a fundamentally different approach to the armed conflict which is reflected in the narration of the respective books (Jaramillo, 2017).

An initial selection of keywords was created after a first, unsystematic review of the books. Around 40 terms were determined, which were then systematically checked, revised and supplemented using the program AntConc. On the one hand, words were taken into account that have a

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8　The Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig also does not have a systematic collection of Colombian textbooks. Historical textbooks are accessible at the Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango; the more recent ones are from the collection of the authors of this article.

9　It is true that the distribution of the book cannot be substantiated with concrete figures for the reasons mentioned above. However, this book has a high recognition value due to its characteristic cover, and many people who went to school in the 1980s and 1990s remember it according to the authors' own survey.

direct semantic connection with the central terms "war" and "peace", such as *batalla* (battle), *combate* (combat) and *insurgencia* (insurgency) for war and *pacto* (agreement), *acuerdo* (agreement) and *compromiso* (compromise) for peace.

On the other hand, terms that can be related to war and peace in a broader sense were also reviewed, such as *orden / desorden* (order / disorder), *catástrofe* (catastrophe), *restablecimiento* (reestablishing), *reconciliación* (reconciliation). Finally, actors of the conflict were searched, such as *ejército* (army), *guerrilla, grupos al márgen de la ley* (illegal groups), *paramilitares* (paramilitary).[10] In general, the lemmata were checked with all their word-forms.

This exercise finally resulted in the following list with 31 key words:

guerra	war
paz	peace
acuerdos	agreement
amnistía	amnesty
conflicto	conflict
conflicto armado	armed conflict
desorden	disorder
diálogo	dialogue
fin	end
negociaciones	negotiations
insurrección	uprising
orden público	public order
perturbación	disruption
terrorismo/terrorista	terrorism
tratado	treaty
reconciliación	reconciliation
revolución	revolution

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10 Not considered were *narcotráfico / narcotraficantes*, which, although an important actor in the more recent stages of the conflict, play little role in the ideological discourse around the cohesion of the state and are more likely to be classified as organized crime.

ejército	army
FARC	FARC guerrilla
fuerzas armadas	armed forces
guerrilla	guerrilla
guerrillero/a/s	related to the guerrilla
al margen de la ley	on the fringes of the law
paramilitar/ismo	paramilitary
rebelde	rebel
revolucionario	revolutionary
víctima/s	victim
victimario	murderer

In a first step, the frequency of occurrence of the keywords was checked. In a second step, the entries were reviewed individually in terms of their relevance, context, and the narratives within which they were used.

Table 1: War and Peace
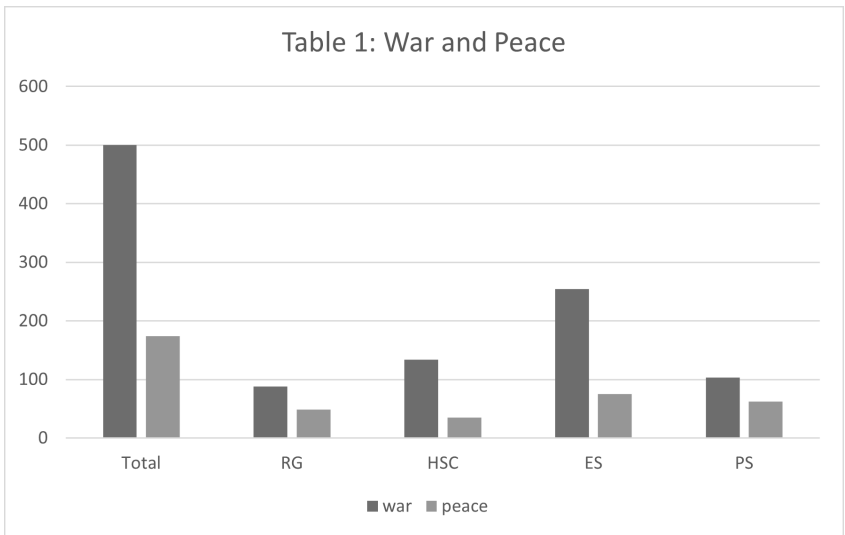
The first thing to note is that the key word "war" appears more than twice as often as "peace". However, it must be taken into account that in ES and PS in particular, the word war is associated with Colombia only to a

small extent: In ES, only about 18 of 254 appearances explicitly refer to Colombia, in PS it is 10 of 103.

Table 2: War and its synoyms

Table 3: Actors
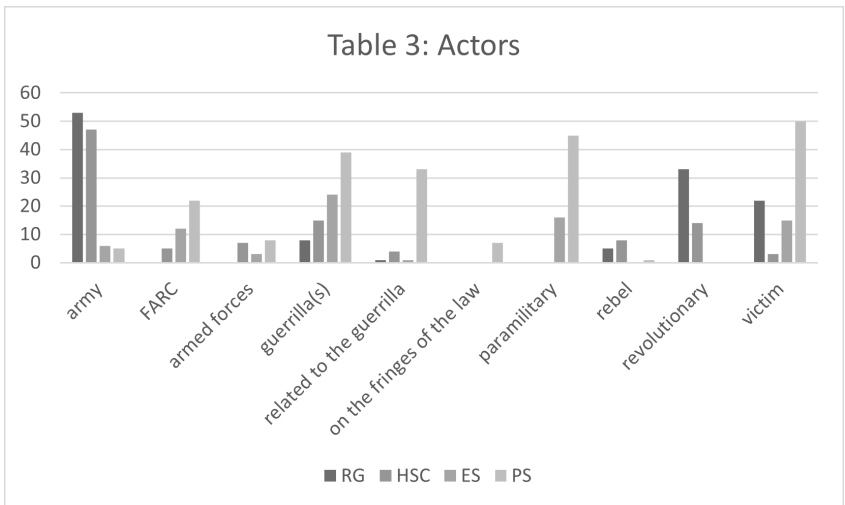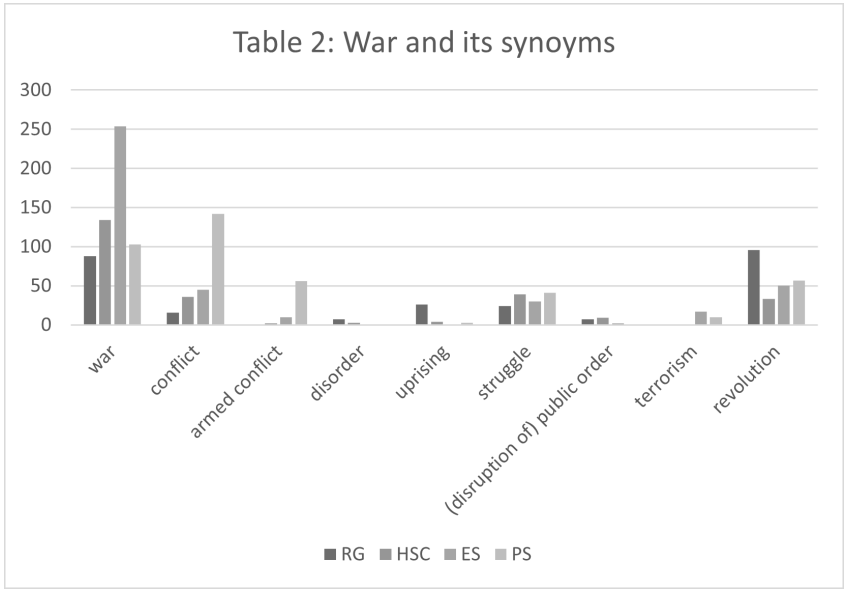
For RG, it can be noted that the term "war" is used primarily for conflicts with other states. This is the case with the wars of independence against Spain at the beginning of the 19th century or the war against Peru in 1932. On the other hand, when it comes to internal conflicts such as the numerous civil wars of the 19th century, these are primarily referred to with the term "revolution": *Revolución de 1859*, *Revolución conservadora*, *Revolución de los Mil Días* (today *Guerra de los Mil Días*, Thousand Days War). The term "war" is used in this context at most as a synonym in descriptions of fighting, along with "combat" or "battle" or to describe the consequences of the conflicts (*consecuencias de la guerra*, p. 244, 265). Accordingly, "war" is a justified external action in the sense of self-defense, whereas "revolution" describes the unlawful uprising against a lawful government. This corresponds to the general usage of the time. Especially in rural regions, uprisings were referred to as revolutions, actually until the 1950s (Sánchez, 2006).

The *Revolución de los Mil Días* (1899-1903) is the last conflict to be depicted in this way. With the turn of the 20th century, internal conflicts such as social tensions in the 1920s are presented mainly as disturbances of public order, but no longer revolutionary in character. The last major conflict covered in this book is the assassination of liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán on April 9, 1948, an event that drew an uprising in Bogotá called the *Bogotazo* and is generally perceived as the beginning of the *Violencia*. These events are introduced as *hechos espantosos* (gruesome events, p. 289), which provoked those responsible with the goal of a revolution or coup d'état. However, the reaction from the state side is again described with the terminology of public order that is consolidated through military intervention (*consolidaron el orden*, p. 291).

The army and its generals, who appear often with their names, are here an important actor in enforcing state interests, such as controlling territory or maintaining security and order. The armed supporters of the various parties during the civil wars are referred to as *guerrillas*. However, this term is not yet to be seen in today's ideological context, but merely describes armed groups. Faceless, on the other hand, are the victims of the conflicts; if they are considered at all, they remain a group, at best a number. The population, too, appears only as an indirect actor, for example in social protests. Their actions are mostly hidden behind the terms that describe the events: *Hubo terribles agitaciones comunistas* (there were terrible communist agitations, p. 276), it says in connection with the 1928 strikes in the banana-growing areas, an event that went down in Colombian history as the *masacre de las bananeras* (masacre of the banana plantations).The aforementioned *espantosos hechos* (gruesome events, p. 289) cover not only

the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, but also the subsequent uprising in 1948.

For HSC, the picture is somewhat different. The term "war" is used, at least in the 19th century, not only for conflicts with other states, but also for internal struggles, which here, in contrast to RG, are called "civil war" without exception. In fact, RG uses the term "civil war" only in the context of internal struggles during the wars of independence, that is at a time when the final form of state and government had not yet been negotiated (Armitage, 2017). In HSC, "war" as a term for internal conflict does not disappear until the turn of the 20th century. The *Guerra de los Mil Días* is the last conflict to be so designated.

Instead, the word "conflict" is increasingly used to describe internal tensions, such as when the social movements of the 1920s are referred to as an *agudización de los conflictos sociales* (intensification of social conflicts, p. 217). *Lucha social* (social struggle) or *huelga* (strike) are also used. For the disputes over political participation in the 1970s, *protesta* (p. 251) is the common word.

The term *revolution* is hardly considered anymore. It is found in two contexts: First, to describe the political program of President Alfonso López Pumarejo, which he himself called *Revolución en Marcha* (Revolution on the Move, p. 229), and second, when referring to the founding of various guerrilla organizations bearing the word in their names, as did the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

What is striking, is the the very neutral language that is used to describe the armed conflict that has marked Colombia's history since the mid-20th century. For example, no term from the field of war/conflict is used for the events that followed Gaitán's assassination. Instead, the *Bogotazo* is described as a *reacción popular* (popular reaction, p. 237) or simply as an *acontecimiento* (event, p. 237). In many cases, it is simply the term *violencia* that refers to the events of the late 1940s and 1950s, a term which ultimately gave this first phase of the conflict its name.[11] That is also true for the situation of the 1960s and 1970s which were marked by strong social tensions. "Crisis" or even just "complicated situation" are used to describe the protests during the presidencies of López Michelsen (1974-1978) and Turbay (1978-1982).

In the context of the narrative of social tensions and social struggle that HSC develops, the portrayal of the army is more critical than in RG.

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11   For a periodization of the conflict, see Safford & Palacios, 2002.

Although it is, of course, the legitimate actor for asserting state interests here as well, it appears more frequently as a factor that exacerbates tensions or creates them in the first place. The military intervention during the *masacre de las bananeras*, described in RG as "energetic intervention" (p. 77) is detailed in HSC, from the militarization of the area, General Carlos Cortés Vargas' order to shoot at the strikers, to the persecution of the workers in the plantations (p. 200).

The ambiguous role that the army can play as an armed actor in the conflict-ridden country is also elaborated in other examples, such as the attacks on the so-called independent republics[12] (p. 248), areas of peasant self-defense that ultimately gave rise to the FARC, or during the Turbay government in the 1970s (p. 255, 257).

In ES, the conflict is mostly referred to as *conflicto armado* (armed conflict). In 2012, when ES was published, this term is broadly used for quite some time already. In HSC, the term does not appear at all in the context of Colombia's internal situation in the 20th century. *Lucha campesina* (rural struggle) or *lucha armada* (armed struggle) shift the perspective to the social and ideological reasons of the difficult situation. The caracterization of the conflict primarily as armed takes it out of the context of social tensions in which it is embedded in HSC. Overall, social movements play a rather subordinate role in the narrative of the book. Although the topic is present as background noise, it is not a primary narrative thread as it is in HSC. Social tensions are discussed in more detail only in two places: once in connection with the social protests in the 1920s, which are here called *agitación* (agitation) or *conflicto agrario* (agricultural conflict) (p. 62), and once as a consequence of the two-party system of the *Frente Nacional* (p. 143f.). There, *movimientos sociales* (social movements) stand in a row with *movimientos armados* (armed movements) and *violencia* (violence), just being one more cause for the country's difficult internal situation.

Although the term "war" occurs most often in ES, it usually refers, as said, to events in world history. The term "world war" alone occurs 66 times. The earlier observation that the term "war" is no longer used for internal Colombian affairs, also applies here, but there are two exceptions. One is the *Guerra de los Mil Días* (p. 60), that is, as in HSC, referred to as civil war. The other event that is called a civil war, is the *Violencia* (p. 139). This epoch is therefore provided with another name than the conflict from the 1960s onward. The short periodization expressed through the category

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12 The independent republics were areas of peasant self-defense where parts of the rural population sought refuge from the ongoing violence and persecution.

creates a discontinuity in which the character of the current conflict is presented as a different one (Jaramillo, 2017; Sánchez, 2006). ES still presents the *Violencia* in the tradition of the bipartidist conflicts of the 19th century and basically reduces it to that. The social tensions and the conflict over land ownership, which have repeatedly led to outbreaks of violence since the early 1940s, are disregarded in the narrative of the book or are only presented indirectly. Thus, the *Violencia* appears above all as a problem of public order, as a situation that must and can be controlled by the state above all (p. 138, 139).

In ES, however, with few exceptions the army almost disappears as the executing agent of state power. Its intervention is mostly expressed impersonally as it is the case for example with the military intervention during the *masacre de las bananeras*: The order to shoot is described as *se ordenó abrir fuego* (It was ordered to shoot, p. 62). Rather, a possibility to act is attributed to the crowd of strikers who were ordered - again impersonally: *se les ordenó* (they were orderd) - to disperse and did not do so.

An entirely new conceptual field used in ES to describe Colombia's internal situation is terrorism. For example, the activities of the so-called *chulavitas*[13] during the *Violencia* are referred to as state terrorism (p. 138). Above all, however, the term is used in the current context: The acts of violence perpetrated by the guerrillas and paramilitaries are described as terrorism (p. 144). The Uribe government's policy of strength toward the armed groups is also called *lucha anti-terrorista* (anti-terrorist struggle, p. 149). Even if ES is rather critical of Uribe's policies overall, the influence of political discourse on the book's narratives is quite evident here. In 2005, the Uribe government declared that there was no armed conflict in Colombia, but a terrorist threat, causing a still ongoing, increasingly polarized discussion on the existence of such conflict and its interpretation (Betancur, 2010; Jefferson, 2017).

In this sense, the main actors in the conflict are the guerrillas and the paramilitaries. These two terms not only appear much more frequently than, say, the army. Clear responsibilities are also attributed to these two groups, as well as to the criminal violence of drug trafficking.

Increasingly, the victims are also considered, resulting in a shift of focus away from the dynamics of war to its consequences. In the process, continuities are established, for example when the situation of today's *desplazados* (displaced persons) is compared with the refugees of the *Violencia* era

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13 During the *Violencia*, the *chulavitas* were a kind of secret police that persecuted and terrorized government opponents.

(p. 148). Another continuity, in which victims even appear as active agents, is the comparison between the United Fruit Company's alliance with the army in 1928 and the association of its successor, Chiquita Brands, with the paramilitaries (p. 63).

In PS, talking about conflicts finds an interesting twist. The different Colombian conflicts do not appear as the book advances chronologically, but are covered in one chapter called "Armed conflict and violence in Colombia" (p. 186ff.). It begins with the conquest and colonization of South America and ends with the peace process in 2016. Where in ES it is opted for a discontinuity in the representation of the different phases of the conflict, as it is presented in two different chapters, in this book the conflict is established as a central element of Colombian history.

In the narrative that proposes *ciclos de violencia* (cycles of violence, p. 190), the following terms are used: *Guerra* for the wars of independence and the civil wars of the 19th century, *ola de violencia* (wave of violence) for the Bogotazo, *conflicto bipartidista* (two party conflict) for the *Violencia*, *conflicto social* (social conflict) in the context of the emergence of the guerrilla, *narcoterrorismo* (Terrorism related to drug trafficking) for the third phase of conflict in the 1980s and early 1990s, and *conflicto armado* (armed conflict) for conflict in general. This essentially coincides with the trends also observed for HSC and ES. "Revolution" is a term that has disappeared completely in the description. The same is true for expressions that have to do with public order.

War is the term that is used to describe interstate conflicts (such as independence) or the civil wars of the 19th century. The appearance of the guerrilla, although very short in the text, is clearly set again in the context of social tensions and inequalities. The US American war on drugs and terror is even more obvious here by using the term "narcoterrorism" to describe the increasing violence during the 1980s and 1990s. For the post-2000 period, guerrillas are discursively removed from their social-struggle context and attributed to global terrorism: "Guerrilla y paramilitares comienzan a ser denominados terroristas." (Guerrillas and paramilitaries are now referred to as terrorists, p. 197).

What is new in this book, and here the influence of the new political context of the Santos government's peace negotiations is clearly seen, is the fact that "war" is discussed in detail in the context of international humanitarian law. Numerous examples from Colombia are used for this purpose when it comes to victims' rights or war crimes, such as sexual violence as a means of warfare (p. 93ff.). In doing so, the Colombian conflict is placed in an international context in which ideological questions recede into the

background and the main issues are legal questions and the protection of human rights.

In this sense, victims gain great weight as a social group. The frequency of the term is by far the highest. Thus, different groups of victims are presented in detail (p. 100, 199). It is explained how they are recorded (p. 202-203), what rights they have and how they are protected (p. 101-102). However, they do not appear as actors. They are talked about, but they have no voice of their own.

The main actors are the illegal armed actors, guerrillas, paramilitaries and, as a new group, the so-called Bacrim, criminal gangs of organized crime. The army, on the other hand, is not an actor and is mainly present in the imagery (p. 186-187, 197), an aspect that is not present in the other books.

Table 4: Peace and its synonyms
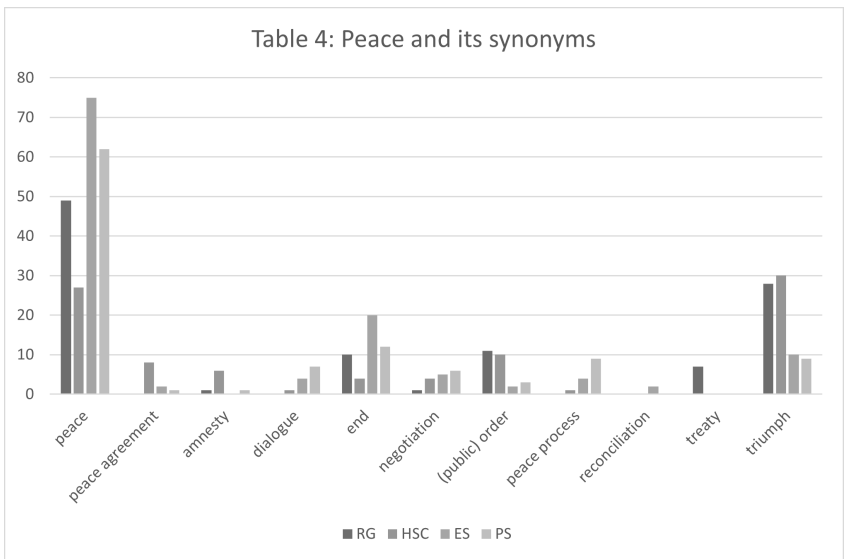
The term "peace" occurs much less frequently than war. The terms used in connection with the end of a conflict are also not so much synonyms of the word "peace", but rather refer to the way in which peace was achieved, such as through a treaty, negotiations, or a victory (triumph) over the opposing side. The concept "reconciliation", that is an explicit part of the current discourse of peace and a learning goal (Decree No. 1874 of 2017), however, appears only in one of the revised books.

In RG, Colombia's history since independence is presented as an inter-play of war and peace, with peace, of course, being the desired state and the shining contrast to war. In the text, peace often experiences an exalta-tion; verbs such as such as *reinar* (reign, p. 246), *florecer* (flourish, p. 194), or *brillar* (shine, p. 254) underscore this impression.

The ending of a conflict is often described in the book simply as a *fin* (end), but more often as a *triunfo* (triumph) over the rebellious group. Peace can also be set in a *tratado de paz* (peace treaty), though the term *tratado* refers primarily to the final outcome rather than the negotiations leading up to the treaty. What follows next is the restoration of public order (p. 244, 265) that had been threatened or disrupted by the war (p. 242, 244, 261). The peace that follows the end of hostilities hardly depends on people, but is God-sent. In two places the *paz cristiana* (Christian peace, p. 9, 300) is mentioned, which is necessary for Colombia to thrive: "Todos nuestros progresos se han ido llevando a cabo a la sombra de la paz cristiana. Si Dios nos sigue otorgando ese don, Colombia será grande. Sin él, la patria irá al abismo de la disolución." (All our progress has been made in the shadow of Christian peace. If God continues to give us that gift, Colombia will be great. Without it, the country will go to the abyss of dissolution. RG, p. 300).

Interestingly, according to the autor, peace has prevailed in Colombia since the end of the *Guerra de los Mil Días*, an impression that hardly corresponded to reality, since the country has been marked by social ten-sions and recurrent violence since the early 1940s. As mentioned above, with the turn to the 20th century, inner conflicts are mostly presented as disruptions of the public order. In this logic, there is no war, and therefore, disturbances are not ended by peace but by the re-establishing of the public order, as for example after the riots following the assassination of Gaitán (p. 292). At a moment when it was not yet clear where the events of 1948 would ultimately lead - the text was published in 1951 - such a perception was still quite possible.

In HSC, the understanding of peace and how it can be achieved under-goes a fundamental transformation. The restoration of public order as an end in itself disappears completely from the language of the book. "Public order" only appears combined with problems or perturbation of public order, indicating that the situation is difficult, but in combination with for example "restoration" or "control" it does not exist. Peace is no longer God-sent, but man-made. Instead of the term *tratado de paz* (peace treaty), *acuerdo(s) de paz* (peace agreement) is used much more frequently here, an expression that refers to prior negotiation and compromise. In fact,

the term *negociaciones* (negotiations) is a new addition, as is *proceso de paz* (peace process).

Although the term *proceso de paz* appears only once, it deserves a closer look. This expression implies that peace cannot simply be decided, for example through a treaty, but rather means a piece of work that takes place over a longer period of time. In addition, the term is used as a title for a chapter (p. 260) and is part of a *política de paz* (peace policy, p. 258) of Belisario Betancur's government. Negotiations and dialogues as a way to peace are a new strategy to overcome the conflict in the mid-1980s. When Betancur took over the government in 1982, his peace policy marked a significant change in direction in dealing with the conflict (Villarraga, 2015). A conclusive assessment of this policy, which ultimately failed, was not yet possible at the time of this book's publication, but the peace policy with negotiation as its central element is described as outstanding (p. 258).

It turns out that the discourse of peace depends more on the political circumstances at the time of publication than it is the case for the representation of war. While no major changes can be observed for the representation of war since the 1980s, fewer continuities can be identified for peace.

The first thing to note for ES is that the *Guerra de los Mil Días*, as well as the *Violencia*, which the book places in the context of the civil wars of the 19th century, as mentioned, are also presented with their respective endings accordingly. Thus, the *Guerra de los Mil Días* ends with a "triumph" of the conservatives (p. 60), the *Violencia* initially with the control of the situation thanks to the fact that General Rojas Pinilla took over the government by coup d'état in 1953 (p. 140). The continuing difficult situation in terms of public order is used as justification for his remaining in power beyond the year initially agreed on.[14]

The terms *proceso de paz* (peace process) and *negociaciones de paz* (peace negotiations) are used in the book primarily in connection with the Pastrana (1998-2002) and Uribe administrations. The peace policy of Belisario Betancur, presented in detail in HSC, is only briefly discussed here; however, Betancur, together with his successor Virgilio Barco, is credited with founding the peace processes of recent times (p. 147).

Thus, the focus in ES is also on the processual nature of peacebuilding. This is, of course, due to the fact that peace efforts since Betancur have been characterized by dialogue and negotiations, which were only ended

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14 It is important to point out that the book does not justify Rojas Pinilla's military dictatorship as a whole. However, the way it is worded makes it difficult for a student to distinguish between the individual situation and the overall judgement.

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by Uribe's policy of strength aiming at the defeat of the opponent. It is noteworthy, however, that although the text adopts the Uribe government's discourse of the anti-terrorist struggle, for example, it simultaneously distances itself from it: Thus, the demobilization of paramilitary groups is also referred to as a peace process, although it was never driven by the idea of recognizing the opponent as a political actor, but rather sought to emphasize the non-political nature of the disputes (Villarraga, 2015). The *Ley de Justicia y Paz*, (Law No. 975 of 2005, Law of Justice and Peace) which created the legal framework for demobilization and reintegration into civilian life in 2005, is explicitly not a peace treaty, but was only intended to create the conditions for a future peace process (Law No. 975 of 2005, Art. 1; Valencia & Mejía, 2010).

However, although the process that began with Law No. 975 was highly controversial and also incomplete in many aspects, developments were nevertheless set in motion that led to the social perception of a transition to post-conflict (Villarraga, 2015). This might explain why the book, published seven years later, classifies the demobilization process of the paramilitaries as a peace process and thus places it in the tradition of peace processes since the 1980s.

PS, published a few years later, is clearly influenced by the peace negotiations in Havana. The aforementioned chapter on violence and conflict in Colombia presents the peace processes of the 1980s (p. 193) and since 2000 (p. 196) in two subchapters. The central terms used to describe these developments are dialogue and process. This applies to Betancur's peace policy as well as to the demobilization of paramilitary groups under Uribe and, of course, to the peace talks in Havana (since 2012). An entire section is even devoted to dialogue (p. 204), which clearly rejects the policy of strength and presents dialogue as the central strategy for achieving peace.

Similar to the topic of war, peace in PS also undergoes a broadening of perspective. Violence is understood not only as the armed confrontations between the various actors of the conflict, as it is presented for example in ES (p. 138, 144, 147) but also as everyday violence, for example in families or in the schoolyard. This broadening of the concept of violence then makes it possible to identify new forms of agency for peacebuilding.

While in RG a lasting peace could only succeed with divine support, in HSC and also in ES the responsibility for peace lies primarily with the governments, which take the appropriate initiatives, be it dialogue or the policy of strength. The ability of society to act in this regard does not go beyond indirect influence: the individual can lead a godly life or vote for those politicians who promise to achieve peace. In fact, civil society as an actor plays no role at all in RG and only a subordinate role in HSC as well

as ES. In PS, on the other hand, the individual is given a central responsibility: "No podemos exigirle a las autoridades alcanzar la paz cuando en nuestro contexto más cercano no generamos hechos de paz." (We cannot demand that the authorities achieve peace when in our closest context we do not generate acts of peace. P. 204) says the text, combined with very concrete instructions for action on how to overcome everyday violence (p. 207). Peace is thus not a state, but rather an attitude, a *cultura de paz* (peace culture, p. 207).

Conclusions

Colombia's history has been marked by numerous conflicts, so it is not surprising that war and violence are often enough the leitmotif of historical narratives. In the school history textbooks analyzed here, conflicts are also the background noise against which history develops. However, the way in which this background noise is referred to, how it finds its way into the narratives in a meaningful way, varies.

In RG, war is primarily associated with the emergence of the state. The wars of independence, the civil wars of the 19th century consolidate modern Colombia. However, once the state is a stable construct – and the moment seems to be around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Melo, 2010) – internal unrest, such as the labor struggles of the 1920s and 1930s, is seen primarily as a problem of public order, the control of which falls to the state. Peace as a concept remains above all a divine concept, which people can influence only insofar as they lead a Christian life.

In the mid-1980s, conflicts are embedded in a socially critical discourse. Civil unrest is primarily an expression of social inequality and lack of participation to which different internal problems can be traced back, as for example the founding of the guerrilla groups. Nevertheless, the increasing violence is also in itself a problem that requires a separate solution in the form of a peace policy in which the opponent is recognized on a political level and peace is a matter of negotiation.

The discourse of terrorism at the beginning of the new millennium can be noted in both ES and PS. The classification of the guerrillas as a terrorist group and of the conflict as a terrorist act justifies the breaking off of peace dialogues in ES. Peace can thus only be the result of a military victory. Nevertheless, the rejection of negotiations is not complete, since the paramilitaries' demobilization process is presented as a peace negotiation.

Finally, the social causes of the conflict are again the focus in PS. The violent background noise is particularly evident here, since an entire chapter

is devoted to the topic of conflict. At the same time, however, a change in perspective takes place, as the conflict, its consequences and its resolution are presented primarily as a human rights issue. What is quite new in this context is that the responsibility for peace does not lie solely with those in power, but is located as individual action in the social context.

The categorization of the conflict and thus the assignment of meaning is the subject of heated debate in Colombia. This discussion, as part of a longer-term memory process, will probably continue for some time. As long as the social meaning of this past, which for many is still a present, has not been negotiated, the reverberations will be found in history books. Apart from that, the fact that peace is also an individual responsibility, as presented in PS in rudimentary form, is a learning objective that will certainly become established, not least because there are concrete guidelines for this, in contrast to learning about history in general.

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