



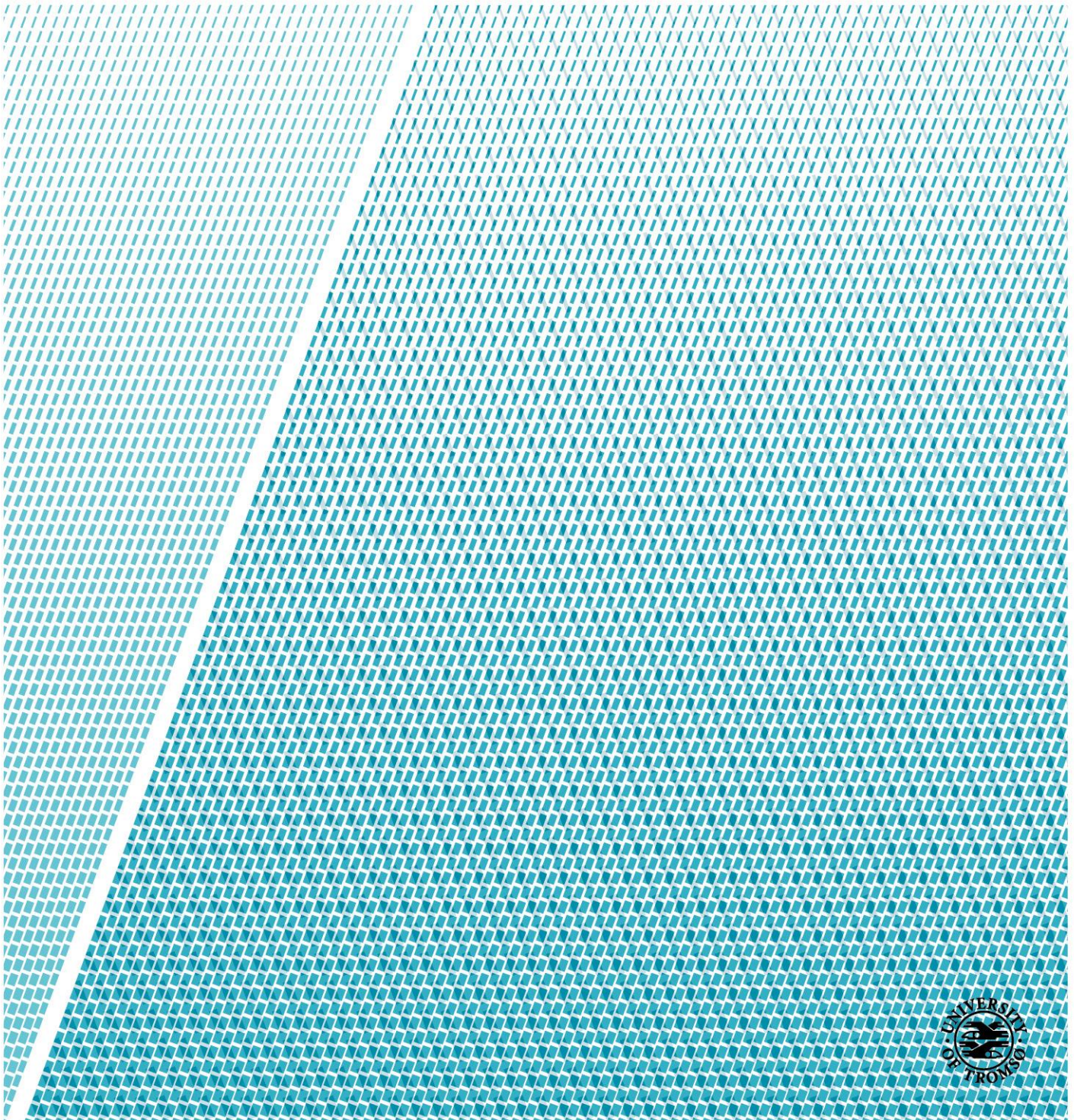
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Peace Education in Guatemala and the Lack Thereof: An Examination of the Effects of the 1998 Educational Reform Following the 1996 Peace Accords.

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To my mother and two brothers, without whom I would not be where I am today.

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Abstract

This thesis is an examination of the effects of the 1998 educational reform following the 1996 Peace Accords, on education in Guatemala and the extent to which it has constituted peace education. In order to observe the correlation between said educational reform and the final educational result, which was preliminarily assumed to constitute peace education, this research applies the qualitative research methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The data collected demonstrates a lack of peace education, which in turn exposed a significant gap between peace education theory and peace education in practice. In order to not only show this gap, but also demonstrate why this gap between theory and practice can be harmful for future application, this thesis takes the reader through the research step by step. After a discussion of the theory and methods, the background of the Guatemalan armed conflict is addressed, as well as the continuing tension between the ladino and the indigenous population. With the context in which the research was conducted in mind, this thesis will examine all observations at both private and public schools, as well as the conclusions from the interviews. In the analysis it will demonstrate how these observations conclusively show the lack of peace education, and finally the explain the harmful potential of a peace education theory that contains a gap between its theory and the practice.

Key Words: Peace education, Guatemalan education, 1998 educational reform, participant observation

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Chapter 1: Introduction

During second half of the 20th century, Guatemala suffered a violent civil war involving many human rights violations, and three decades of chaos and terror. In 1989 mediation and negotiation processes commenced, which ultimately resulted in the seven Peace Accords of 1996. From these Peace Accords, an educational reform followed in 1998 which addressed some of the key requirements of the Peace Accords, namely the inclusion of Mayan language and culture in public education, as well as equality of education for the entire population in order to provide the possibility for the amelioration of the quality of life for the Mayan indigenous people who had been targeted and oppressed before and during the conflict.¹ It is here that my research starts as this is an examination of the effects of the 1998 educational reform with respects to peace education. My research question hinges on the presence of these two elements in Guatemalan education, firstly the aforementioned educational reform, and secondly the presence of peace education. The intention of this research was to discuss the correlation between these two elements, as I inquire whether the 1998 educational reform has resulted in, or contributed to peace education.

The discussion of this correlation is not the establishment of a new theory, but instead the testing of the theory of peace education. Namely, it was based on peace education theory, that I made the preliminary assumption of the presence of peace education in Guatemala. According to the theory all elements necessary for peace education were present, including the situation of a post armed conflict situation, education that recognized the violence that had taken place not only during the war but also the structural violence leading up to it, and an educational programme to change systematic education organized by the political power in cooperation with the oppressed.² In practice however, this is not what I encountered during my

¹ COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runukik Jun Káká Tijonik* (Guatemala: Comisión Paritaria de Reforma Educativa (COPARE), 1998). Margriet Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 7, no. 4 (2009).

² Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary ed., *Pedagogía Del Oprimido* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 30.; Ian M. Harris, "Peace Education Theory," *Journal of Peace Education* 1, no. 1 (2004): 6.; Betty A. Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education : Educating for Global Responsibility* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 5. Leonisa Ardizzzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations," *Peace & Change* 28, no. 3 (2003): 430.; COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runukik Jun Káká Tijonik*.

field research. The reality presented on paper, one of an educational situation in which violence was recognized and addressed, where educational was agreed upon and established through cooperation and mutual respect, was far removed from the reality that I observed. In order to answer the research question, whether the 1998 educational reform resulted in or contributed to peace education, I created a research design based on the social research methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Naturally, I am duly aware that I am not able to observe the conflict that took place in the past century, nor the development and implementation of the educational reform, nevertheless the manner in which it is recalled in society, the manner in which it is retold, and how this may differ within various social classes can be equally, if not more, informative especially through the medium of education. It was here, through the observations of classes at 7 different educational institutes, and by having conducted a large number of interviews, that I learned we cannot in fact speak of peace education to describe the education in Guatemala as it was at the time of my research, fall 2017.

Therefore, as I cannot establish a causal relationship between the 1998 education reform and peace education, I will address the Guatemalan education that I encountered instead, discussing the elements that oblige me to conclude the lack of said peace education despite the existence of the 1998 educational reform. These elements include, but are not limited to, observations and interviews regarding the content of classes, the manner in which they are taught, and the eventual result with which a student leaves the school, in other words, what possibilities the student has been provided with due to the education he received. In order to understand these observations, I will first give a short summary of the armed conflict that took place, and the consequences of the violence and human rights violations which last to this day. It must be understood that in Guatemalan society as a whole, as well as in Guatemalan education, there is a continuing presence of fear, polarization and exclusion. This exclusion and polarization targets the indigenous population of Guatemala, which consists of 23 different Mayan peoples, and is executed by a small ladino elite.³ The causes for the outbreak of the conflict, the conflict itself, and the political situation both during and since the civil war, reflect this ladino v. indigenous people dichotomy, and the decades of discrimination and violent

³The term ladino will in this research and context be understood as it is used and applied in Guatemala, that is to say, a ladino is a person with Guatemalan nationality or origin, who does not classify by birth or culture as indigenous. It should be noted that generally speaking, people who identify themselves as ladino dislike association with the indigenous population, and often stress their European heritage and roots (however distant).

oppression has resulted in continuing fear. The observations and conclusions of this research cannot be understood correctly, without this background information.

Before entering into the discussion of my observations, I will shortly discuss the limited research that has already been conducted on the topic of educational reforms in Guatemala, with specific regard to the PRONADE programme, schools of which I deliberately did not include in my research, as they do not relate to the 1998 educational reform. Nevertheless PRONADE is officially an educational reform, and has been used by the government to claim progress and success with respect to the development of education, thus claiming to adhere to the Peace Accords, when this is not the case. Despite the separate nature of the PRONADE schools, and the schools affected by the 1998 educational reform, it is important for the reader to understand what the PRONADE schools are. The PRONADE programme does not only represent the power and capability of the government, it also demonstrates their political prioritization, as the programme increases government credibility with statistics indicating increased school attendance contributing to the government's adherence to the UN millennium development goals, while it places an increased burden on the indigenous people who are meant to benefit from it. The PRONADE programmes have caused for the already limited information on education and educational development in Guatemala to be unrepresentative and skewed.

After the discussion of the necessary background information, the observations of my field research themselves as well as those of the semi-structured interviews, I will proceed with my analysis in which I address the testing of the theory of peace education, with which I started this research. I will argue that the peace education theory that is in place today, does not sufficiently account for certain influences in the peace education process. The case of Guatemala demonstrates that the mere presence of a document signed by the one in power, in this case the Guatemalan government largely constituted by the small ladino elite, does not guarantee the implementation of, or adherence to the agreement by this party. This is a matter that can be considered rather self-evident, however does not appear to be accounted for in much of the peace education theory. There is a major political factor which ultimately appears to have the main influence on whether or not peace education is established. The manner in which peace education theory is currently constructed as well as formulated, does not only fail to account for this factor, it furthermore provides for the possibility of concluding the presence or even success of peace education by the mere establishment of the presence of certain elements. It is

a gap between the theory and the practice of peace education that is highly problematic as it has possible harmful consequences, which will be demonstrated with this research.

Peace Education Theory

One of the most prominent physical representations of the lack of peace education, and the consequent ignorance and misunderstanding surrounding the peace and conflict paradigm, is perhaps presented in the commemorative plaque hanging above one of Guatemala's most important roads in centre, leading to governmental institutions and the national theatre. This plaque reads: 'guerra es inútil'. War is useless. Despite the close to endless number of things that can be said of war, lack of utility is not among them.⁴ Naturally its application, method, morality and effect should be examined with great scrutiny, however its employment, even when illegal and inhumane, is not without use. Peace education theory is a dynamic and continuously developing field, encompassing greatly versatile definitions of the term peace education itself. Inherent however, to almost every interpretation of the concept, is that one cannot talk of peace if one does not address conflict also. It would be as if one attempted to describe warmth without knowing cold, or light without knowing dark. It is certainly possible although it cannot be denied that this individual would be left with a substantially incomplete understanding of the concept in question. This plaque, placed in memory of the civil war that Guatemala endured during the 20th century, can be considered highly offensive because, as the plaque indicates, when war is without use, then by extension so were the sacrifices of those that participated. It might appear a small matter to find fault with, however it indicates lack of understanding, and without understanding of the peace and conflict paradigm it should come as no surprise that there is a lack of peace education also. However, before addressing the lack of peace education or the perhaps misunderstood and faulty application, we will first address here what the peace education paradigm entails.

⁴ Georg Simmel, *Conflict ; the Web of Group-Affiliations*, A Free Press Paperback (New York: The Free Press, 1964).; Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force : The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2007).; D. Scott Bennett and C. Stam Allan, "A Universal Test of an Expected Utility Theory of War," *International studies quarterly (trykt utg.)*. 44 : 2000 : 3.; Neta C. Crawford, "What Is War Good For? Background Ideas and Assumptions About the Legitimacy, Utility, and Costs of Offensive War," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18, no. 2 (2016).

Peace education theory is often discussed with normative descriptive terms,⁵ that fail to indicate concrete content or effect. Such theories speak of peace education as a catalyst for social change or the bringer of justice, however, without concrete examples or demonstration of the correlation between the peace education effort and the consequent result, it is easy to classify anything as peace education when the desired outcome is reached. In this manner, there is no need to recognize unsuccessful peace education projects, as they did not result, for example, in justice or social change. The lack of social justice or change is not easily recognized as the outcome of a failed peace education programme, as the setting of a post armed conflict situation in which the peace education programme takes place, would usually provide for a context in which these social justice and social change are absent to start with. However, truly bringing about justice or social change is a matter of both great importance as well as great difficulty, which is why it is so important to recognize the programmes that fail and to identify why, in order to improve the theory.

I will first discuss some of the more concrete approaches to peace education, as presented by Ian M. Harris in his work entitled 'Peace Education Theory'. I will continue by demonstrating the problematic nature of the more normative approach towards the definition of peace education, bearing in mind that the gap between theory and practice only grows larger when the use of nonspecific terms increases. For example, the term justice alone, can generate a large array of interpretations, where the scale ranges from justice being equal to revenge and reciprocity to justice requiring forgiveness in order to rebuild a stable society.⁶ Let it be noted, that I am aware of the argument that a more general description or guideline to peace education allows for a case specific application where the adaptation in order to put the theory into practice, does not require the theory itself to be altered. This argument however, did not hold up in my research as the liberal interpretation of peace education theory in Guatemala led to the abuse of the very concept that was meant to bring peace and justice, which will be discussed in

⁵ Zehavit Gross, "Revisiting Peace Education: Bridging Theory and Practice – International and Comparative Perspectives – Introduction," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 12, no. 1 (2017).; Riane Eisler and Ron Miller, "Educating for a Culture of Peace," (Portland: Ringgold Inc, 2005).; Ardizzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations."

⁶ Allan D. Sobel, "What Is Justice?," *Judicature* 85, no. 4 (2002).; Christie Hartley, "Two Conceptions of Justice as Reciprocity.(Essay)," *Social Theory and Practice* 40, no. 3 (2014).; Karen A. Hegtvedt, Karen A. Hegtvedt, and Jody Clay-Warner, *Justice*, (Bingley: JAI Press, 2008).; Solomon Schimmel, *Revenge & Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

further detail in my analysis chapter. Finally, let it be noted that the peace education theories of both the specific as well as the more normative approaches, have been chosen with care from a wide array of possible articles and sources on what the theory ought to be. The reason I have chosen these specific sources, is because they represent the foundation that the majority of the newer articles appear to come back to. It might be best compared to finding the definition of for example Christianity: it has grown so much and resulted in so many churches, each with their individual interpretations, one should not simply choose one that fits their needs best, and state that this is the 'true' Christianity, one should go back to the source on which it was based, the Bible. I believe that the sources I have selected to represent concrete and content specific peace education theory, and normative non-specific peace education theory, do exactly this, represent the fundamental argument that the individual and separate interpretations are based on.

Before commencing with the discussion of peace education theory, let it be shortly stated that unless otherwise indicated, with the term peace I will refer to positive peace as identified by Galtung, namely as the absence of violence of all kinds.⁷ I will adopt this definition of the concept, and the further specifications as stated below without additional discussion as this is not the focus of this chapter nor thesis. Galtung identifies different types of positive peace including direct positive peace, structural positive peace, and cultural positive peace. I will not refer to each separately, however refer to peace as positive peace in the accumulation of all three. These forms of positive peace include: the fulfilment of the five basic needs that of survival, well-being, freedom, identity and ecological balance, and aspects of kindness and love, freedom from repression, equity for exploitation and aspects of social norms such as integration, solidarity and participation, the legitimation of peace in the realms of religion, law, ideology, language, education, and media.⁸ The presence of education is here mentioned as merely one of the aspects of peace, considering the number of aspects that must be taken into account when devising peace education in order to achieve this positive peace, we receive the first glimpses of the magnitude of such a task.

⁷ Johan Galtung, "Positive and Negative Peace," in *Peace and Conflict Studies: A Reader*, ed. Charles P. Webel and Jørgen Johansen (London: Routledge, 2012), 75.; Johan Galtung and Oslo International Peace Research Institute, "Peace by Peaceful Means," *International Peace Research Institute, Oslo* (SAGE, 1996). 31.

⁸ "Peace by Peaceful Means," 32, 197.

Concrete Content Specific Peace Education Theory

Ian M. Harris identifies five different types of peace education namely, international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education.⁹ According to Harris, every one of these types of peace education adheres to each one of the five peace education postulates. These postulates are the following: 1) It explains the roots of violence; 2) it teaches alternatives to violence; 3) it adjusts to cover different forms of violence; 4) peace itself is a process that varies according to context; 5) conflict is omnipresent.¹⁰ In his theory, Harris elaborates that the types of peace education are not mutually exclusive, and states clearly that, for example environmental education cannot substitute conflict resolution education. He explains that each of these subjects can be considered peace education because each in its own way, adheres to the aforementioned postulates. In an ideal situation, if all five forms of peace education, as indicated by Harris, were to be taught simultaneously and in a complementary manner, the product of such education would be an individual with a close understanding of the concepts of peace and conflict. Bearing in mind that all types of education being taught also means all postulates are covered, one would hypothetically not only understand the origin of the conflict, it would know an alternative solution to the violence that took place, understand the nature of the violence in question, understand the peace in place is specific to its situation and not universal, and that conflict, nevertheless, remains omnipresent.

This ideal education, with the expected result of a full understanding of the peace and conflict paradigm is, by all means, not a given, even though the theory might appear functional and effective at first sight. Although I will not argue that Harris' theory does not cover all the essential elements to peace education, it is still not perfect. Despite it being both specific enough to generate a general direction for the curriculum, and sufficiently non-descript to allow for national or cultural interpretation of the concept to be incorporated in the lessons, it operates on a false premise. It speaks of developing, among other things, critical thought, in the generation that is subjected to peace education.¹¹ However, those who are to develop the program, and teach the next generation are more often than not, underqualified for such a function. As Harris explains, grass roots movements are promoted over top-down development

⁹ Harris, "Peace Education Theory," 6.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 17.

strategies in peace education,¹² this means that even when those involved in such movements are teachers, it is unlikely that they have had examples of peace education theory in their educational trajectory or upbringing. I am aware that top-down development strategies are not a guarantee of quality, however they do usually come from a position of power and financial capability. If they do not provide the required professionals for such a project, they would have the capital to either hire, or train individuals for it. The possibility of educating the teachers before they embark on teaching peace education is not considered in the theory, nor is the question whether grass root movements are able to organize this. Most of Harris' examples concern Western developed countries, with well-educated teachers capable of teaching at least one the five subjects of peace education as previously identified, without extensive supplementary training. The strong possibility that the peace educators in developing countries do not always possess the skillset to design a peace education curriculum or course that generates critical thought, is not sufficiently accounted for in this concrete peace education theory.

Furthermore, Harris' theory demonstrates knowledge of the struggle for peace taking place on multiple levels, among which social class and the often encountered lack of mobility between the different social classes present in that situation. Although it clearly identifies the aspects of the social levels that are most crucial to be addressed: "insights into the various aspects of structural violence, focusing on social institutions with their hierarchies and propensities for dominance and oppression",¹³ it fails to acknowledge that understanding of dominance and oppression alone is not enough to escape it. Harris exclusively takes the perspective of those that do not find themselves oppressed or subjected to structural violence¹⁴, which is demonstrated, among many examples, in the following statement: "students in peace education classes learn about the plight of the poor ... The goal is to build peaceful communities by promoting an active democratic citizenry interested in equitably sharing the world's

¹² Ibid., 12.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The term structural violence was first introduced by Johan Galtung, whose definition of positive peace this paper has adopted. Galtung argued structural violence concerns unequal power, specifically with regard to the power to decide over the distribution of resources and consequent unequal life chances. Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 171.

resources”.¹⁵ There appears to be no account of a case in which the students receiving the peace education are in fact ‘the poor’, whose plight they are all too familiar with. Unfortunately, it appears that Harris theory in many ways depends on the social group that has the upper hand, who are not subjected to structural violence, who are capable of making the decision to share resources equitably, to take the decision to create a more peaceful society. Although this does constitute a peace education for peacebuilding strategy that applies non-violent methods to improve society,¹⁶ it is questionable to what extent it is effective in a society where the majority of the population is ‘the poor’, oppressed and subjected to structural violence.

Peace Education Theory from the Perspective of the Oppressed

As we observe above, Harris referred in his theory to ‘the plight of the poor’. This was done in a context referring to peace education classes teaching students about certain social groups being more or less fortunate than others, with the intended result of promoting a citizenry ‘interested in equitably sharing world’s resources’. In this statement Harris, although seemingly unintentionally, classifies two groups. The first, is the group that is being educated, those whom receive peace education according to his methods; they are according to this statement in a position where they have the agency to decide that the world’s resources ought to be share equitably. The second group, is the ‘poor’ whose plight is discussed in these peace education classes; he refers here not just to a group of citizens less fortunate in their financial standing, he refers to a group that in his construct is to be helped. Although it cannot be said that helping the less fortunate is not admirable or to be encouraged, it should be noted here that what Harris does in his theory is establish a power relationship. A relationship in which one actively decides to change the course of the world, and the other is in need of said help and assistance which is to come from the first individual. Although Harris does not actively address this relationship, it is one that takes an active part in peace education processes, and has been discussed at length by other academics, and it is this relationship I will address here.

In 1972’s, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Paulo Freire divides society in two categories, the oppressors and the oppressed. Neither of these groups are static, and people can move from one category to the next, in fact Freire states: “It is a rare peasant who, once ‘promoted’ to

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Marc Pilisuk, "The Hidden Structure of Contemporary Violence," *Peace and conflict* 4, no. 3 (1999).; Harris, "Peace Education Theory."; Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos, 1st ed. (Londen: Penguin Group, 1972).

overseer, does not become more of a tyrant towards his former comrades than the owner himself.”¹⁷ Naturally the desired movement is not from participants of each groups to ‘switch sides’, but rather to cease the division into groups and for all individuals to have equal access to political participation, self-determination, wealth and general prosperity. Instead of having one group exercising power over the other, the goal would be a society in which all individuals are equal participants. The inherent power relation between the oppressor and the oppressed does constitute a significant barrier in the process of extinguishing the lines between these two groups, however according to Freire this barrier is not insurmountable.

Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed is the idea of peace education initiated, designed and taught by the ‘oppressed’ in the society. Freire argues that one of the most foremost aspects to having the oppressed succeed in changing this structure in society is by differentiation between projects that are merely top down, or those that include both parties equally, the latter option being the desired one. “[T]he distinction between *systematic education* which can only be changed by political power, and *educational projects*, which should be carried out *with* the oppressed in the process of organizing them.”¹⁸ His pedagogy of the oppressed, similar to Harris’ peace education, is to awake critical consciousness which in turn is meant to the expression of social discontents, which he considers the true components of an oppressive situation.¹⁹ The process of awaking this consciousness in the pedagogy of the oppressed should be executed with committed involvement and not mere ‘pseudo-participation’, as Freire puts it; the traditional education structure of narration should be abandoned, and teaching should involve give-and-take: “Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators.”²⁰

Freire describes how the educated man according to the *systematic education* is fit for the world according to how the oppressor shaped it, both the educational system and the reality

¹⁷ *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 16. Authors note: Part of this theoretical argument comes from Freire quoting Francisco Weffert in his preface to Freire’s work *Educacao como Pratica Da Liberdade*. As I lack access to this work, these elements of theory are referenced as part of Freire’s work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 44.

that is their world. When the above stated *educational projects* are put into places, taking into account the committed involvement of the oppressed, the individuals resulting from this system will no longer fit in a world shaped by the oppressor. The reactions of students towards problems they face on a day to day basis, change, same as their approach to challenges. The moment the students begin to question the oppressive system, is the beginning of the end, which is exactly the objective.²¹ This approach is close to the opposite of Harris' peace education theory which regarded mostly the perspective of education to students that did not appear to find themselves in the situation of the 'oppressed'.

Despite these differences, Freire like Harris, identifies concrete elements required for successful peace education, including the postulate that political and educational plans ought not be designed according to personal views of reality without taking into account the '*men-in-a-situation*' for whom the programme was officially directed.²² Not only must the particular view of the world held by the people, be respected in the educational policy, the structural conditions including language and mindsets must be taken into account by both the educator and the policy maker in order to communicate effectively, so that a positive result may be reached.²³ Nevertheless, there are no concrete peace education subjects identified that ought to be observed in the design of an educational plan, programme or policy. This leaves the theory in between the spheres of a concrete approach, and a subjective normative approach with room for interpretation. The question whether a too liberal interpretation could negate the purpose for which the theory was designed, can only be answered by looking at the case study, which I will do in my analysis chapter.

Normative Peace Education Theory with Non-Specific Content

Peace education theory is hardly a new concept, and its existence and development have been around for many years. However, the number of years the concept has been in existence has not been a guarantee that its definition is now sufficiently refined to ensure effective application. Even academics such as Leonisa Ardizzone, who recognize its evolvement throughout time,²⁴ may still misrepresent its importance, complexity and application. Such

²¹ Ibid., 54-59.

²² Ibid., 66.

²³ Ibid., 68-69.

²⁴ Ardizzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations," 430.

misrepresentation can be seen in the following statement: “Peace education is about justice and dignity. It is simply education for social change and action.”²⁵ Firstly, it should be noted that concepts such as social change and action are never easy, nor should education thereof be taken lightly. Secondly, the phrasing of this argument leaves the student or applicant of the theory, free to only regard the educational programmes that successfully convey concepts of justice and dignity resulting in social change and action, as ‘peace education’. This is not to say that this is the only interpretation possible, merely that this statement and the remainder of this particular paper do not sufficiently reflect on what peace education is, other than education resulting in social change; and more importantly whether peace education is considered such if it doesn’t reach the desired outcome.

The approach taken by Ardizzone does not provide any form or guideline for those with the intention of creating a peace education programme, or those trying to learn about the concept from any other standpoint than a purely academic one. From an academic point of view, Ardizzone’s paper is truly informative and educational regarding the topic of peace education. However, as it does not seem to address an audience that finds itself at the grass root level, truly implementing and applying peace education, merely an academic audience, the gap between theory and practice in the field of peace education widens.

The gap between peace education theory and peace education practice can be observed in many aspects, the most telling however, usually appears to surface when the curriculum is observed. It is in the curriculum where one has to practically decide what steps to take as an educator, and what lessons are taught to the next generation. Designing a curriculum concerns more than merely determining the content, the manner in which the classes are taught is also highly influential. Teaching a class about self-agency and critical consciousness, for example, in which students are not allowed or invited to participate, nor are they permitted to comment on, or question the teacher regarding the content or approach, does not constitute a coherent or effective programme.

The more traditional approach to peace education focussed on studying violence, starting with the most obvious expression of such, namely war.²⁶ Ardizzone argues however, that peace education has now evolved into a more well-rounded and complete approach to

²⁵ Ibid., 423.

²⁶ Ibid., 430.; Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education : Educating for Global Responsibility*, x.; Harris, "Peace Education Theory," 5.

include all kinds of violence and the manners in which this violence can be addressed in order to assure peace on structural and individual levels.²⁷ Reardon identifies the a similar development in peace education, and divides peace education theory into three phases: the *reform* phase, the *reconstructive* phase, and the *transformational* phase.²⁸ He argues that each has its respective political goals, of which the first two are primarily focussed on the rejection, prevention and complete abolishment of war, involving the necessary institutional and behavioural changes. The last phase is focussed on rejection of not just violence in the shape of armed conflict, but every type of violence in all levels of society, including structural violence encountered on a day to day basis. If the last phase were indeed to be effective it would realize the positive peace as previously stated, that is constituted by absence of violence of all kinds.²⁹ However, this only speaks of the end phase, the final result of peace education, the absence of violence. It is the process in between that I mean to address, the actual implementation of peace education theory. Although Reardon does speak of a ‘comprehensive peace education theory’, the structure and large portions of the content of her theory are outdated and by extension non-applicable. Much of her theory exist of ‘current’ approaches and knowledge which 30 years after the time of writing, is simply no longer relevant.³⁰ The elements that are transferable however, such as education on the difference between positive and negative peace, or the notion that students need to have individual agency with skills enabling them to make or maintain peace,³¹ there is no certainty these elements will reach their audience, the students.

Reardon proposes for comprehensive peace education to be taught through so called ‘formal education’, through the institutional education system, a top down approach. An approach that Freire already identified as flawed, sixteen years earlier. A top down approach does not account for the scenario in which the oppressed are in need of peace education in order to alter the status quo for them to obtain peace. Any peace education process that were to apply (part of) Reardon’s theory is dependent on the intentions and political wishes of those in power. This theory, in many ways like Ardizzone’s theory, widens the gap between theory and practice in the field of peace education theory. These two theories cater specifically, if not exclusively,

²⁷ Ardizzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations," 430.

²⁸ Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education : Educating for Global Responsibility*, xi.

²⁹ Galtung, "Positive and Negative Peace," 75.

³⁰ Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education : Educating for Global Responsibility*, 5-10, 38-53.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 60-63.

to individuals in privileged situations, academics, policy makers, people in a position of power and authority.

It is precisely because of their position in power that they are still widely accredited and hold a certain academic standing for which people will accept their theories, despite any misguided or incorrect arguments their theory might hold. Ardizzone for example states: “Critics of peace education either do not recognize or decide to overlook peace education’s focus on reducing direct and structural violence and on promoting values of justice, responsibility, and equity.”³² The statement is in one word short-sighted. It does not allow for the possibility that a critic might recognize the ‘focus’, however finds it to be insufficient or ineffective. There are close to endless other aspects a critic might remark upon, for example the fact that this focus has not universally been decided upon, nor universally reached in past peace education efforts. This issue surfaces, and is addressed by other academics who work with peace education theory in a different context from the mere theoretical approach. Such approaches can be seen in studies regarding the application, where the main fault identified, is that of predefining conditions that are labelled as essential for the effectiveness, disregarding the complexity of the concept.³³

Necessity for Caution in Peace Education Theory

There is harm in blindly accepting, applying and following the theory of a well-renowned academic in the field of peace education theory, simply for the fact that that this academic is well known. With the use of non-descriptive terms, or terms that leave significant room for interpretation, the effect of such a theory can end up to be far removed from the intention or focus from which it started. Social change, action, justice, dignity, long-term sustainable change; these all have different connotations, not just depending on cultural and social context, but also on political affiliation and political goals. As stated by many, perhaps most profoundly by Freire, peace education is a powerful tool, so much so, that it is capable of

³² Ardizzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations," 423.

³³ Michalinos Zembylas, Constadina Charalambous, and Panayiota Charalambous, *Peace Education in a Conflict-Affected Society : An Ethnographic Journey* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), 21-38. Gavriel Salomon and Richard V. Wagner, "Does Peace Education Really Make a Difference?," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 12, no. 1 (2006): 40-45. Mohammed Abu-Nimer and Milton Schwebel, "Peace Building in Postsettlement: Challenges for Israeli and Palestinian Peace Educators," *ibid.* 6 (2000): 18-19. H. B. Danesh, "Towards an Integrative Theory of Peace Education," *Journal of Peace Education* 3, no. 1 (2006): 17.

not only changing the dichotomy of the oppressors and the oppressed, but eliminating the structure all together. The power of such a tool however, is in many of these theories almost exclusively assigned to those already in power, depending on a top down approach. The interpretation by those in power, the oppressors, is highly unlikely to be in line with one that would fit the positive peace profile, as previously discussed. Positive peace includes, as previously stated, among other things, freedom of oppression, aspects of kindness and love, and equity in distribution of resources. None of these requirements for positive peace are met in a society with an oppressor – oppressed dichotomy, and unfortunately this is precisely one of the societies where peace education is needed the most, and where it is at the highest risk of failure.

As demonstrated, many of these theories are described in such a way that only the success stories are considered peace education, thus showing an idealistic approach appearing to be incapable of failure. Bear in mind statements such as peace education simply being social change and action, if peace education equals social change and action, that would mean by extension that the lack social change and actions means a lack of peace education. This is why I state that only a success of peace education, calling social change a success, would be included in the observations of peace education theory. Apart from the fact that it is highly problematic that the cases of failure are not discussed and examined to be learned from, the success stories too can be dubious. As the application is built on a theory including ambiguous terminology, the results and suggestions for further research and consideration too, involved terms of such nature. An example of such would be the result of ‘internal readiness for peace’, as the authors named it.³⁴ Whether internal readiness for peace is a psychological state or a political direction is not addressed, as the focus of the research in question lies with case study, the outcome of which is considered successful by the authors. Unfortunately, many of the more recent academic pieces on peace education theory are of a similar nature.³⁵ The more recent academic

³⁴ Abu-Nimer and Schwebel, "Peace Building in Postsettlement: Challenges for Israeli and Palestinian Peace Educators," 15.

³⁵ Scherto Gill and Ulrike Niens, "Education as Humanisation: A Theoretical Review on the Role of Dialogic Pedagogy in Peacebuilding Education," *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 44, no. 1 (2014).; Zembylas, Charalambous, and Charalambous, *Peace Education in a Conflict-Affected Society : An Ethnographic Journey.*; Soli Vered, "Peace Education in Israel: An Educational Goal in the Test of Reality," *Journal of Peace Education* 12, no. 2 (2015).; Yaacov Boaz Yablon, "Time Span as a Factor in Contact Intervention : Implication for Peace Education Programs," *International journal of peace studies (trykt utg.)*. 14 :

contributions on peace education theory are not so much contributions on the theory, as they are accounts of successful application, making use of highly ambiguous terminology. The majority of the most fundamental and concrete peace education theory and its accompanying development remain to be found in the works of academic over three decades ago. Nevertheless, whether you would base peace education theory, in preparation for my research into peace education in Guatemala, on the fundamental theories discussed, or the less theory specific recent academic contributions; none of the theories would have been equipped to deal with the situation at hand, regardless of any application or interpretation imaginable.

2009 : 2.; Klas Roth, "Peace Education as Cosmopolitan and Deliberative Democratic Pedagogy," in *Global Values Education: Teaching Democracy and Peace*, ed. Joseph Zajda and Holger Daun (Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York: Springer, 2009).

Chapter 2: Methods and Methodology

This chapter will address the methodology I have chosen in order to conduct my research, and the methods of which this methodology is comprised. Bearing in mind that my research focusses on peace education in Guatemala, or more precisely, the 1996 Peace Accords and the subsequent educational reform, I have chosen to use qualitative research methods as it resonates with the nature of peace education which cannot be sufficiently represented through quantitative data. The information already available specifically concerning education in Guatemala with respect to the inclusion of elements of peace education, or the development of education over the past decades, is scarce. The few reports by government sources which are available, are not per definition reliable, taking into account the part they played in the oppression of the indigenous peoples, and their interest to present educational progress in a favourable light. This does not mean that they are collectively unreliable, merely that the little information that is presented, ought to be reviewed with great scrutiny. Doing so, however, would require knowledge of Guatemalan education, which brings me back to my ethnographic study.

I have recognized, and do so still, that I am not able to observe the conflict, the peace process, or the manner in which the educational reform has, or has not, contributed to peace education efforts, however I can obtain the information I need in other ways. The manners in which the conflict is recalled in society, the manner in which it is retold, and how this differs within various social classes, will be demonstrated in current day education and the lessons that are taught to the next generation, and it is here that I will make my observations. In order to do so I conduct qualitative research from an interpretivist epistemological position, and a constructivist ontological position, making use of the methods of participant observation and semi-structured interviews. During the discussion of my methods and methodology I will use information obtained in the participant observation process, this concerns for example, elements of the functioning of society. The inclusion of these observations is necessary at this stage as they demonstrate the use of the chosen research design and methods.

Before entering into the discussion of the interpretivist epistemological position that I take in this research, let me say a few words about the choice of qualitative research itself. Although it has been said in the social research methods handbooks over the years, that qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, is concerned with an inductive, theory and

research relationship,³⁶ this was not my reason for selecting it. Like few others,³⁷ I will use qualitative data for the testing of theories, not the creation of one. Specifically, I use qualitative research for the testing of the application of the peace education theory previously discussed, including its various interpretations and sometimes ambiguous terminology. Precisely because of these already existing unclaritys, I have designed my data collection in such a manner that this could not be the source of any further ambiguities. To ensure such a clarity based data collection process I have observed in the research design the most important criteria of sound qualitative research namely: reliability, validity, trustworthiness and authenticity.³⁸ I will further discuss the significance and practical consequences involved in the application of these criteria when I address my methods choices individually.

The Epistemological Position of Interpretivism

For the last couple of decades, the dominant epistemological position in qualitative research has been that of interpretivism,³⁹ and for good reason. It has replaced the application of a model that was used in the natural sciences, which did not sufficiently lend itself for the purposes of the research in question. An interpretivist position does not only require the researcher to report how individuals within a certain social group or setting interpret the world around them, it places these interpretations within the applicable scientific frame, thus interpreting the interpretations.⁴⁰ In turn, the researchers interpretations resulting in his observations and statements will be placed within the setting of a theory or concept, thus creating another level of interpretation.⁴¹ Although this might not appear like a construction that would provide a great deal of clarity, in practice it does, or at least more so than any

³⁶ Alan Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," in *Social Research Methods*, ed. Alan Bryman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 375.

³⁷ David Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data : Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2001).; Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 381.

³⁸ E. G. Guba and Y.S. Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln, and (eds) (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994).; Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 383-86.

³⁹ "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 375.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 26-28.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

alternative for my research setting, as it provides understanding and it is this understanding that brings clarity.

The levels of interpretation are necessary because the interpretivist approach does not only seek to explain human behaviour in social settings, it also seeks to understand it.⁴² With the combination of both the understanding and the explanation, researchers try to identify a causal relationship, and it is precisely this what I require in order to hold peace education theory to the test of practice. The first level, that of individuals interpreting the world around them, is a good first step in establishing whether the terms and conditions as identified by the authors of peace education theory resonate at all with the reality of those to be involved in the peace education project, whether this individual in question is to be a teacher or student. I will illustrate the importance of this first level interpretation with an example.

Bearing in mind that peace education seeks to address the different kinds of violence and the elimination thereof, a teacher of a peace education programme will include this in the curriculum. However, while knowing and understanding many types of violence, and while addressing various pacific methods of conflict resolution, this teacher might simultaneously fail to recognize that eighty percent of his students are male because cultural norms dictate that their female peers are at home fulfilling domestic tasks. It is necessary to understand not only the researchers interpretation of the negligence in addressing the fact that this could be construed as structural discrimination, and by extension as structural violence, the view of the teacher in the situation needs to be understood as well. An outsider might interpret it as wilful negligence, after all the teacher is familiar with the concepts of different kinds of violence, including structural violence. In insider however, might be able to explain that the teacher does not see it as harmful discrimination, but rather as respecting tradition and cultural standards. It matters not only how this individual would interpret the world, but also which social setting he find himself in, and under what social scientific framework this would fall. This requires a combination of both the researcher's interpretation as that of the participant, thus stimulating close cooperation. This cooperation between researcher and participants is crucial to the

⁴² G. H. von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding*, International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method (London: Routledge, 1971).; Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Free Press, 1964), 88.; Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 26. Alfred Schütz and Maurice Natanson, *Collected Papers : 1 : The Problem of Social Reality*, vol. 11, *Phaenomenologica* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1962), 59.

outcome of the data collection process, as will be demonstrated in the other aspects to this methodology, as well.

The Ontological Position of Constructivism

The ontological position of constructivism, approaches the nature of social entities as one that is constantly changing.⁴³ Not because the objects themselves possess a dynamic nature, however because: “social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals rather than phenomena ‘out there’ and separate from those involved in its construction.”⁴⁴ In short, it means that reality is constructed by the individuals that part take in it, most specifically including terms and concepts that might be considered inconclusive. It might not appear the most practical choice for observing social entities in a situation meant for the observation of the interpretation of the application of peace education theory, however it does constitute the most realistic option. As already reflected in the peace education theory section, the interpretation of terms that make up our reality, such as peace, conflict or violence, can be highly consequential for the interpretation of the theory’s intention or focus itself, let alone for the application. The fact that these terms are already interpreted in a different way already demonstrates the fact that peace education theory is based on a constructivist approach, therefore it is only right to conduct research regarding the testing of this theory, from the same constructivist position.

Research Design

In order to answer my research question whether the 1998 educational reform, following the 1996 Peace Accords, has resulted in, or contributed to peace education, I will look at current education in Guatemala by going to schools, sitting in on classes, and speaking to educators and directors both informally as well as formally through interviews. This educational reform specifically addressed the need for equal education for all peoples in Guatemala, specifically for the indigenous people who were the subject of severe discrimination in the previous decades. Considering that the educational reform took place barely 20 years ago, it is not realistic to already expect changes in society as a whole. After all, it is only the new generation, the children and young adults that systematically receive education. Thus, I have designed research that looks to see what the education looked like in Guatemala at the time, fall 2017, and whether

⁴³ Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 28-29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 375.

there is a conclusive causal relationship between the educational reform and the level of peace education or lack thereof. Ideally, the result of this research design would provide sufficiently substantive information to apply observations and conclusions regarding the peace education in Guatemala, to peace education theory application in general. Let it be noted, that this is purely ideally speaking, as I am duly aware of the specificity and uniqueness of each and every individual situation, including that of Guatemala.

To assess the practice or level of peace education in Guatemala, bearing in mind that the start is a governmental document signed by both state officials as well as public representatives of indigenous and non-indigenous backgrounds, this research primarily focusses on systematic education. With systematic education, I presumed to mean an educational system of prevocational education, focussed on a specific age group, where children and young adults attend classes on a five-days-per-week basis, teaching subjects pre-set and pre-defined by a national curriculum, regardless whether this concerned a public or a private institution. However, in Guatemala the distinction between systematic and non-systematic education is highly unclear. Many schools outside the capital, specifically in rural areas with an indigenous population, are not part of such an idea of systematic education, however they do constitute the only source of education they receive. They can appear to be part of systematic education, however they are not, as their curriculum and the consequent educational degree is completely independent, and the field and level of knowledge bears no similarity to that found in most schools in the capital, whether these are public or private.

One could make the division between public and private schools however this will not present you with a homogenous class of educational institutes or systems. Within public schools, there is a wide array of subjects being taught, quality of the classes differs, approaches taken by teachers contradict, and even number of days or hours that school is in session is not agreed upon. The same is true for private education, with the added variation of large variety of ages in which the student commence their education, class sizes, and the fact that the diversity of subjects include such a high degree of variation that student have the possibility to study a specific field or direction as a much younger age. Furthermore, I was unable to exclusively select one stage of education such a primary, or one of their two levels of secondary education. The reason I could not do such was because all these levels of education were present within both private and public schools within the capital, however in the more rural areas this was certainly not the case. I considered the two levels, or preferably the last level, of secondary

education to be the most telling when it comes a curriculum involving peace education, but it was these levels that students often did not have access to in rural areas. That would leave the option of only regarding primary education, which simply is not sufficient in order to accurately answer the research question.

Thus, because of the heterogenous nature of education in Guatemala I decided to obtain a sample from a wide selection of educational institutes, both private and public, classes containing students approximately between the ages of 6 and 18, located both inside the capital as well as in rural areas, and most importantly, bearing in mind the focus of the educational reform on the inclusion and equal treatment of the indigenous people, institutions predominantly attended by indigenous peoples as well as non-indigenous peoples. Therefore, I use the purposive sampling approach of both maximum variation sampling, as well as opportunistic sampling. My intention was to conduct research at least at one of each type of educational institute, their individuality based on being public or private, their location, and whether the attending students are predominantly indigenous or not. Nevertheless, I realized early on that in Guatemala access to schools is not easily arranged through e-mail or telephone, I would have to gain access to these schools through contacts I would make once I would be on location, hence the combination of both mixed variation as opportunistic sampling.⁴⁵

Mixed Variation and Opportunistic Sampling

The manner in which I distinguish the schools to be substantially different, that of public v. private, their location, and whether they are predominantly indigenous or not is based on several factors. The difference between private and public is the most dominant one, as in Guatemala private education is not required to follow the national educational curriculum, nor are there set guidelines for them to qualify as a school.⁴⁶ In fact, if they complete primary and secondary education, and wish to pursue an academic carrier by going to university, there is only one state university. All other universities are privately owned, and many of their degrees are based on certifications that are founded in accords of recognition with other universities abroad, not on a Guatemalan national requirement of some sorts. This is the opposite of systems

⁴⁵ Ibid., 408-09. See also Michael Quinn Patton and Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 2nd ed. ed. (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990).; T. Palys, "Purposive Sampling," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. L. M. Given (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008).

⁴⁶ Ministerio De Educacion, "Gobierno De La Republica De Guatemala Ministerio De Educacion: Comprometidos Con La Educacion," <http://www.mineduc.gob.gt/portal/index.asp>.

predominantly found in Europe, where one can switch between universities for undergraduate and graduate programs nationally, but internationally your degree has to be examined before it may or may not be recognized as valid. Which bring us back to the distinction between public and private prevocational education in Guatemala, where both sectors set their students on a very different path from which it is difficult to diverge. Both the question of entering a public school with a private diploma or degree, or entering a private school with a public diploma or degree can be difficult up to the point of impossible. This is why public and private schools must be examined separately, the results of one cannot automatically be transferred to the other.

The choice to include location as a category of distinction was not made in the initial stages of research design, rather it was a necessary step in the acquiring of access to schools once in Guatemala. As stated, I made use of opportunistic sampling, which meant that this distinction in location was an element that I was made aware of by my contacts who offered me access to certain schools. One of such was for example a head figure in the organization *Fey Alegría*, who offered access to schools specifically located in so called 'red zones'.⁴⁷ Technically speaking all public schools receive equal funding, in practice however the budget is highly dependent on local contributions or aid from organizations, usually international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), which in practice appears to be lowest in red zones due to the fear of finances ending up in criminal circles instead of being used for educational purposes. Schools located within red zones hence not only deal, with a group of students who have a very specific background, because of which their perception and experience of reality may differ, they do so with extremely limited finances at their disposal. The observations and data results from such an educational institution would be significantly different from those of a school located within a safe area without debilitating financial limitations. Therefore, in my mixed variation purposive sampling approach, I include the aspect of location as a distinguishable factor, an element that sets one school from another.

Finally, the distinguishing factor of the composition of its students, whether or not they are indigenous, was a factor that emerged from the preparation of research design focussing on mixed variation, and was confirmed in my opportunistic sampling approach. The reason to include it as a distinguishing factor is due to its direct relation to the educational reform, which effects I research. The educational reform stresses that the inequalities between the indigenous

⁴⁷ The capital is divided into sixteen zones, red zones is a term used to refer to those with high rates of criminality and as a consequence, it has at risk children and young adults.

and the ladino's are to be eliminated, and that this process start with education.⁴⁸ The discrimination was not only systematically present in the education system, for example in the way indigenous peoples were addressed, but more importantly in the way education would be denied to them. The lack of education was not a mere absence in their youth, but a substantial gap in their formative years causing them to be denied access to career opportunities and subsequent standards of life that others with education did have. By observing schools both with predominantly indigenous students and predominantly ladino students, I will be able to assess the kind, quality, and manner of education that is being taught, and the differences between them. Not only do I speak of quality or quantity of education, I intend to specifically observe the manner in which they now regard the indigenous peoples and the development of their rights; both from the perspective of a predominantly indigenous school as well as that of a predominantly ladino school.

Participant Observation

As previously stated, I have chosen participant observation as one of my research methods, however I will refine here why and more importantly what I mean to include in this term. Participant observation and the term ethnography are often used interchangeably, and in many ways, I have done so here as well. I have used the term participant observation specifically in Guatemala as it appeared that they were more familiar with this concept than that of ethnography. For ethical reasons, it was important that they understood the nature of my research and what type of information I wanted to collect in which manner. However, let it be stated here that I have conducted an ethnographic study which included the following aspects: I immersed myself in Guatemalan society for a period of three months, mainly moving in educational professional circles; I made observations of the behaviour and content of the settings, mainly that of educational institutions, board rooms, conferences, class rooms etc; I observed and listened to conversations but also engaged in many; I interviewed informants on issues or questions that were not clear from observation alone; I collected information about the subjects of my research; I developed an understanding of the culture of the groups and the people's behaviour within the context of that culture; and I have written accounts of all settings;

⁴⁸ COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runukik Jun Káká Tijonik*, 7-8, 39.

the combination of all these elements would follow the definition of an ethnographic study as defined by the Oxford social research methods handbook.⁴⁹

The reason for using the term participant observation within the setting of gaining access to schools in Guatemala, was due to lack of understanding regarding my field of study and the term ethnography. I intended to observe the school, the classes, and the behaviour of all its participants, as it would normally be. It was not my focus to learn how they behave when a white foreign female researcher visits. Naturally, the latter cannot be entirely avoided, however by using the term participant observation, I managed to convey that I wished to be treated as if I were one of them, as if it was an ordinary day, filled with their ordinary educational programme, despite the fact that I obviously could not participate as an insider and avoid changes in behaviour.

I took an overt approach in my participant observation for several reasons. Naturally the predefined advantages of an overt research positions were applicable in my study such as, the possibility to take notes, the possibility to apply other research methods, the reassurance regarding ethical issues (people are aware of your role and presence), and access.⁵⁰ Due to the nature of my contacts and the manner in which I gained access to schools and different educational settings, such as meetings and conferences, it would have been impossible to take a covert stance. Before my departure to Guatemala I was already faced with the reality that access would not be granted based on the request of an unknown master's student, so, like any other researcher, I was in need of contacts.

For this purpose, I decide to accept an offer for an internship at the Diplomatic Academy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working directly for the director, who also offered to host me for the duration of my internship and research period. This provided me with an array of contacts, the most important of which gave me access to Rafael Landivar University through which I entered into an academic sphere in which many were concerned with education and development who were able to help me provide direct or indirect access to schools. I was extremely fortunate in the way I gained my contacts, and I am aware that, because I was always introduced by someone in an authoritative position, many doors opened for me that otherwise might have stayed closed.

⁴⁹ Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 424.

⁵⁰ J. Ditton, *Part-Time Crime: An Ethnography of Fiddling and Pilferage* (London: Macmillan, 1977).; Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 427.

A large part of the reason for them to aid me was because I am a white European female. The aspect of my skin colour and my origin had the effect that people were eager to be associated with me, and the fact that I was female meant that I was often considered harmless, especially in situations where I did not uphold the same political views as my contacts. I made use of these advantages, as a researcher does,⁵¹ but doing so, I made sure to adhere to the previously mentioned criteria of reliability: the postulate that a study can be replicated by another researcher, and that if there had been another member of a research team, they would have made the same observation or conclusions.⁵² I must stipulate that a replication of this study might be harder to realize by a researcher who is not white, or European, or even who is not male. Nevertheless, it does not make this study any less reliable. The fact that being a white European female opens many doors, does not make the information obtained ‘behind that door’ any less valid. It is merely a pre-condition for the replication of this study, due to the cultural aspect to reality in Guatemala.

Semi-structured Interviews

Apart from informal conversations taking place during participant observation periods at schools or meetings, I have also purposefully conducted semi-structured interviews. The interviews concerned the changes in education of the last two decades, or more if the interviewee had such knowledge. Questions were based on an interview guide which included inquiry regarding the focus of education, the inclusion of topics that I would be able to classify as peace education, such as international law, human rights law, or the teaching of pacific methods of conflict resolution, and if such topics were taught, whether their spirit was reflected in the classroom or the school in general. The reason for the interviews to be semi-structured and not structured, had to do with the fact that the answers were vastly different, as was the nature and the amount of information they were able to provide. The people I wanted to conduct interviews with were those that would classify as ‘peace educators’, the teachers, school directors or curriculum designers within a school that have a working understanding of the material taught, and to some extent have influence on either the material that is taught or the manner in which classes are conducted. Within this selection of interviewees, I hoped to

⁵¹ J. Sarsby, "The Fieldwork Experience," in *Ethnographic Research: A Guide to General Conduct*, ed. R. F. Ellen (London: Academic Press, 1984), 96.

⁵² Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 384.

interview specifically educators, or school directors, that had been in their post for a period of twenty years or more. In this manner, I hope they would also be able to reflect on the changes that occurred since the educational reform took place, and not merely on the situation as it was today.

After the three month period of ethnographic research I was able to conduct 56 semi-structured interviews, of which 49 have been recorded and transcribed. I gained access to such a large number of interviewees in the same way I gained access to schools where I was able to conduct participant observation. I was introduced to the school by directly being referred to the school director, the director would be at my service and arrange for a schedule for the classes I wished to attend, for the teachers I wishes to interview and would personally provide me with a tour of the school, the grounds (if any) and inform me about their history. Most schools started classes at 07.00 in the morning, and this would be when I would attend also, usually leaving again around 17.00 in the afternoon. Although I arranged some of the interviews myself, the opportunity for most was directly provided by the school director, and throughout the long school days, I would spend half my time attending classes, and the other half interviewing teachers, educators, or in some instances administrative personal with influence regarding the curriculum. All the interviewees that were teachers, I have also observed in class, however not all teachers I have observed in class, were interviewed. Due to the large number of interviews I conducted, I outsourced the process of transcribing in order to save time for content analysis.⁵³

Overall, the goal of the semi-structured interviews, was to obtain a better understanding of the education that took place in that moment, and the relation of its quality and content to the education reform. Mere observation of the situation as is, would not provide sufficient information to construct any correlation between the educational reform and the quality and content of the education, whether this was good or poor. The semi-structured interviews provided insight into the education as observed, what the intention of the teacher was with certain methods, or that of the director or curriculum designer with the choice of topics and material. Furthermore, it provided some degree of historical and developmental perspective, into what the situation is today compared to that of twenty or thirty years ago. A class that I might have experienced as outdated and obsolete, might in fact already have been a great step

⁵³ When I speak of content analysis I refer to the interpretation of ethnographic content analysis as presented by David L. Altheide and Christopher J. Schneider, *Qualitative Media Analysis*, 2nd ed. ed., vol. volume 38, Qualitative Research Methods (Los Angeles, Calif: Sage, 2013).

forward considering where the starting point of that school was. The scale on which I conducted these interviews, added the advantage of some degree of comparison. It was not a significant number to call it a quantitative study, however it was sufficiently great to be able to filter some statements and opinions as exceptions, especially when these statements did not conform with what I had observed in class. All in all, it was a vital tool in establishing a comprehensive understanding of the both the educational program and the school I had visited itself, as well as my observations therein.

Ethical Considerations

My main ethical consideration in the ethnographic field study was the question of the effect of my research on my research participants, those I observed, and more importantly those that I interviewed. Was there any possibility that my presence, or my actions could cause them harm, whether direct or indirect? The worst case scenario answer, would be yes. Guatemala is known to be a violent society, and in the past, one's political views could determine their safety or the safety of those surrounding him. The extent to which this would still be true today was unknown to me at the start of my research, and for this reason I took all the necessary measures regarding anonymity and consent. I discussed precautionary measures with my department and supervisor and gained their consent, as well as that of the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. The process entailed the commitment to measures such as personally safeguarding sensitive data collected, to the extent of writing fieldwork notes in Dutch to prevent those around me from knowing information I gather concerning others. But more importantly, it concerned matter of consent of my research participants.

As consent can only truly be given by adults, I determined not to directly include any minors in my research. Although I conducted an ethnographic study with participant observation at schools where, naturally, many minors were present, I was careful not to directly include them. This meant I did not conduct formal or informal interviews, nor did I base any observations or conclusions on interactions with them. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the objective of my research, actions of minors in a group as a whole were bound to be included in some aspects of my observations. However, all these were observed as actions of a group as a whole, not individual minors, and all identities remain anonymous as they are observed as 'crowd behaviour' so to speak.

Adults on the other hand, capable of giving consent, were asked to do so before I would involve them in my research. In all semi-structured interviews, I would explain the purpose and

methods of my research and request their permission to record the interview. Only 7 participants did not agree to recording, all others were requested on record to give permission to use the information given in my research, and whether or not they would like to remain anonymous. Even though the majority of the interviewees expressed consent to not be anonymous in my research, I have made the decision to treat all data anonymously nonetheless. Because, the use of names in certain cases, and the explicit anonymity of some, would provide for the possibility of indirectly identifying the anonymous interviewees. The current approach of blank anonymity provides further protection, which according to some of my interviewees, is still very much needed in the Guatemalan society today. For these reasons, all data collected is preserved exclusively by me. The only other person who has heard the recorded interviews is my transcriber, who signed a statement of non-disclosure regarding any and all content of, and relating to the interviews. This agreement too, is held by me.

When it comes to consent with regard to participant observation, I realize that in some cases there is the possibility that those involved might not have had the liberty to object to be part of my participant observation research. As previously stated, I was received by the director of the school, and teachers would be told I would be attending their class, they were not asked whether they would have liked me to. The same, to a large extent, may have been true for the directors of the schools themselves, as they too were often told that I would be visiting, before I would be able to ask myself, whether they would like to receive me or not. To this I can only state, that I tried to use the opportunities that were presented to the extent where I was as certain as I could be that it would not cause harm or have any negative effects for the participants involved. I weighed the possibility that their warm welcome might not have come from a place of voluntary consent, with the effects that my presence could have for those involved. In this consideration I took into account the measures to ensure anonymity and the possibility for requesting consent personally to those that I would ask for a more direct involvement in the form of interviews. Let it be clearly stated, that I have never had the impression that the welcome I received at the schools was not heartfelt, or that consent given came from a place of fear or coercion. Nevertheless, I have considered the possibility, and accounted for it in the steps I took to ensure I would adhere to ethical standards, while bearing in mind the criteria of qualitative research in general.

Returning to the previously mentioned criteria of qualitative research, which I believe have to be met in order to conduct ethically sound research, I will shortly discuss validity,

trustworthiness, and authenticity; as reliability has already been addressed it will not be repeated here. The criteria mentioned appear broad, and stated in arbitrary terms capable of interpretations in many different ways. However, when we observed the Oxford handbook of social research methods it basically boils down to whether a study does what a scientific research paper ought to: whether the researcher's statements and conclusions relate to the theory they examine or develop; whether the findings can be generalized in the field as a whole; whether the researcher's study can be replicated, and if its conclusions are both feasible as well as credible; and finally, whether the study is authentic.⁵⁴ On the authenticity of the study, I adopt the criteria as set by Lincoln and Guba:

*1) Fair representation of different viewpoints among members of the social setting; 2) The degree to which it helps members to arrive at a better understanding of their social milieu; 3) The degree to which it helps members to appreciate better the perspectives of other members of their social setting; 4) The degree to which the research has acted as a catalyst to members to engage in action to change their circumstances; 5) The degree to which the research empowered members to take the steps necessary for engaging in action.*⁵⁵

The approach I have taken has adhered to all the above mentioned criteria of quality qualitative social research, in so far as this is possible. Naturally, I am aware that my interpretations are never fully objective, nor is a Guatemalan case study automatically generalizable to other post-armed conflict situation in for example a South-Asian country. Nevertheless, to the extent that it is possible to adhere to the criteria set, I have done so with the possible exception of criteria numbers three, four and five of authenticity. Although I agree with the fact that a complete authentic social research would be capable of meeting such criteria, I do not know whether these are so easily applicable in Guatemala society. I believe that due to the cultural setting, actions such as research being a catalyst, or empowering members of society to take action, are incredibly difficult to realize. I will not argue that the theory is flawed by setting such high criteria, merely that in this specific case study, it was not feasible to reach such. I will further elaborate on the role of my research with respect to being a catalyst, or causing social change later on. Ultimately, let it be stated here that this research has taken into

⁵⁴ Bryman, "The Nature of Qualitative Research," 383-86.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 386.; Guba and Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research."

account the criteria for qualitative social research methods, and has taken the necessary ethical considerations into account, to deliver sound data in order to answer my research question.

Gatekeepers

Both in the method of participant observation, as well as with semi-structured interviews, have I gained access through gatekeepers. A gatekeeper is the person, in this case within a fieldwork setting, who can provide or obstruct your access to your desired research subject, they have a relatively large influence on the researcher's result, as they have the power to withhold access to sites, locations or information.⁵⁶ It was because of gatekeepers that I was able to gain access to 7 different schools, and conduct 56 interviews. In many cases access to interviews specifically, was provided in quantities I did not request. However, due to the role of the gatekeepers, and my dependence on its power and willingness to grant me access, the situation often did not allow for refusal of further access than I asked for, nor would this be beneficial for my research. Despite the overwhelming amount of information gained through the interviews, the participant observation process is of equal importance in the final observations. Aspects to education, such as teacher-student dynamics, teaching methods in practice, behaviour and attitude, cannot be sufficiently described in an interview alone. It was the combination of the two methods that provided the best approach to gain a complete and comprehensive understanding of Guatemalan education today.

⁵⁶ Isabel Crowhurst and Madeleine Kennedy-Macfoy, "Troubling Gatekeepers: Methodological Considerations for Social Research," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 16, no. 6 (2013): 457.; Marlene de Laine, *Fieldwork, Participation and Practice : Ethics and Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 2000). 58, 123.; V. Minichiello et al., *In-Depth Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1997), 171.; Raymond M. Lee, *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics* (London: Sage, 1993), 125.

Chapter 3: Education in Guatemala Today: Setting the Stage

Discussing the observations of my ethnographic field study, and the results of my semi-structured interviews, would not be of any significance without understanding the context in which education and Guatemalan society found itself at the time of my research. There is always a certain degree to which the author depends on the interpretation of the reader for its text to be understood in the same manner as the intention with which it was written. Therefore, when a reader is not familiar with the context of the setting in which the research took place, it is impossible to correctly convey the observation and conclusions of the author. In order for my observations regarding education in Guatemala to be understood correctly, or to be understood at all, I will shortly set the stage on which this research has taken place. Bearing in mind my research question, whether the 1998 educational reform, following the 1996 Peace Accords, has resulted in, or contributed to peace education, I must shortly discuss the Peace Accords and the conflict that led to them.

As stated in the theory chapter, peace education is usually applied in post armed-conflict situations, and it is meant as a tool to bring about important aspects to society such as social change, justice, and peace itself, through understanding of elements such as the conflict that took place, the concept of violence, methods to deal with conflict in more peaceful ways, and approaches to a more peaceful society, for example by regarding human rights. Therefore, in order to understand the observations regarding the manner that the conflict is referred to and dealt with in schools, it is important for the reader to understand the conflict and the nature of the armed violence that took place. Once the past, especially including the Guatemalan civil war, is understood as far as this is feasible within such as limited summary, we must also regard the present situation in Guatemala. As I will discuss the aforementioned 1996 Peace Accords, it is an easy mistake to assume that Guatemala now enjoys a positive peace,⁵⁷ or any peace at all for that matter. In order to understand the situation in Guatemala with respect to the context in which I conducted my research, I will also shortly address the tensions with respect to indigeneity, and class division. Although most, if not all, of these tensions are rooted in the armed conflict, they ought to be addressed separately in order to understand their ramifications at the time of my research. Finally, I will give an overview of the more technical elements of

⁵⁷ Authors note: see Theory Chapter for further elaboration to the approach of the definition of positive peace that this paper takes.

the 1998 educational reform, how it came to be established, and why it is this government educational decree that I chose to look at. The setting in which this educational reform emerged is of great significance to its consequences and effects, and must be regarded in order to observe its influence as well as assess its effectivity.

Background Information to the Guatemalan Conflict

Although the Guatemalan conflict in the 20th century is not the focus of this research, it is not possible to address the developments and current social situation, including much tension, without understanding what exactly took place. Therefore, I will shortly discuss the conflict, when it took place, the nature of the tensions, the atrocities that took place, and the manner in which it was resolved. The short version of the Guatemalan civil war would be to state that it broke out in 1960, after a few years earlier, a coup overthrew the democratically elected president Jacobo Arbenz, and that it ended in 1996 with a peace process between the Guatemalan military and the main insurgent group of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). An ever so slightly more comprehensive version would add that the coup was backed by the US as part of their anti-communist policy, and that the peace process was sponsored by the UN. These minimal outlines of the Guatemalan civil war, is the manner in which the conflict is generally discussed in Guatemala prevocational education, with a few exceptions. Naturally, this is not sufficient to understand the past or current tensions in Guatemalan society, specifically between the ladino's and the indigenous peoples.

The source of conflict between the ladino's and the 23 different Mayan indigenous peoples, is far more elaborate and dates further back than to mere denial of equal educational privileges. In 1994 the CEH was created with the mandate to "clarify human rights violations related to the thirty-six year internal conflict from 1960 to the United Nation's brokered peace agreement of 1996, and to foster tolerance and preserve memory of the victims."⁵⁸ In practice, they went much further than merely 'clarifying human rights violations', as they addressed the origin of the tensions back to 1821 when Guatemala proclaimed independence. According to the CEH the proclamation of independence was initiated by a small elite, creating an authoritarian State which: "excluded the majority of the population, was racist in its precepts

⁵⁸ United States Institute of Peace, "Truth Commission Guatemala: Commission for Historical Clarification," <https://www.usip.org/publications/1997/02/truth-commission-guatemala>.

and practises, and served to protect the economic interest of the privileged minority.”⁵⁹ These trends have persisted in the centuries since, as demonstrated in the legislative branch and the political regime, specifically in the dominating political parties, who collectively increased polarisation and exclusion by:

*“establishing legal norms which legitimised regimes of exception and the suppression of civil and political rights, as well as hindering or obstructing any process of change. Appropriate institutional mechanisms for channelling concerns, claims and proposals from different sectors of society were lacking. This deficit ... further consolidated a political culture of confrontation and intolerance and provoked almost uninterrupted instability, permeating the whole social order.”*⁶⁰

The indigenous people have been subjected to structural violence for centuries, and the situation has only escalated due to the increased measures taken to permeate this discrimination. This social injustice was not met with quiet acceptance, and the protest that followed, demanding change on an economic, political, social and cultural level, led to political instability. Facing this instability “the State increasingly resorted to violence and terror in order to maintain social control”.⁶¹ It is important to note, that it was not only a society saturated with structural violence against indigenous people, and the poor (which were in practice largely made up of indigenous people), it was a society with a fundamentally anti-democratic nature rooted in an economic structure, where the wealth, capital, and income lay in the hands of a small elite minority. The State itself, its political and institutional structure, including all elements of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches became a structure preserving the status-quo of profound discrimination in favour of a small ladino elite.

After the coup overthrew the democratically elected president Jacobo Arbenz in 1954, the political situation, if possible, grew increasingly more restrictive, and opportunity for political participation became close to non-existent. With this process, the government demonstrated that the three branches of trias politica were operating in such close relation, that it is doubtful whether there was any separation of power at all. In this track of increasing oppression, polarisation and militarization, Guatemala’s historical pre-existing trends were not

⁵⁹ Commission for Historical Clarification, "Guatemala Memory of Silence: Conclusions and Recommendations," (Guatemala City 1999), 17.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 18.

⁶¹ Ibid.

the only influencing factor. Anti-communism sentiment promoted by the US, found ground with the political parties in power and the catholic church, and not long after direct military aid from the US followed, which reinforced the national intelligence apparatus, and was simultaneously directed towards training the officer corps in counterinsurgency techniques; both of these forms of US military support, constituted “key factor which had significant bearing on human rights violations during the armed confrontation.”⁶²

After these centuries of oppression, discrimination, injustice, poverty and exclusion mere protest turned into insurgency, as it appeared the only way to generate social, political and economic change. Although often only the URNG is mentioned as the insurgency force fighting the Guatemalan military, there were in fact many different insurgent groups although all adopted Marxist doctrine in form or another, with historical roots in the proscribed communist Guatemalan Worker’s Party (PGT).⁶³ Guatemalan insurgent groups received political, logistic, and strategic support from Cuba, leading those with an already Marxist ideology to adopt the Cuban approach which argues for the necessity of an armed conflict in order to ensure control and the cessation of injustice.⁶⁴ At this point, as the situation escalated, those who were sympathetic to the indigenous peoples’ cause, but not in favour of an armed struggle, became more isolated in society as they were greatly mistrusted or even treated as belonging to the ‘enemy’. The ‘enemy’ itself was also an evolving concept, as it did not only include the political parties in power, or the military forces that they commanded. In many people’s eyes, the entire elite in power was responsible for their oppression over the last centuries, which included many civilians that did not hold any political, judicial or military function.

When the conflict did break out in 1962 the State made use of an “illegal and underground punitive system ... managed and directed by military intelligence.”⁶⁵ Its military practices were, unfortunately, no more legal than its punitive system was. According to the CEH findings an estimated 200,000 persons have been killed or disappeared during the course of the civil war, of which 42,275 were victims of human rights violations and acts of violence; 23,671 of these victims passed because of arbitrary execution, and 6,159 disappeared forcibly.⁶⁶

⁶² Ibid., 19.

⁶³ Ibid., 20.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 19-21.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 18.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 17.

Furthermore, 93% of all human rights violations and acts of violence that took place during the period of armed conflict, were committed by the State; and 83% of all those deceased, whether this involved human rights violations or not, were Mayan, and only 17% ladino. Apart from those killed, there is another number, estimated between 500.000 and 1.500.000, displaced persons, internationally as well as those who sought refuge abroad.

Using the term of the violation of human rights, the manner in which these were violated must not be overlooked. Because this was not a technical violation of international law, this was cruelty in its most profound form. Common practices included the criminalisation of victims, the forced complicity in the violence causing social discord within communities as perpetrators lived amongst the victims, general impunity, and an environment of utter terror. In order to ensure said terror, their actions included:

“the killing of defenceless children, often by beating them against walls or throwing them alive into pits where the corpses of adults were later thrown; the amputation of limbs; the impaling of victims; the killing of persons by covering them in petrol and burning them alive; the extraction, in the presence of others, of the viscera of victims who were still alive; the confinement of people who had been mortally tortured, in agony for days; the opening of the wombs of pregnant women, and other similarly atrocious acts.”⁶⁷

Further terror was ensured by forced disappearances and scorched earth tactics in which entire villages would be incinerated including its inhabitants and all their belongings. Finally, although it might not seem significant, they fundamentally disrupted Mayan culture and tradition, gravely unsettling Mayan daily life, by preventing them to ensure the well-being of the dead. In Mayan practices it is of great importance to give the dead a dignified burial due to their belief in an active bond between the deceased and the living. The denial of such unsettled generations to come as there could not be any rectification for those who were not given the proper burial, and this meant the lack of access to those deceased who were not given this dignified burial.

It is important to understand these aspects to the internal conflict that took place in Guatemala. I can go into further regarding the specific insurgency groups, and what actions they took at which point in time, however these are not the aspects to the civil war that remain

⁶⁷ Ibid., 34-35.

influential today. It is the all-consuming terror, that was already looming to some extent in the centuries of oppression, which presented itself in its full and extremely harmful capacity during the civil war that has not disappeared despite the fact that the conflict has come to an end. These tactics of terror, unequivocally led to issues of mistrust, which is part of the reason that the negotiation process to come to an actual peace agreement lasted as long as it did.

After nine years of negotiation and diplomacy between the respective presidents of Guatemala, the public officials of the administrations, the URNG commanding officers, the participants of the National Reconciliation Commission and the Assembly of Civil Society, the religious sector especially the Catholic Church, and Army representatives, the 1996 Peace Accords were signed with the aid of the UN as moderator. Although there was only one accord entitled 'Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace', the 1996 Peace Accords are always referred to with the year of closing, and in plural form. This is because there have been agreements since 1989 demonstrating the stages in the process of negotiation towards peace. However, the seven agreements concluded in 1996 are considered the ones to have truly established peace in Guatemala.

These agreements include in chronological order: 1) Agreement on Socio-Economic Aspects of the Agrarian Situation 06/05/1996; 2) Agreement on the Strengthening of Civilian Power and on the Role of the Armed Forces in a Democratic Society 19/09/1996; 3) Agreement on the Definitive Ceasefire 04/12/1996; 4) Agreement on Constitutional Reforms and Electoral Regime 07/12/1996; 5) Agreement on the Basis for the Legal Integration of Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) 12/12/1996; 6) Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace. 29/12/1996; 7) Agreement on the Implementation, Compliance and Verification Timetable for the Peace Agreements. 29/12/1996. However, it ought to be noted that often the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples is often also considered to be included when spoken of the Peace Accords of 1996, despite the fact that this agreement was concluded a year earlier in 1995. The reason it is often assumed to be included when spoken of, is because it represented a unique breakthrough for indigenous peoples considering the historical record of discrimination, exclusion and oppression. It was in this agreement that it was also determined that education would be a major catalyst in ensuring better treatment in the future, and an

equalizer with respect to ladinos, as it would provide them with the chance of bettering themselves, and moving between social classes.⁶⁸

Social Tension and Class Division

Class division in Guatemalan society is not only based on the division between a small rich elite, comprised of ladino individuals, an incipient middle class comprised of mainly ladinos also, and a large predominantly indigenous lower class, located in the rural areas,⁶⁹ it is also largely based on the historical discriminatory division between ladino and indigenous. The limited possibility for mobility through education and consequent occupation is very much connected to this second type of division. Apart from my observations regarding the poor quality and availability of education to the lower class in rural areas, even if someone of indigenous descent is well educated, the likelihood of this individual obtaining a job in his respective field is low due to persistent discrimination. Guatemala continues to be incredibly polarized, although it has not been recorded in a statistical study, it is omnipresent. Neighbourhoods are either predominantly, if not exclusively, inhabited by ladino's or indigenous, same is true for schools, universities, companies, sport-clubs, and churches. This list is not exhaustive, as it merely includes those places in which I have personally experienced such divisions.

Ladino's, in my experience, do not wish to be associated with having indigenous heritage, nor with indigenous peoples in general. Wearing traditional clothing, such as I have, was frowned upon, as well as interacting with indigenous peoples at social encounters. Such behaviour of continuing exclusion, facilitates the preservation of the polarization⁷⁰ of Guatemalan society. One of my main gatekeepers in my research, who for purposes of protection of identity, I will call Juan, has shared the experiences of many communities members with me. In his position he deals with many indigenous peoples as he often provides support, whether educational, technical, or financial, to those pursuing education past primary

⁶⁸ Government of the Republic of Guatemala and Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, "Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples," ed. United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Security Council (1995), 9.

⁶⁹ Guillermo Díaz, "Social Stratification and Mobility in Guatemala," *CEPAL review* 107 (2012): 32.

⁷⁰ Author's note: This thesis specifically uses the term polarization, as it was polarization that the CEH rapport established, not segregation. This is not to say segregation might not be present also, however the observation and establishment of this, was not the focus of this thesis.

level, and has been witness to many of such discriminatory events in the process. Because of the continuation of such exclusionary attitudes, there is much suspicion and distrust from indigenous peoples towards ladino's. Pinpointing the reasons for the dislike, and sometimes full on discrimination of indigenous people by ladino's, would be a study in itself, however my main guess after having spent much time as part of this minority elite, it is their apprehension towards losing their privileged position, being powerful, rich that drives them to preserve it.

Guatemalan Educational Reforms

In order to engage in the discussion regarding the results and consequences of the 1998 educational reform, that I have concluded from my individual research, let me first shortly reflect on the observations already made in academic literature. Although there are some articles and books that address Guatemalan education with respect to the Peace Accords and the peace building process in general, in many cases they do not sufficiently regard detail for their analysis to be of significance.⁷¹ The reason for always mentioning the year 1998 when referring to the educational reform, is that technically there has been more than one reform. It depends on legal definitions and terminology whether you can consider both educational reforms as a 'reform', as one is in line with the Peace Accords, and the other, the PRONADE programme is not, however the level of implementation between the two different reforms is unmistakably clear. The reason I have chosen to conduct my research looking at the 1998 educational reform, is because this reform, unlike the earlier one, adheres to the requirements set out in the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (AIRIP). In order to understand the fundamental difference between the two reforms I will shortly discuss the function and purpose of each proposal, and the role and function of the parties that constructed and supported them.

⁷¹ Michelle J. Bellino, *Youth in Postwar Guatemala: Education and Civic Identity in Transition* (New Brunswick, Camden, Newark, London and New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2017).; Regina Cortina, *The Education of Indigenous Citizens in Latin America, Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2014).; Vivian Estrada, "Education in Ixim Ulew (Guatemala): Maya Indigenous Knowledge and Building New Citizens," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 35, no. 1 (2012).; Luis López, "Keys to Indigenous Youth and Adult Education in Latin America: Lessons Learned in the Pursuit of Social Literacy," *Tertium Comparationis* 19, no. 2 (2013).; Walter E. Little, Walter E. Little, and Timothy J. Smith, *Mayas in Postwar Guatemala : Harvest of Violence Revisited*, (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009).

With the signing of the Peace Accords two commissions were called into life by the government. The first of which was responsible for drawing up the draft of the educational reform that the Peace Accords demanded, titled the Parity Commission for Educational Reform (), and the second was the Consultative Commission for Educational Reform (CCRE), which had the task of overseeing the realization and implementation of the Educational Reform, once this had been drafted.⁷² COPARE was made up of an equal amount of indigenous representatives, as well as delegates of the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and in the process of establishing the educational reform draft, it invited community based, and civil society, organizations to present proposals, ideas or requests for change to the previous educational system. This process took two years, and in 1998 the resulting Educational Reform was presented to President Arzu, and subsequently handed over to the CCRE for implementation.⁷³ This is the educational reform whose results I will look at in this research.

PRONADE: The Other Educational Reform

During the same period as the establishment of the COPARE and the CCRE, another programme was being developed, without the participation of the two commissions, funded by the World bank, and the KfW German Development Bank, and supported by the government. This programme promoting self-managed schools, called PRONADE, was signed in 1997, and in this year the already lacking support from government and MINEDUC for COPARE and CCE diminished further, to the point where MINEDUC obstructed implementation of the 1998 Education Reform, and limited the CCRE tasks and responsibilities to assessment and advice only.⁷⁴ The exclusion of the commissions in the drafting and implementation of this programme, was only a small precursor of what was yet to come. Although PRONADE's target was providing education to the poorest in the most rural areas, thus by extension predominantly indigenous peoples, the manner in which it was executed did not have their wellbeing in mind,

⁷² Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 389-90.

⁷³ COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runukík Jun Káká Tjonik*.

⁷⁴ Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 390.

and had harmful consequences. Meanwhile, the continuing existence of the CCRE and the COPARE was used by the government to legitimize their plans and actions.⁷⁵

PRONADE was designed to address the low enrolment rates in primary and secondary education, which were a result of the armed conflict: enrolment lowered to 65% in primary, and 17% in secondary, and overall literacy reached 45%; literacy exclusively among the indigenous population barely reached 28%, and school attendance averaged 1,8 years for men, and 0,9 years for women.⁷⁶ The process of PRONADE's inception excluded the Assembly of Civil Society (ASC) any other civil society organization, the CCRE and the COPARE, and the teacher's unions. The programme, approved by MINEDUC, operates on a system of self-managed schools, entirely separate from public education, where administration lies with the responsibility of the parents. Although it gives the schools and those running it, a great deal of liberty to include elements in the curriculum that they deem important, in practice the low budget and the burden on the parents, do not result in a school that is capable of meeting the requirements set out in the AIRIP. The parents are responsible for: "the acquisition and the maintenance of the building, for the administration, for the hiring, firing, payment and control of teachers, the meetings with the ISE supervisors, the buying of the food, and for organising the distribution, drawing up the accounts ... present all documentation at the departmental ISE."⁷⁷ The parents are not payed, and the finances they receive to complete all responsibilities as listed above, are so minimal, the teachers indicate to rather be working in public education because of the difference in wages, leading to high turnover and inexperienced staff, the teaching materials are lacking or outdated, the often already malnourished children are hungry during school hours causing difficulty with concentration, and if there are multiple PRONADE institutions in the vicinity, they often end up competing over the scarce resources for either building materials or even staff, causing discord among indigenous communities themselves, the combination of which makes the parents vulnerable to corruption.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ D. Cojtí Cuxil, "Educational Reform in Guatemala: Lessons from Negotiations between Indigenous Civil Societ and the State.," in *Multiculturalism in Latin America: Indigenous Rigts, Diverist, and Democracy*, ed. R. Sieder (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

⁷⁶ Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 387.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 393.

⁷⁸ E. Gropello Di, "A Comparative Analysis of School-Based Management in Central America," in *World Bank Working Paper* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006).; Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and

The lack of consistent materials, and the fact that it operates entirely separate from the public education system, which means they don't have a national curriculum to adhere to, makes it unclear what the students actually learn at each individual PRONADE school. Although many of the teachers are indigenous, they do not have the skill, experience or material to teach a bilingual programme involving Mayan tradition and culture as indicated by the AIRIP, nor is the quality of the other subjects guaranteed. However, PRONADE represents a larger problem than the lack of quality education, it is a mechanism that revives the historic 'oppressor – oppressed' dynamic. As Poppema observes: "There are no structures of representation and no possibilities to articulate discontent, let alone to influence politics. It implements an obedient and technocratic form of participation, keeping parents busy while retaining them in a subordinate position. At the same time it does serve as a mechanism to control and mitigate social discontent through the provision of a minimum of education-like activity."⁷⁹ The KfW German Development Bank, financially supporting the PRONADE programme, goes so far as to suggest that the poor indigenous peoples constitute conflict potential, making a full circle back to the criminalisation policies that were common practice before and during the armed conflict,⁸⁰ despite the fact the indigenous peoples have been recognized as being predominantly the victim during the conflict.

Therefore, the PRONADE educational reform has incredibly harmful effects, not only regarding the level of education it produces, as it does not provide the opportunity for bettering one's life, but because of what it appears to present politically. Because of the PRONADE programme, the government can claim to have passed an educational reform that increased attendance in prevocational education in indigenous and rural areas, and that it is officially on track for the Millennium Development Goals.⁸¹ Which is subsequently picked up in research regarding improvement of education, often based on attendance rates, presenting a misleading

Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 393-96.

⁷⁹ "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 395. Andrea Cornwall and Karen Brock, "What Do Buzzwords Do for Development Policy? A Critical Look at 'Participation', 'Empowerment' and 'Poverty Reduction'," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 7 (2005).

⁸⁰ Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 395.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 393, 98.

and fundamentally incorrect image of the situation in Guatemala.⁸² The consequences and effects of the PRONADE educational reform have been studied and recorded, and concluded to be far from positive. However, as previously stated, this programme took place simultaneously and separately from public education, as well as private education, and in these 'non-PRONADE' institutions the question remains whether developments have taken place based on the 1998 educational reform, despite the restrictions placed on CCRE, the implementation commission.

The 1998 Educational Reform

The 1998 educational reform was produced by the COPARE, the commission brought to life by the Peace Accords. This educational reform took into account requirements as set out in the AIRIP and the 1996 Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation (ASEAAS), the last of which emphasizes how education ought to be the tool for economic equality. The 1998 educational reform, a document containing approximately 140 pages of guidelines and suggestions, in short, seeks for future education to eradicate all forms of discrimination, strengthen the cultural identity of indigenous people, incorporate Mayan culture and traditions in the curriculum, including the respective Mayan languages, and intends to do so through cooperation with pre-existing organizations such as the National Council for Maya Education (CNEM), the Coalition of Organizations of the Mayan People of Guatemala (COPMAGUA) and Maya community schools.⁸³ The 1998 educational reform also established a National Directorate for Bilingual Education (DIGEBI) which has produced a number of materials for bilingual teaching programmes, and opportunities for training courses for teachers. However, DIGEBI last passed a resolution in congress in 2008,⁸⁴ and has not appeared to be active since.⁸⁵ Apart from DIGEBI, a law was passed in 2003 on National Languages

⁸² Bellino, *Youth in Postwar Guatemala: Education and Civic Identity in Transition.*; Cortina, *The Education of Indigenous Citizens in Latin America.*; Estrada, "Education in Ixim Ulew (Guatemala): Maya Indigenous Knowledge and Building New Citizens."

⁸³ COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runuk'ik Jun K'ak' T'ijonik.*; Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 396.

⁸⁴ DIGEBI, "Punto Resolutivo Numero 4-2008," Congreso de la Republica de Guatemala <http://www.mineduc.gov.gt/DIGEBI/documents/leyes/04-2008.pdf>.

⁸⁵ "Dirección General De Educación Bilingüe Intercultural," <http://www.mineduc.gov.gt/DIGEBI/index.html>.

recognizing indigenous languages and cultures in the curriculum, and a governmental agreement was established on the generalization of bilingual and multicultural education.⁸⁶

What has come of the implementation and adherence to the 1998 education reform since these developments, is largely unknown, or at the least, largely undocumented. Statistics from the World Bank or government are not representative, firstly because they constitute the sponsors of PRONADE which means they are not an objective party, secondly, they do not present to what degree the curriculum in schools adheres to the requirements set out in the AIRIP. The number of schools that were in operation, adhering to the 1998 educational reform and the consequent documents and guidelines as provided by DIGEBI, predominantly Mayan schools, has greatly diminished around the year 2006.⁸⁷ They do not receive government support, financial or otherwise, and international funding started to dry up. Which leaves the task of realizing the AIRIP and the 1998 educational reform to the schools of both public and private education, and initiatives outside the PRONADE context. It is these schools that I have looked at in my research, and it is these that I will now discuss.

⁸⁶ Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 397.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 396.

Chapter 4: Observations and Outcomes in Private and Public

Education

Implementation of, or adherence to, the educational reform, cannot be concluded from the adaptation of a curriculum alone. The official recognition of a concept in a document, does not guarantee its success, or its real life application. Even when it is assured that a topic will be addressed in class, it is highly dependent on the manner in which this happens, and the focus with which it is executed, what the final understanding of said topic will be. The participant observation, and interview information that will be discussed here, will examine the involvement of the key elements of the educational reform in day to day education, as well as to what extent this has turned the education programme into one of peace education, both in public and private school, respectively. The key elements of the educational reform concern the inclusion of Mayan languages, Mayan tradition and culture, as well as the equal provision and distribution of this education to both indigenous and ladino students. Further aspects relevant to the observation, regarding whether or not the programme can be considered to contribute to peace education, include the manner in which their armed conflict is discussed, the teaching methods, the teacher student relationship, and any other factor of influence to the quality of education itself as well as the student's ability to learn. Firstly, I will compare the observations in private and public education with respect to the aforementioned aspects. Secondly, I will discuss these aspects taking into account the influence of location and the factor of the composition of the student with respect to whether they are predominantly indigenous or ladino.

Private Education

For the sake of protection of the identity of my interviewees, as well as that of the school as a whole, I will not share the name or location of the private institute at which I have conducted participant observation for several days, as well as conducted a number of interviews. That being said, let me start by giving a short overview of how my days progressed. The gatekeeper who provided me access to this school, had brought me directly into contact with the school director, and it was the school director who expected and received me at my first day there. School starts at 07.00 in the morning, and this is when I would be present also. After having provided identification and the name of who was to receive me, the gates opened and I got my first view of the grounds. Like any private school, community or club in the capital,

the building and grounds were surrounded by massive 4 meters high, stone walls denying any access, physical or visual. Once inside, security further directed the way to the administration building where the director awaited me, as this building had additional security, which was only passed if a visitor was picked up by his host. After exchanging pleasantries, I was asked what kind of classes I wished to attend, and a schedule was drawn up with social studies classes, including history, philosophy, political studies, and a class that would translate to global studies. The first classes would start at 07.00 in the morning, and the last would end at 17.00. The gaps in my schedule between classes, were enthusiastically filled up by the director when I mentioned I would like to interview a few teachers next to the interview with the director personally. The intended few I had in mind, quickly turned into 4 each day, and without the possibility to decline, considering the cultural and diplomatic setting, I gracefully accepted my schedule of classes and interviews for the remainder of the week.

Classes: Content and Material

My initial intention was to only attend classes at secondary level, as this level would generally receive more advanced and detailed information, specifically bearing in mind more complex and delicate subjects such as the civil war. However, being aware of the limited access to public education at secondary level in public schools, specifically in rural areas, I wanted to obtain an overview of the primary level also, which included of course, that at private education. In the observations I will discuss here, I will not differentiate between the two, as it is not necessary. Regarding the content of the classes, as well as the materials provided, primary and secondary education did not differ greatly from one-another. The teachers had books from which they taught, and the children received all materials regarding the topic of that respective class online or in printed handouts. However, in both primary as well as secondary levels, the difference between the subject material, and the lessons learned, where in some cases quite substantial. I will illustrate this difference with some examples observed in my days at the school.

The topic of one of the history classes I attended, first year of secondary education,⁸⁸ approximately age 12 to 13, the topic was the colonialization of Guatemala. The materials

⁸⁸ Authors note: The Guatemalan education system does not speak of 'secundaria' or secondary education, instead it divides this period (what we would call secondary education) into 'basico' and 'bachillerato'. Basico is from approximately age 12 to 15, and Bachillerato is approximately from age 15 till 18. Bachillerato is not comparable to 'bachelors' as we know and use it in a Western context. It is the second part of their 'secondary

distributed spoke of colonialization, however the teacher spoke of colonization. The first, colonialization, would address the subjugation of a population by colonists in a country that is not their own. The second however, colonization, which was the concept taught, addressed the process of the establishment of a colony in a foreign land. It is not merely a matter of terminology, the oppression of the Guatemalan population was largely ignored. The material that was handed out, acknowledged their presence and subsequent role as labourers without pay on plantations, however the video that was shown in class regarding the topic depicted them in their traditional clothes, happily smiling, and excited when given new tools (supposedly unknown to them) with which to work at the plantation. No attention was drawn to the fact that their labour constituted slavery and that they were exploited and oppressed.

In a global studies class I attended, third year of secondary education, approximately age 15 to 16, topics such as globalization and increased interconnectedness on an international scale, were discussed. The class of that day concerned the post armed conflict period of Guatemala in comparison to that of Germany. The question that was asked by the teacher was whether the students could explain why, with respect to the fact that they both have suffered through a war, that has cost them a great deal of lives and financial resources, Germany is now a strong state both politically as well as economically, and Guatemala is not. The answer given by students and teacher alike, was focussed on market strategies, productivity rates and the necessity of tailoring education to produce individuals with the skills required as indicated by market demands.

The fact that the question itself was based on a false premise, that post armed conflict Germany and post armed conflict Guatemala are the same, was not addressed. Nor did anyone seem to notice that the nature of the conflict in Guatemala and that involving Germany was very different. After the class had ended, in conversation with the teacher, I was told that the underlying thought of this approach was, that both the Guatemalan state and the German state were responsible for many of deaths and human rights violations, hence the comparison. It did not seem to occur to this teacher however, that the German path, including the payment of reparations, acknowledging guilt, numerous trials, and the significant re-structuring of their society, has been substantially different from Guatemala. Nor was it considered, that the German post-war period started 50 years before theirs. None of these objections however would

education', which is required if you wish to attend university and do a bachelors programme. Because this part is the prerequisite for the bachelors programme, it is now commonly referred to a 'bachillerato'.

make the comparison between Guatemala and Germany invalid, if only these were the differences that were discussed. Topics of the nature of the conflict, and the peace building elements that followed and which were successful ought to at least be included, if it is not the main focus of the class. Instead the approach taken was one of economic gain, demonstrating a vast difference between the material provided and the lessons taught in class. I can provide more examples of the extreme discrepancies between the material used and the message that is conveyed in class, however let it suffice to say that this discrepancy was presented throughout, although perhaps not always as unmistakably clear as in these two cases.

Student-Teacher Relation and Class focus

The relevance of the student-teacher relationship is demonstrated in the approach to learning in class, and the consequent results. Bearing in mind the importance of independent thought, self-agency and critical consciousness as identified in peace education theory, the level of participation a teacher allows for, or invites in his students can be a great indicator of these elements. Expecting to observe great demonstrations of independent or critical thought in the moment that you are present is by definition unrealistic. My presence remains a novelty, and teachers informed me on separate occasions that it might cause the students to be more shy than usual. I am not in the school long enough for this effect to subside, and on the occasion they do speak in class in my presence, which did happen in most classes, it is difficult to judge in that moment to what extent this thought or comment was independent or even critical. The student-teacher relationship contributes to the observation whether or not the possibility for such participation allowing for independent thought is present.

Traditional education approaches to education involved the teachers narrating while the students took notes and accepted his knowledge to be fact. The dynamic at this private school was substantially different, and gave every indication for the student to have the liberty to question the teacher. In both primary as well as secondary education, teacher would ask students questions requiring interpretation and personal opinion regarding the subject matter. Most teachers were addressed with ‘profe’, short for professor, or by their first name. Depending on the age of the students the manner in which they asked for attention, i.e. by raising their hand, became less and less formal. In turn, most teachers knew all their students by name, and appeared aware of each individuals contribution during class. If tasks didn’t concern oral participation, however written assignments during the class, the teacher would walk around with a stamp, approving each student’s work individually. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the

earlier accounts of selective approaches to historical detail (colonialism), or current society needs (economic focus), it ought to be considered whether the students are truly taught to be critical. They certainly appear to have the opportunity to question the teacher (which they repeatedly do when assigned ‘too much’ homework), and in philosophy classes I attended it was stressed that an individual’s statements are often biased because of his philosophical, political or religious conviction. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that they are encouraged to think critical of information that is provided by them from a source that falls within their own philosophical, political and religious conviction. Which would mean that these students do not develop a critical consciousness, merely a deep suspicion of information provided by sources that do not align with their own views.

Remaining Factors of Influence: Finance and Polarization

Although fairly self-evident, it ought to be stated that due to the private nature of this school, it does not suffer from financial difficulty. The high fee demanded at the start of each school year covers expenses for all elements one can imagine to be necessary at a school, such as the teaching materials provided in class (including computers and projection screens in every room), equipment required for natural sciences (chemistry lab, microscope etc.), the building and grounds themselves including maintenance, the furniture, the decoration (most classrooms were extensively decorated with consideration towards the age group using the room), bathroom facilities with running water, sportsgrounds, items for entertainment such as games and toys, and the staff one could desire to keep it running. However, this is not the only costs of the parent, because, every child brings a backpack and a cooler bag to school with them. Usually both match, and are themed with the latest trends (Disney princesses from Frozen etc.) they are filled with notebooks, pencil cases, mobile phones, headphones and such, while the cooler bag is filled with lunch and snacks for the multiple breaks they receive during their school day. The students do not lack any basic needs, and are able to focus all attention on the classes, although more often than not, much time and energy is spent on their smartphones.

However, this is not true for all students of this private school. During the interviews I learned several important previously undiscovered facts about the school. First, they have designed their own competency guide based on their curriculum which has included all the subjects indicated in the national curriculum, however they expanded the range a bit further. They offer classes with an international focus, involving topics that would prepare students to take a university education in whichever direction they chose, in Guatemala or abroad, for

example with classes focussed on sustainable development or climate change. The competency guide however, also includes many arbitrary elements such as the competency of moral values among which love and faith, something for which students are in fact evaluated at the end of the year. The second thing I learned, was that the students of the school are divided in two groups: those who attend school in the morning, and those who attend in the afternoon. The morning group are students who pay the full fee and who have attended classes at the school since the very first year. The afternoon group consists of students who either were entered through scholarship programme, international funding, or who have gone to school on an intermittent basis, depending on the financial situation of their parents at the time. Once made aware of the different background of these students, it was noticeably how despite the larger class sizes in the afternoon, the student were more quiet, attentive and hardworking. None of the students played with their smartphones, whether if this was due to the lack of possession or due to respect for the class and teacher I do not know, however the atmosphere was different. Students were eager to practice their language skills with me, did not complain about the amount of homework that was assigned, and all appeared to have come to class equally prepared.

The more worrying observation however, was the manner in which they were polarized by the staff with respect to the morning group. Although none of my interview questions as set in my interview guide concerned this topic specifically, many teachers brought it up when confronted with the question regarding whether or not, in their opinion, there was equal provision and access to quality education for both indigenous and ladino students alike. The term indigenous was often automatically equated with poor, and in this context, they would bring up the 'poor students' who attended school in the afternoon. Despite the fact that the teachers recognized they were hardworking, they did not seem to notice the manner in which they divided the classes. After being questioned about the division, teachers generally answered it was better for the students, as they did not expect them to mix well, taken into account their attitudes toward learning. The director, and other administrative and legislative staff indicated however, that school in the morning was more productive for the students, and hence more desired by the parents paying the full amount. There was no room for further discussion on this matter as the subject was subtly but firmly changed, however the message was clear. Those with greater financial capability have greater influence.

Finally, it ought to be noted that from the beginning the director made it clear what a shame it was I missed the semester of classes on the topic of the indigenous peoples. Although I was not able to gain access to any of their teaching material on the subject, I was told in detail about their new approach, both by the director as well as several teachers when asked about the implementation of the 1998 educational reform and the inclusion of its elements in their school. Apart from discussing the Mayan languages, culture and religion in class, as of three years they now also visited Mayan villages in indigenous areas where students were assigned, in pairs of two, to a family with kids their age to experience life in their shoes. For a week they would go to their schools, help out with manual agricultural labour if the child their age would do so normally, and learn the value of the privileges they enjoy at home. However, the students would not stay over nor eat with the family, accommodation was arranged for in the nearest hotel in the area, due to consideration of hygiene and health risks. When I inquired as to how the students react when they are told they will not eat or sleep there due to health risks, I was informed that the class was simply told indigenous people are used to it

It must be acknowledged that this private school appears well rounded on paper, as they, include the elements of the 1998 educational reform in their curriculum, not only speaking of Mayan culture and tradition but also visiting the rural areas, speak of the Guatemalan war in history class, discuss the post armed conflict period, and provide room for participation by students in class, just to name a few examples. In practice however, the tendency towards polarization is undeniable, and breaks through in almost every subject discussed, and even in the structure of the school itself. Despite the fact that all materials are present, and students enjoy education by teacher who are well-educated themselves and have access to the latest teaching materials, the quality of this institute would not be very high if it is kept to peace education standards, which will be further discussed in the analysis chapter.

Public Education

Contrary to private education, for a general understanding of public education I had to visit multiple schools, rather than just one. Although, naturally, there are differences between private schools, they are relatively homogenous due to the financial security, which also means it has a specific target group. The financial security ensuring the availability of materials, staff and facilities, combined with a specific target group, found in specific areas ensures its homogeneity. For public schools this is not the case. Private schools provide education predominantly for the small rich ladino elite, the same elite that continues to hold much of the

power in the country. The remainder of the population depends on public education or PRONADE schools. This target group is heterogenous, containing both middle class, as well as lower class, both ladino and indigenous students, and are located throughout the country. In the discussion of these different public schools I will adhere to the outline as described above, firstly addressing the content and material in class, secondly discussing the teacher-student relation and the class focus, followed by all other relevant factors of influence. The influence of the location of the school, and the composition of its students will be addressed afterwards in a separate sub-section of this chapter.

The manner in which I was received at the public schools was very similar to that of the private school. In all scenarios I was received by the director, of the highest placed representative present at the school at the time of my arrival. Schedules for my classes of interest and interviews were drawn up, and I was taken for a tour of the school and grounds. Although the building and grounds would be significantly smaller, despite a similar or larger number of students, the security in place would be equally high, if not stricter. School would start as early as 07.00 or 08.00 in the morning, and last until 16.00 in the afternoon, with the latest classes being primarily those of the older students, the last years of secondary education. At none of the public schools were morning and afternoon classes divided into two student groups as we saw at the private school, all were merely the same teachers having to teach different levels of classes consecutively. With a significantly smaller amount of staff compared to those at the private school, the time required to teach all students in one day is simply more, hence the equally long school days. As I had multiple public schools to visit, I would stay less days at each school, and at some I would only attend one day. Nevertheless, due to the long hours I would still be able to attend a wide range of classes as well as conduct a number of interviews.

Classes: Content and Material

The subjects of the classes were largely based on the national curriculum, despite the fact that the Currículo Nacional Base (CNB) is designed only for primary and the first part of secondary education, and that it largely exists of guidelines rather than specific subjects as to what a course ought to be or contain.⁸⁹ Thus, the presence of courses such as political science

⁸⁹ Dirección General de Currículo Ministerio de Educación, "Currículo Nacional Base," http://www.mineduc.gob.gt/DIGECUR/?p=CNB.asp&t=Currículo_Nacional_Base_CNB.

or social studies is due to the CNB, however the content of such a course is dependent on the material that each individual public school is able to get access to. This means that the level of education, or the quality of the classes themselves, fluctuated immensely. For example, one of the classes I attended concerned political science, and the subject that day was trias politica, its definition and which governmental institutions represent which branch in Guatemala. The teacher appeared to be teaching without a book, and students were taking notes during class, the important parts were dictated in order for the students to correctly write down the information given. Unfortunately, the fact that the three branches of the trias politica are currently not as separate as they ought to be, was not discussed. In conversation with the teacher after the class had ended, I learned that he was aware that in Guatemala the three branches were not functioning as they should, however he explained he did not want the children to get 'confused'.

The lack of the presence of books in class seemed to be universal regardless the subject, which was compensated for by the creativity of the teachers. For example, in one of the history classes in which all the president were listed, the teacher got out his wallet and handed around the different banknotes to show the faces of the president to the children as there was no book, computer or projector to do so. There was however, a small library, which coincidentally was opened on the same day that I was visiting the school. The inauguration of the library involved a nun, because the school was financed by a Christian international organization as is common, an administrative member of said organization, the school director, several teachers and a group of children of all ages. Each contributed to the ceremony, either by giving a speech, leading the audience in prayer, or in the case of the children, by singing the school song. The ceremony was concluded with cake, and after the crowd had subsided I was shown around in the library. I was told the library was constructed with the purpose to invite student to do more individual learning, and to provide extra materials for teacher if they wanted to expand, adapt or update the content of their classes. Taking into account my area of interest, subjects that related to peace education, such as social studies, history classes etc., they showed me specifically this section of the library. Although it was of course a commendable effort, as both the teachers as well as several directors at different school had told me of the difficulty of acquiring teaching material, I am not certain as to what extent the ultimate result contributed to the educational development of the students. Particularly the social studies section appeared to be predominantly dated from the 1960's and the 1970's. The book that was especially shown to

me on social integration of different ethnic groups in society was dated from 1957. Further inquiry as to whether these books were to function as a historical perspective on the subject, told me that this was not the case. Despite the fact that most books appeared to be between 40 and 50 years old, they were meant as material for both research as well as class content. A quick scan of the other sections, as this library was the size of a small classroom and each section did not take up more than one or two bookcases, determined that most books were outdated, if not by 40 years, at least by 20 or 10. Regardless whether the subject would relate to social sciences or natural sciences, the new library, would not be able to provide new information for this particular public school.

The situation was not quite as drastic at all public schools as it was at this one, however despite there being better case, there were also worse. The best case scenario I encountered were less programmes based on books which the school had in their possession which were actually written for consecutive years of the same subject, expanding a student's knowledge by building on concepts learned. However, even in these cases there was only one copy available, it was last updated 8 years ago, and teachers had to photocopy the chapters needed in order to share the material. Due to limited financial resources, these photocopies were saved also so that they could be used again. The worst case scenario was a public school where only a few, or in some subjects, only one book was available, and from this material all years of primary education had to be taught, which was supplemented only by the knowledge of the teachers themselves. This resulted in interesting counterfactual conversations I had with certain primary school teachers. In one case, the response to the question where I was from, was a little different than usual. The conversation went along the lines as this: "The Netherlands? Aaah yess. The Netherlands, that is Belgium, Holland, Germany, Luxembourg and Denmark. Which part are you from?" Naturally I attempted to explain that The Netherlands did not include all these countries, unfortunately my efforts were in vain. Questions regarding the plurality of the name, consequent recounts of the establishment of The Netherlands and a summary of the 500 years of history since, left the teacher unconvinced. The only progress I made, was that he yielded Denmark was part of Scandinavia, not The Netherlands, but Germany, Luxembourg and Belgium definitely were.

In other cases, books were available, so much so that a second building was being constructed in order to establish a small library. Regrettably, there was no evidence that these books were used to construct class content. For example, students in their last year of secondary

education, were taught a biology class on the subject of healthy diet for an individual that engages in excessive amounts of exercise. Instead of speaking of the need for certain fats, sugars or carbohydrates, they were asked to glue pictures of the right type of foods on a poster. This resulted in poster filled with fruits, vegetables, rice, pasta or potato based dishes, and even some candy bars as they argued that sportsmen need a lot of energy, and sometimes deserve a reward also. The teacher in this scenario elaborated that the focus of this class was not the number of carbohydrates or fats, as the manner in which they acquired their food and consumed it would not have this information on the packaging in any case. It was stressed that they attempted to convey the message that people should have a wide variety in their diet, and not only consume maize or corn based products. My questions regarding whether the example of a sportsmen in that case was the best strategy to reach that result, or if perhaps knowing the reason why variety is important would be helpful, were disregarded. This was not unique for this school, although I would often be asked to tell about topics they were not familiar with, such as, information about The Netherlands, languages, European history, and Western television, just to name a few, topics that the educators would teach themselves, would not be open to discussion. My inquiries regarding the content or material, were generally at all public schools (as well as the private one, as demonstrated in the examples) dismissed as ignorance.

There was a silver lining however, as at some schools there were a number of teachers who were indigenous, and they taught both indigenous language as well as indigenous culture and religion to their students. Because this did not fall under the subjects of any of the courses as indicated by the CNB, this teacher in question taught after hours, during spare unpaid time, and despite the fact that attendance by the students was not compulsory, it was purely voluntary, the class was always full. Unfortunately, this initiative hinged entirely on the personal knowledge and voluntary sacrifice of time of this teacher in question, which means replication of such results would require an individual of equal dedication and skill. The first can be found, the second however, appears more difficult as I am yet to encounter the educational path that will set you on track for becoming an indigenous studies teacher.

[Student-Teacher Relation and Class Focus](#)

Bearing in mind the dismissal, and the manner in which my inquiries and questions were disregarded, or simply ignored in the conversation, it is perhaps not surprising that I did not encounter any instances of critical inquiry by the students, nor did there appear to be the possibility for such. Teachers definitely appeared open to questions, however any and all

questions I observed concerned factual questions about content that either had not yet been discussed, or remained unclear despite the teacher's explanation. This did not appear to be caused by a negative student-teacher relation, rather the opposite of such. The financial struggle of all the public schools I visited, was experienced as much by the teachers as it was by the students. Not all students were able to afford their own uniforms or notebooks, and would require financial aid, or depend on charity. It is common knowledge among the students that the same is largely true for the acquirement of many of their materials, including those for teaching. This common understanding, and the shared experience of the struggle to find finances in order to afford your education appeared to have a positive effect on the student-teacher relation. In the majority of the public schools I attended, teachers did not only know they students name, but they would know their history and personal or family circumstances as well. In many cases, attending school at all is not a given, and this is reflected not only in the joy of the student, but also that of the teacher that each individual is there. This attitude of mutual respect and gratitude results in an attentive class where the teacher does not have to remind them to pay attention, and most students appear eager to participate when the class is asked questions. The students were collectively well behaved, rising every time the teacher, or the director and I would enter to wish us good morning and wait for permission to re-take their seats. Initially this gave me the impression that perhaps the school or at least the classes were strictly run, and depended on a structure based on the adherence to rules, however this was not the case. Even in the most relaxed classes, where the teacher would be addressed by his or her first name, and the students and teacher would joke back and forth, they would still rise upon entry to bid him or her a good morning. Nevertheless, it left an uneasy feeling regarding the fact that both students and teacher adhere to rules of formality that do not represent or match the level of formality that truly takes place in the classroom, merely adhering to rule because 'that is how is has always been done'.

As previously stated, the environments I experienced in the different schools, did not give the impression they would invite much critical inquiry or consciousness. Participation on the other hand, was indeed encouraged, and appeared to be a method of making sure the student had both heard and understood the content of the class that was just given. Unfortunately, this appeared to be the extent of the education, memorizing and understanding. Although granted, this is one step further than mere memorization, it still lacks the step of application, in which ideally speaking they learn how to apply knowledge learned in school, to their everyday lives.

Even though this often missing step of application has been noted by some of the teachers, their approaches to remedying it are not always successful. It is likely that due to inexperience with this step in their own education, they misinterpret the concept of ‘application’ to mean that classroom content has to match the student’s current needs. This is how one school for example, skipped the chapter of statistics in their math classes, as it was not likely that the student would ever need them. Instead, they focussed on mathematical elements to construction, as it was most likely that these students would end up building their own houses. The idea that education is in place to allow students to not only learn the essentials, but improve their quality of life, be able to take advantage of opportunities, and be able to obtain a profession that is more advanced than the profession their parents practiced, is an idea that has been acknowledged, but has not quite yet sunken in. Many of the current practices still hint at the ‘old ways’, the manner in which education was constructed and taught during the period in which indigenous peoples were still excluded and oppressed. An attitude in which they feel they ought to be grateful for everything they get, even if that is insufficient funding, or a teacher that is not capable of teaching an indigenous language, or a building with toilets that do not have running water. The focus of the classes does not yet lie with the empowerment of students to further themselves in life through education, whether for purposes of being able to study and work in the field of their choice, or for purposes of learning about Mayan language and culture which has been passed primarily orally for the last decades. The priority of these classes often seem to be focussed on the right intention, however appears to get lost along the way when the teachers, directors or administrators try to deal with one obstacle after another, caused by financial troubles.

Remaining Factors of Influences: Financial Vulnerability

The main determining factors for the quality of education and subsequent observations regarding the inclusion of the educational reform with the intention of contributing to peace education, are the location and the composition of the students which revolves around whether they are predominantly indigenous or ladino. These factors however, will be discussed separately hereafter due to their significance. The remaining influence, which has already surfaced to a great extent throughout the discussion of public education, is finance. As previously stated in the discussion of the sample selection, public schools are technically financed by the State, however largely depend on local contributions or aid from NGO’s. Such aid can present itself in many forms, however each form makes the school vulnerable in its decision making processes. A number of the schools I visited for example, were largely

financed by a Catholic non-profit organization. I conducted interviews with the vice-director of the organization, as well as with the directors and teachers at the schools in question. Although all parties individually assured me of the complete separation between the religious identity of the organization and the project they were funding, there would be no requirements or 'string attached' for the schools receiving funds. However, in practice there is prayer on a daily basis, there is consideration for faith and religion during major events for the school (the welcoming of a teacher, graduation etc.), and religious values are taught as if they are common general norms and values, that simply happen to be in line with majority of the 10 commandments. Religion might not be forcibly imposed upon the students, however the routine and practices set a certain example, one which might influence the students subconsciously. The subconscious effect of the process makes the situation more precarious as it means there is an influence that is not accounted for, and its possible harmful or helpful consequences will go unnoticed. Inviting such uncertainty into a public school, due to the urgent need for financial aid, just for the sake of providing the educational service for which the school has been established in the first place, is definitely not a positive influencing factor, nor does it resonate with any part of the education reform or peace education theory.

How harmful the influence or dependency on an international organization might be, a public school making due without is worse off. The public school without any form of financial aid other than the standard government financing, was not so much an educational institute as it was a day care centre. The class sizes in this school ranged from 60 children to 80 children, of which most were not in the same age group, or level of education. The building did not include bathroom facilities, and not all children were in possession of materials to make notes. I was told however, that this was not a problem, as there was very little for them to write down in any case. Most of the time was spent on doing a roll call to check who was present in class that day. Understandably, calling out 80 names will take up some time, however this was not the cause for the lengthy period of time this activity took. The largest issue was that the language predominantly spoken by the students was Poqomchí, one of the Mayan languages, and most spoke little to no Spanish. The teacher however, spoke Spanish or Kaqchikel, a Mayan language from a different area of Guatemalan, which does not resonate to Poqomchí in any way, which naturally led to a considerable communication issue. The teacher informed me after the class that the communication issue would have never taken place if it hadn't been for the AIRIP or the subsequent 1998 educational reform: 'after all, if they weren't required to include and allow

for class in indigenous languages, all parents would teach their children Spanish and everyone would be able to communicate with one another'. My concerns about some of the more substantial logical fallacies, such as the assumption that the parents speak Spanish, were once more disregarded as the ignorance of both an outsider as well as that of a woman. Another worrying factor however that ought to be observed here though, is the fact that a teacher had been assigned to a school in an area of which he did not speak the language. The assignment of teachers to public schools is done by MINEDUC, and it has been suggested to me by a number of my gatekeepers that this unlikely to be an accident. Apparently, there are more cases in which teachers will be assigned to public schools in areas of which they do not speak the language, in order to, if my gatekeepers are to be believed (among which the previously mentioned Juan), reduce the changes of the implementation of the educational reform, as well as the development of education in these areas in general. Which brings undeniable brings me to the discussion of the influence of the location of the school with respect to its quality regarding the involvement of the educational reform as well as the results of peace education.

Location Related Consequences and the Composition of the Students: Predominantly Indigenous or Ladino Children and Teachers.

The previously mentioned dichotomies of indigenous people v. ladino's, and the capital v. rural areas, are still very much relevant at the time of this research. The two are highly interrelated, as the rural areas are also the predominantly indigenously populated areas, and the capital is a predominantly ladino populated area. The two main reasons these are such strong influential factors, is the fact that financial capability and political power is largely divided among the same lines as the location and the composition of the population is. The small ladino elite in the capital possesses the largest part of the national wealth, and if they do not possess the actual political position in order to achieve certain goals, they can pull the rights string until they make it so. Guatemalan politics is known to be highly corrupted⁹⁰, and the elite in power has been considered to increasingly oppose the decisions made in the Peace Accords.⁹¹ The result of such division of wealth and power, and the disinclination regarding support of the

⁹⁰ INSERT REFERENCE

⁹¹ Poppema, "Guatemala, the Peace Accords and Education: A Post-Conflict Struggle for Equal Opportunities, Cultural Recognition and Participation in Education," 391.

indigenous people, is abuse of said power with subtle neglect and indifference demonstrated in public schools.⁹²

Schools in the Capital's Red Zones

Although I have mentioned the major dichotomy regarding location with respect to the capital versus the rural areas, however, within the capital there are significant differences also. The previously mentioned red zones, with their notoriously violent and criminal nature, only have public schools, most of which receive aid from international religious NGO's. Due to their location, literally inside the centre of areas that are considered to constitute the homes of crime rings, they receive little other funding as both the government as institutes fear too much money will not just disappear in criminal circles, it might actually make the school a target. Apart from the financial difficulties, the interviews have indicated that these schools face many challenges in dealing with the trauma's these children have experienced, or still experience on a continuing basis. Brutal violence and abuse are, as the teachers describe it, at the order of the day in these children's lives, which makes the role of the school all the more influencing, as this is to be a 'safe zone'. One of the main goals of the public schools I visited in red zones, is to show the children that there is also an alternative. Especially at one of the schools, the approach to this was a very practical one, where they constructed their own car repair shop. A mechanic who had recently lost his business due to a heist in which all his cars were taken, was invited to come work as a teacher at the school. They were not able to pay him a full salary, however if he brought all his materials, and if he managed to complete car repairs while teaching students, he could keep the money he made. Next to the workshop, was a hall filled with sewing machines, donated by the NGO, where students learned how to make, mend and repair cloths and other fabric based products. Both these classes were compulsory for all students, both boys as well as girls. Initially this led to protest from the parents, however as the director held firm on this position, protest subsided and it gradually became accepted.

Gender Roles and the Disadvantaged Position of Indigenous Women

This position of gender equality was relatively novel inside the capital, however outside the capital it would have been completely revolutionary. One of the biggest differences between

⁹² The abuse of such power by the elite is far less subtle in other areas of political issues, such as the active continuation of impunity through the passing of bills and law, on which I will not further elaborate considering it is not the focus of this thesis.

the public schools in the capital and outside, is the gender roles that are commonly accepted and taken for granted. In many public schools in rural areas at least two-thirds of the class would be male, and the fact that the girls would stay home to help out with domestic tasks was considered to be a cultural trade. One of the school directors told me that this was what it meant to accept local and indigenous culture (to let the girls stay home instead of study), whether the director personally agreed with it or not. In another school,⁹³ one of the teachers who also functioned as ‘deputy’ director, taking all the director tasks and responsibilities in case of absence, would actively try to include all youth in the surrounding communities. Being from the community himself he knew all the families and their position on both education as well as their thought on the necessity of girls receiving education. Some fathers he convinced to let the daughters go to school, with the exception of gym classes, others were more difficult. In one case he repeatedly tried to convince the father that she needed education for three years in a row, when I asked after how he changed the mind of a man that stubborn, he responded that he won a bet based on a drinking game, and the price he claimed was that the daughter was allowed to attend school. The fact that an agreement between men, arranged over a drinking game has more value, than three-years-worth of arguments on why a girl ought to attend school, describes the gender roles very visually.

It out to be mentioned here that most indigenous girls in the rural areas further away from cities and infrastructure, get married in their early teen age years. Although I have heard different numbers both in the interviews as well as in my observations and my stay with local families, it appears generally agreed that marital age for girls is considered to start as early as 12 or 13 years old, however more commonly would occur around the age of 15 or 16. It was emphasized by many that marriage at this age, was not necessarily part of their culture, but more a protection of the girls virtue with respect to the plantation owner. Many still work, or used to in the past, for plantation owners for very little money, or no pay at all. There are many land disputes, and often plantation owners ‘allow them to work’ on their plantation, on land which the indigenous people claim is theirs. They will work long hours in exchange for food or part of the crop, produce that belongs to the indigenous people by extension of the argument

⁹³ This school is neither a private nor a public school. It is funded by an individual originally from that community, who made a career outside Guatemala. It is completely free for all students, and adheres to the national curriculum. As it is located in a rural indigenous area, and struggles with finances like any other public school, it has been included in this category.

that the land is theirs also. In the past, and apparently still to some extent today, landowners would claim young women and girls they fancied for work in their household. Sometimes under the pretext of providing education, or sometimes without any pretence as their pleasure girls or 'plantation wives'. The rationale behind early marriage, was the protection of the girls. The question to what extent this is justification or an excuse for the continuance of an old practice is not for me to judge, the consequences for their education however, is.

Because of the young age at which they marry, they are not able to attend secondary education. Even if they get married at 16, which in these areas was clearly considered to be rather old to still get married, they do not have the time to finish or sometimes even start secondary education. Complete secondary education would finish at the age of 18, and generally start around the age of 12 or 13. The years leading up to the marriage however, are considered to be required for learning everything to run a household, as the women are responsible for all domestic tasks, and must know entire processes of preparing food. Not mere cooking as is known in Western societies, but the process of planting and harvesting the food also, and with plants such as maize there is an elaborate time consuming process to the preparation of it. The skills for a woman to make a good wife, and run a smooth household are not taught in school, and it is often considered unnecessary for her to be able to read and write more than just the basics, which she would have already learned in primary school. This reasoning is questioned by very few people.

Some women I spoke to, indicated they would have liked to stay in school longer, but mostly because they enjoyed class more than domestic work, not because they wanted to change their destiny. One of the few occasions where it was loudly and elaborately advocated that current gender roles ought to be addressed, was by a teacher of a grass root educational programme, specifically designed for those who already left school, but would like to continue learning. In order to facilitate for their needs, as this often concerns women with children, or men who ought to work at that time, there are small forms of compensation, to the extent that the budget allows. This compensation is offered in the form of nutritious food, something that is consistently lacking for many indigenous people. The absence of nutrition affects those children that do attend classes immensely, not only does the lack of vitamins stifle their growth, but the feeling of hunger itself decreases their capability for concentration. From personal experience I know that three days of a diet based exclusively on maize based meals, can cause

severe headaches, dizziness and reduced mental function, and basic tasks such as speaking in a different language, translating my own thought, became taxing tasks.

Distance and Lack of Infrastructure

Finally, before moving on to my analysis chapter, it ought to be noted that the concrete distance between rural areas and the capital, combined with disastrous infrastructure makes it difficult to go between the two areas. The quality of the highway is of such poor quality, the speed will reduce to 40 km/h, this combined with traffic that starts at the most outer zones of the capital, and the subsequent increase and decrease of speed at both events, the overall speed is low. The roads apart from the highway, specifically in rural areas are often not even asphalted, and become dangerous to the point of lethal during rain-season, because of the landslides, mudslides, and spontaneous rivers that will cross the road with such velocity it would sweep away your car altogether. If a student does manage to complete both primary and secondary education, the last of which often requires travelling along these roads regionally, as there are not many schools offering secondary education, it is often difficult for the parents to send him to university in the capital. If the indigenous family make money at all with the jobs in manual agricultural labour, it is generally not a lot, and usually desperately needed for other basic needs such as meet to supplement their diet of the plants they grow themselves. Studying in the capital is expensive, despite the fact that the university fees themselves are rather low. The costs of sustaining oneself, staying in an apartment or dorm, and providing for your own needs is close to unaffordable for the majority of the indigenous population. Whereas the ladino middle and lower class in the capital, for example the inhabitants of the red zones, have easier access to the university. The fees are the same, and the commute from certain red zones to the zone where the public university is located might not be short, but it is possible with a low budget. This difference between the ladinos and the indigenous people, is another fundamental example of the continuing polarization of Guatemalan society. Even those citizens from both ladino as well as indigenous background, who both endured financially challenged public education, will be divided not physically in distance, but socially. Because where the ladinos have at least some opportunity to study a profession of their choice at the public university, in the case of the indigenous people, it is doubtful whether they would be able to send an application for which they would need a computer and internet, let alone be able to come to the building to attend class. Fundamentally, it is not the lack of physical infrastructure that prevents

indigenous people from developing and furthering their lives through education, it is the continuing presence of the social structure that oppress, exclude, and polarize.

Chapter 5: Analysis

Returning to the research question with which it all started, in this chapter I will analyse the observations presented and discuss the correlation between the 1998 educational reform and the current level of peace education in Guatemala. In order to do so, I will first discuss the extent to which there is in fact peace education in Guatemala, based on the aforementioned observation and the semi-structured interviews. Despite having mentioned the interviews in the context of the supplementation of information I had gathered in the field, I have not yet discussed the questions I posed, nor the answer that were presented. Due to the gatekeepers that helped me gain access to my research locations, the number of interviews I conducted were much higher than anticipated. However, this has had the benefit that I have a more representative overview of the interpretation and understanding as to certain aspects of Guatemalan education. I am aware the sample size of 56 interviews in total, is not sufficiently significant to call it representative in a quantitative study, however in a qualitative one, it has provided an abundant source of valuable information.

Semi-Structured Interviews: the 1998 Education Reform and Their Respective Schools

Before engaging in deeper and more complex questions regarding the 1998 education reform, all my interviews would start with both an introduction of myself, my research and my goals, and an introduction of my interviewee after a statement of consent to participation and the use of the information provided. The introduction on my part that was naturally required for ethical considerations, had a wonderful secondary function that it invited my interviewee to share a similar summary regarding academic history, and ethical positioning before I would engage in further questioning. I would start by inquiring whether or not they were familiar with the educational reform, and ask them to mention some of the more important elements. To this all my interviewees answered the same, although some in a more elaborate manner than others, that it concerned the implementation of the key agreements of the Peace Accords regarding education, namely the inclusion of Mayan language and culture. If my interviewee was a teacher, or had been involved with education for a period of 10 years or more, I would ask about the development of the school's educational programme over the last decades, and any noticeable changes. This would be followed by requests for elaborations of the inclusion of topics related to the educational reform, and subsequently regarding topics that I did encounter in the school in question, that would relate to peace education, even though it may have not

related to the education reform. Further questions would relate to the answers given, as each of the subjects were substantially different at each respective school. In most interviews, I would also ask the interviewee at one point, what he or she considered to be the most important thing that they teach their students, the most valuable, or influential lesson. I will discuss these answers based on each question, and not the interviewee bearing in mind the numbers.

Knowledge of the 1998 Educational Reform and Its Most Important Elements

The difference in the degree of detail regarding knowledge of the educational reform was astounding. Although I did not have a single interviewee who claimed not to be familiar with the 1998 educational reform, there were some who were not able to formulate its most important elements. The majority however, more than 50 interviewees, stated that the most important element concerned the inclusion of bilingual programmes and educational regarding Mayan tradition, religion and culture, not only in Mayan populated areas, but in all school nationwide. Few elaborated by explaining why the knowledge of their language and culture is important for students who are not indigenous themselves, demonstrating approaches to education that would adhere to some of the peace education elements, such as the understanding of all kinds of violence, and the discussion of the history of the (armed) violence that took place in the country. The teaching of Mayan language and culture is required to understand what the effects were of the prohibition of the expression of their culture and language, and the consequences for their identity. Merely stating that the use of discussion of Mayan language and culture in schools was forbidden, teaches the student a fact about history, however it does not offer an understanding of history that would allow for use or application in different setting, which is ultimately what knowledge should provide.

The many teachers and educators,⁹⁴ who claimed to have knowledge of the educational reform and its main contents, were working at one of the schools of which I have given examples of classes or materials having the right intention, however the wrong execution, causing the final message and understanding that the students end up with, to be far removed from the intention with which the material was written or intended. In the answering of this question, many interviewees used their schools as examples of the inclusion of some of these elements of the education reform. In some cases, this was indeed the teaching of an indigenous

⁹⁴ Author's Note: With educators I will refer to people within the educational setting, schools, education related conferences etc. that are not a teacher in their function, but do contribute to the education of the students.

language by the teacher, or the field trip of the private school to indigenous areas where they experienced indigenous life, however in most cases it was a mere handful of classes within a different subject, such as history or social studies that mention the Mayan population. The teachers apparent acceptance of this minimal level of incorporation is problematic as it does not appear to inspire further incorporation of elements of the 1998 educational reform.

Significant Changes or Developments in Education and the Educational Programme at the School

In order to avoid a line of questioning that could be considered leading, I did not inquire after changes in the past decade that exclusively considered subjects that relate to peace education or the educational reform. Instead, and only in the cases in which the interviewee had been involved in the field of education for more than a decade, I inquired after the significant changes or developments in the educational programme of the school in question, as well as education as a whole. Interestingly, most interviewees were rather positive in their responses, indicating change had indeed taken place, and that in comparison to the 1990's and before, education had come a long way. However, when most interviewees continued, they spoke of changes that I would like to consider quantitative changes, rather than qualitative ones. The interviewees of the private school, predominantly spoke of an increase in the quality of their education, and increased access to better sources for acquiring educational materials, causing more and more of their students to attend international university programmes after they had completed their prevocational education. Changes included the shifting focus towards more computer sciences as well as natural sciences, as they felt the future of education was to be found there. Some interviewees indicated that they felt, that during the time of war the focus was pulled away from innovation of education, and finally they had the liberty to return to this, the unending pursuit of providing the best possible education.

Most interviewees at public schools on the other hand, had an overwhelming focus on the increased access to education for the students in the area. Whether this was in the red zones in the capital, or in the rural areas, there appeared to be a sense of pride and accomplishment in the opening or reopening of schools that had been targeted and closed during the armed conflict. Many schools were burned due to the scorched earth tactics during the armed conflict, or simply ceased to exist because of the spreading terror, and the consequent precautions by parents to keep their children at home. The educational programme the schools had, despite some of their flaws such as the use of outdated sources, or the lack of knowledge of the teachers which was

required to compensate for the outdated or missing information, was still generally regarded as a success. Many interviewees at public schools in rural areas spoke specifically of increased literacy in the community, and the sense of accomplishment and pride in being educated and possess valuable life skills such as being able to use and apply mathematics. Ultimately, the changes that were considered anything between noteworthy and significant, were developments that in any Western setting would be considered the bare minimum of schooling.

Elaboration Regarding Subjects Indicative of Peace Education

Depending on the school of the interviewee, or the classes I had observed, I would inquire after the programme that involved subjects that I considered to be indicative of peace education. Although, as demonstrated in the theory chapter, a complete and comprehensive peace education programme is not so easily established, it is also shown that a wide variety of subjects can contribute to peace education thus increasing the likelihood of the presence of some element of peace education. One of those subjects, which was present at every school, was history and the discussion of the Guatemalan conflict. Having attended only a few of the history classes in which the conflict was in fact addressed, and due to the lack of textbooks and access to teaching materials that were used, I depended on the interviews to obtain an overview of their approach to the history of the Guatemalan armed conflict. Bearing in mind some of the experiences during which the information that was meant to be conveyed rather deviated from the lesson that was factually taught, I was prepared for answers to this question which might incorrectly present the situation in a better light. However, this expectation proved to be unfounded, as the responses to this question with specific regard to the subject of history, already demonstrated that the potential for peace education was not utilized.

Many interviewees of the private and the public schools alike, expressed the approach in which emphasis lay with names and dates. The students would know the president at the time that the conflict started, the presidents in power during the conflict, and the one at the time of the conclusion of the Peace Accords. Some schools also required the memorization of the names and years of the Peace Accords and the main focus of each. However, there was not one school that emphasized the social discord and the movements that led to the outbreak of the conflict. They would mention the parties to the conflict, which were largely drawn up along the division between ladino and indigenous, but not the underlying political, economic and societal structure of polarization, exclusion and discrimination. One interviewee in particular stated openly “We do not teach real history at this school, because we need to guarantee the safety of our teachers.

Teaching about the responsibility and the role of the State in some of the things that happened, well, it would not be surprising if this teacher disappeared.”⁹⁵ There was only one interviewee that explicitly stated that the history taught was not only an untrue version of the history, as it was ‘not real history’, but that it was not taught out of fear for the safety of the person responsible. Considering the aspect of fear of forced disappearances as we saw during the civil war, it must be taking into account that although there was only 1 out of 56 interviewees that gave this answer, his approach might not be an exception. The possibility exist that the same fear for teaching ‘real history’ is present in other schools, however the interviewees did not trust to share their suspicions with me. When I asked this particular interviewee as to why he did feel it was safe to share this information with me, he said he was familiar with Norwegian academic standards and trusted in the ethical commitment to keep data anonymous.

There were other subject that could be considered indicative of peace education, such as the discussion of the UN and its function, Human Rights and some degree of environmental education. However, the teachers that taught or dealt with these subjects in question, expressed doubt as to the applicability of such topics to the students, and some even expressed they were uncertain as to whether it would give the students unfounded hope. Three interviewees in particular expressed that they often experienced confusion with the students when they were taught about the International Human Rights Law (IHRL), and when they learned that they can derive rights from these. It was argued that often the explanation of the process required to ensure enforcement would discourage the student from believing IHRL applied to them also. An example given was the following:⁹⁶ if you want to file a claim that your Human Rights have been violated by the state, you have to exhaust all national possibilities for obtaining justice first, before going to an international court. Going to a national court to file a claim against the state, is only the first step, and one that most students cannot imagine to be achievable. Considering some are not even able to purchase a notebook to make notes in class, let alone obtain the financial capability required to either hire representation, or learn all required to represent oneself in court, the financial aspect to the paperwork alone is enough for the students to decide this task is above their abilities.

⁹⁵ This is a quote from one of the interviews, translated by me from Spanish to English.

⁹⁶ The example given is that which was presented by the interviewee, the phrasing however is different as I have summarized the story significantly as the example alone took the better part of half an hour to tell.

Although there are more subjects that can be discussed as examples here, the outcome is similar as to that above. There is potential for peace education in the subject matter, however it is not being utilized, either consciously or unconsciously, because of the system in which these classes take place. The private school is dependent on the funding by the parents which are largely made up of the ladino elite in power. The same ladino elite that was, and to a large extent still is, responsible for exclusion and polarization policies. The public schools are, apart from private funding, dependent on government funding and government approval for their very existence. Neither public nor private schools appear to be in a position of complete freedom or independence with respect to what they teach, and this must be taken into account when considering the responses given by these interviewees.

Best Aspect to the School's Educational Programme, and Element most in Need of Change

Interestingly, the overwhelming response to the school's best aspect, the most valuable lesson they impart on their students, according to the interviewees, were focussed on values. Despite the difference in location, financial capability, or the composition of the students, the vast majority of the interviewees of the different school emphasized the importance of largely the same values of respect, honesty, kindness, and responsibility. Some of the schools added the values of love, faith and community, however it ought to be noted that these responses primarily stemmed from interviewees at public school funded by religious international organization. Apart from the fact the value of justice and fairness was never mentioned, the values that were listed did not always appear to be applied to the same extent as it was advertised. Honesty was generally interpreted by the interviewees as honesty of and among the students, honesty between the teachers and the students was left unremarked. Bearing in mind the 'not real' history that was taught, and other discrepancies between information on paper and the lessons learned, it is not surprising that the same dynamic is encountered here. This is not to say that all values which are spoken off are absent in the school, on the contrary. The interviewees demonstrated how much they believed in the presence of the values, and their personal involvement in ensuring these values were imparted. However, the interpretations of these values with respect to peace education, would require them to be applied in a different manner. Teaching these values such as kindness and respect in a setting where you do not learn about the polarized reality that is Guatemala, could make it more difficult for the students to continue to uphold these values when they are faced with discrimination and exploitation. The

result more often than not, which was demonstrated in the way the interviewees spoke of the application of these values later in life, is that the values are only applied within the polarized group the student will find himself in later, whether that is ladino or indigenous.

With respect to the elements that were considered to be in need of change, the answers varied greatly. Some interviewees focussed primarily on the improvement of certain subjects, usually this concerned subject that were currently taught on the basis of outdated sources or incomplete teaching materials. Others focussed on the financial element being the greatest source of troubles, and elaborated how the change of this element would lead to improvement of education all round, both in the quality and diversity of subjects, as well as the quality of the building and facilities, or the impact that a nutritious snack could have on the children that came to school walking for an hour or more without having had breakfast. There was only a very small number that addressed the need for increased cooperation and support from MINEDUC, as it was here that not only their finance came from but also their curriculum. These few interviewees discussed the small number of changes MINEDUC had made, such as the law that passed in 2003 regarding the recognition of indigenous languages, however which had not yet reached the public school in practice. And it was only two of them that addressed also the lack of the implementation of the educational reform, however it was reiterated that this was important but definitely not the first priority. The priority was considered to be the increased cooperation and support from MINEDUC as improvement was needed all round, and the inclusion of the educational reform alone, would not make a difference.

Analysis: The Relation Between the Presence of an Educational Reform and the Lack of Peace Education

The observations based on the semi structured interviews as presented in this chapter, as well as the observations made during the participant observation periods, are primarily focussed on all the aspects that do not include the 1998 educational reform, nor does it constitute peace education. This is not to say there were no positive aspects, there were in fact schools that taught the subject of human rights law, or discussed the Guatemalan civil war, however these did not outweigh the other harmful practices. Especially, when considering that this is study designed for the testing of peace education theory in the setting of the Guatemalan post armed conflict situation after the implement of the 1998 educational reform following the 1996 Peace Accords, we must be critical. Therefore, I will address in this section why firstly, I do not believe I can speak of peace education. Secondly, I will address why I cannot establish a

correlation between the 1998 educational reform and the lack of peace education, or simply put, the situation in which education found itself at the time of my research. Thirdly, I will discuss the main influence on the state or lack of peace education, and the situation of education as a whole, which is the current Guatemalan political situation.

Peace education is more than a mere legislative document that states there will be inclusive education, that states all elements required will be present. Such elements as discussed in chapter one, included, addressing all kinds of violence, teaching methods of conflict resolution, explaining international law among which IHRL. This research has shown that a document stating their future presence, does not guarantee their deliverance. It is not because there is no correlation between the educational reform and peace education, it is because the current educational situation in Guatemala cannot possibly be considered peace education. The current Guatemalan educational system does not teach peace, or the development thereof, it teaches the class system. Not only do the subjects taught not constitute peace education, as there is a significant lack of peace education related subjects, it is also the manner in which classes are given that excludes this education from the peace education paradigm. The subjects do not recognize the oppression of the indigenous people, nor does it recognize the fact that their protest and uprising at the start of the civil war was a consequence thereof. The origin of conflict is not understood as the blame is simply assigned to the political conviction of communism, because of this, to this day there is great suspicion towards anyone with leftist beliefs or thought processes. I myself, have personally experienced being called a communist for believing in equal rights for all, in this context it concerned gay marriage rights, as a communist I was not long after accused of being a spy and by extension a threat to the state. It demonstrates the extreme proportions the rationale of communism being the instigator for a civil war, can take.

Furthermore, the approach and attitude found in school continues the polarization processes that were originally established by the government. This continuing of polarization is demonstrated for example, in the division we saw in the private school, where the morning schedule was preferred, and thus given to the students whose parents payed the full entrance fee, whereas the students who were there through scholarships and funds, the poor students, were assigned the afternoon schedule. In public schools, there was no division of students, however the attitude and approach of the school and teachers, indicated their patterns of expectation for their students, especially in the rural, indigenous populated areas. They were given math assignments that would help them in the construction of their own houses; the

gender discrimination and the absence of girls in school was considered to just be the cultural tradition; the malfunctioning branches of *trias politica* in Guatemala were not explained in order to not confuse the students as to what they are meant to be and they would not be involved in any of them later anyway; and even information regarding nutrition and health was dumbed down to only identifying what a varied diet would be, as these students would never buy food in packaging anyway. All examples indicate a pattern of expectation by the teacher and school that this education is not a step towards a life where they might leave the community and study in the city in order to apply for a job of their interest, it is merely the stage that comes before domestic life dependent on agricultural manual labour.

Although this attitude of polarization was less present in the public schools located in the capital, this education still did not constitute peace education either. The chances of this education changing significantly in the near future, with respect to taking on more of the peace education functions, are slim. The biggest reason for this is the same reason peace education has not yet been established, the current political situation, which will be discussed hereafter. The second largest factor however, is the fact that most teachers already consider the educational reform included when there was mere mention of the Mayan traditional and culture in one of the classes, and more importantly, the fact that most people, teachers and students alike, are kept sufficiently satisfied with the education currently present that there is no call for further implementation of the reform. The majority of the population, the same majority that is subjected to exclusion and polarization policies, is distracted by the minimal satisfaction of their needs, in order to keep them just sufficiently satisfied to prevent them from protesting and claiming what is owed to them. The fact that the manner in which the educational system currently functions, only provides opportunities for a small part of the population, primarily the ladino elite, is not recognized by many, and those that do appear either not have the will or the political power to change that.

As stated above, the biggest reason for the lack of establishment of peace education is the current political situation in Guatemala. As this has not been the focus of this research, I have not conducted any study regarding the details or the functioning of the government, however it is abundantly clear that it is above anything else, corrupt. The small ladino elite that is repeatedly spoken of in this thesis, controls the biggest political parties, the majority of the seats in congress, and the president himself. Furthermore, there are several large influential media stations, operating radio stations, television channels, newspapers and online social

media, all expressing the opinion of the same dominant political party and the small ladino elite, thus generating influence not only politically, militarily, economically, but also socially. As I stated, I have not conducted a study into this, however I base these statements on three months of experience as an intern at a governmental institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, due to which I have had unending politically oriented discussions with a wide variety of individuals, through which such media sources were repeatedly suggested to me. The discussion of the political situation in Guatemala could constitute a dissertation in itself, which is why I will conduct no further attempt to explain its complexity and influence.

Instead, I will end by saying that the political situation is a large influence and is not sufficiently accounted for, both with respect to its responsibility for the situation of the Guatemalan education today, as well as with respect to peace education itself. Its responsibility for the situation of Guatemalan education, largely pivots around the implementation and support of the aforementioned PRONADE, and the lack of support after the passing of the 1998 educational reform. The government had the power to approve the educational reform, as well as provide for the implementation thereof, and did not. The only answer as to why, that I can provide, is persisting dichotomy in which the ladino elite has power and a successful implementation of the 1998 educational reform could take that very power away from them in the not too distant future. However, as previously stated, this could constitute a study in itself, and truly ought to be researched further in detail. With respect to peace education, it has become clear that there is insufficient consideration for the political situation in peace education theory. Admittedly, the theory does mention that it ought not to be only grass root initiatives, but that a change in systematic education, a top down approach, with participation of grass root organizations would be more effective. Unfortunately, the theory fails to recognize that participation of a grass root initiative, does not make the government yield any agency or power. The approach is effectively dependent on the good will of the government, and if their policies or inclinations change, they are capable of undoing all efforts. The fact that they can undo these changes is troublesome in itself, although not surprising. The worrying aspect of their retraction of effort, is that they have not officially retracted their support, nor the documents passed. Officially they remain committed and are capable of presenting an image to the world in which they appear to be working on equality through education, or even peace education. They have taken education as a tool to demonstrate good intentions, while in practice they use the educational system to keep the class system in place. From the very first stages of development,

they undermine any chance of improving one's standard of life, including the path to a career in diplomacy or politics, ensuring the political power for future generations of the ladino elite.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The research question, whether the 1998 educational reform, following the 1996 Peace Accords, has resulted in, or contributed to peace education, presupposes that there is in fact peace education. The research pivoted on the existence of two elements, that of the educational reform and that of peace education, and the goal to establish a correlation between these two. The reason for assuming there was in fact peace education present in Guatemala, was based on the elements that constitute peace education according to the theory as discussed in chapter one, and the preliminary research that demonstrated their presence. These elements included the situation of a post armed conflict situation, education that recognized the violence that had taken place not only during the war but also the structural violence leading up to it, and an educational programme designed to change systematic education organized by the political power in cooperation with the oppressed.⁹⁷ According to peace education theory alone, based on the information available, I could already conclude that there was in fact peace education in Guatemala. The origin of this peace education, again in accordance with peace education theory, lay with the 1998 educational reform. After all, the educational reform was written by a commission comprised of both representatives of the indigenous people and civil society organizations, as well as representatives of the government. This meant that both the oppressor and the oppressed had contributed to the construction of the agreement and the approval thereof. My intention was merely to observe the result of peace education in practice, as my criticism with much of the peace education theory lay with the gap between theory and practice, as is argued in chapter one: much of the theory is formulated in a way that allows for ambiguity which could be harmful in the eventual application. It was in the process of my field research that I realized my research question was based on a false premise, the assumption of the presence of peace education. This meant that not only could I not answer my research question as it had been rendered void, it meant I had to address why I cannot speak of peace education with respect to Guatemalan education, and lastly and perhaps most importantly how this false premise could have occurred.

⁹⁷ Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30.; Harris, "Peace Education Theory," 6.; Reardon, *Comprehensive Peace Education : Educating for Global Responsibility*, 5. Ardizzzone, "Generating Peace: A Study of Nonformal Youth Organizations," 430.; COPARE, *Diseño De Reforma Educativa Runukik Jun Káká Tijonik*.

The reason for not being able to consider Guatemalan education, peace education, this includes both public as well as private education, is due to the fact that all elements required are lacking. In the event that the elements were in fact present, the manner in which they were taught to the students would negate the effect the subject in question was supposed to have. The opposite scenario, for a subject to be lacking, but for the approach to teaching to constitute peace education, was unfortunately not present either. The largest factor for the absence of peace education, and the lack of implementation of the 1998 educational reform, is the political situation in Guatemala. Proving the correlation between Guatemalan politics and the lack of peace education could easily constitute a dissertation itself, as the complexity and corruption of the political system alone requires significant collection and analysis of data. As this research was not designed to review the Guatemalan political situation, I cannot argue for this correlation, except for stating that it was the Guatemalan government that was responsible for passing the Peace Accords on which the 1998 Educational reform was based, and it was MINEDUC, a government institute, that was responsible for its subsequent implementation. The possibility that MINEDUC was incapable of implementing the 1998 educational reform for reasons concerning lack of power or finances, is unlikely, as they did successfully implement the PRONADE educational programme. This is not to say that the PRONADE schools are successful, merely that the government branch responsible for the implementation of an educational reform is capable of doing so. Therefore, it is reasonable to state that the main reason for the lack of implementation of the 1998 educational reform is the Guatemalan political situation. As the peace education was dependent on the educational reform, after all, this was one of the elements that caused me to assume the presence of peace education in the first place, it can be stated that the Guatemalan political situation is responsible for the lack of peace education also.

The question concerning the cause of the false premise, the assumption of the presence of peace education in Guatemala, is not answered by the influence of the Guatemalan political situation. It is the elements identified in peace education theory that led me to believe in the presence of peace education, and it is here that the false premise originated. Throughout the discussion of peace education theory in Chapter 2, I have emphasized the risk of the gap between the theory and practice. Although I am aware that this gap is present in many research paradigms, when it concerns a matter of such importance and influence such as peace education, further caution ought to be exercised. It is not the false premise in my research design that is

potentially harmful, it is the use of the concept of peace education as a tool or cover to justify one's actions. If someone did not conduct field research, and merely regarded the written existing data on the 1996 Peace Accords, the 1998 Educational Reform, and the statistical data resulting from the harmful PRONADE programme which shows increased literacy and attendance, the combination would suggest effective Peace Education to be in place, when we have seen that clearly is not. Consequences could include Guatemala no longer being considered in need of international funding in order to stimulate peace education initiatives. However, potentially even worse, is the fact that peace education theory itself could lose its significance. Because, at the moment that the theory is so far removed from the reality that the adherence to the theory no longer results in peace education in practice, the question must be raised what the function of the theory is. There is a necessity for further research in peace education theory, specifically involving field research. In the case of Guatemala, it must be observed where in the political process did the theory fail, examining what unspoken factor or circumstance the peace education theory presupposes, in order for the theory to work. Political stability for example, is not specifically mentioned as a prerequisite, as most post armed conflict situations do not constitute a model of political stability, however in the case of Guatemala it would appear the logical answer. This research was designed to test peace education theory with the use of the 1998 educational reform following the 1996 Peace Accords in Guatemala, and what it has ultimately demonstrated is the need for further research and refinement of the theory, because as the theory stands right now, it is not capable of aiding the Guatemalan situation.

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