

**TRANSFORMATIONAL MISSION AS A CATALYST TO  
BUILD SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN COLOMBIA**

by

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I declare that TRANSFORMATIONAL MISSION AS A CATALYST TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN COLOMBIA is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

*D Rivera*

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26 October 2015

# **Abstract**

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Abstract of Master's thesis, submitted 26 October 2015:

## **TRANSFORMATIONAL MISSION AS A CATALYST TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN COLOMBIA**

Since the time of colonialism the Colombian territory has experienced many problems, which brought a lot of instability in society throughout its history. Colombia has been bleeding all these years, but especially in the time known as “The Violence”. With the creation of the Guerrilla group FARC, of Paramilitary organisations, and Drug Cartels, the problems were intensified. Different attempts to find a solution have unfortunately failed, as is shown over a period of history.

This paper argues that to deal with such conflicts there is need for an alternative concept for building sustainable peace. The model of John Paul Lederach, “Professor of International Peacebuilding at the University of Notre Dame“, is described as a possible solution that goes beyond what has been achieved by the peace efforts of President Andrés Pastrana. The Churches, both Catholic and Evangelical, have a role to play in building peace as part of a Transformational Mission effort.

## **Key Terms**

Peace; Shalom; Sustainable peace; Peace process; Divided society; Andrés Pastrana; Guerrilla FARC; Colombia; Transformational mission; Integrated framework for peace; Catalyst; Catholic Church; Mennonite

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this research to all those in Colombia who throughout history have sown a seed of shalom in Colombia, and also to those who have died in following their intention. Also my admiration and dedication go to those who are currently working through Mission as Transformation to build sustainable peace in the most remote areas of the land.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

David Rivera was born as the son of a Pastor in Barranquilla, Colombia, on the 31st January 1967. He graduated from primary and secondary schools in 1986. After graduation he worked part time as a waiter and started his studies in languages such as English, French and Spanish. His goal was to become a language teacher, but after coming back to Jesus in 1991, he gave his life for the work of mission. Together with his father he started helping in the founding of churches in poor places of his country. So after completing his College Studies in 1993 and having done an internship with Operation Mobilisation, he joined them as a crew member of the ship Logos II. There he was able to deepen his Mission Studies theoretically as well as practically.

In the autumn of 1995 after winning a scholarship at Belfast Bible College, he started his Theological and Mission studies. As an active member of Strandtown Baptist Church in Belfast, he helped in the youth work. As part of his studies he was required to do two field terms at home and abroad. He went to Colombia to support the ministry of his father, but also became involved in different Mission projects in Morocco, and in France was able to support a ministry among mentally handicapped people.

After finishing his Theological Studies in summer 1998, he was able to serve in Davao, The Philippines, for seven months in a slum area of the city.

He was married to Renate in 1999 and in 2001 together with their daughter Hanna they served with Indicamino, Switzerland, in Villavicencio-Colombia among Indigenous people. It was during this time that he was able to follow the final phase of the peace process between President Andrés Pastrana and Guerrilla FARC. Due to the precarious political situation in the region of service, they returned to Switzerland and in 2002 they, together with other Christians of the region, started an International Church. He was able to serve there as Pastor for 9 years. In between he earned his Bachelor's degree in Theology from FLET (Facultad Latinoamericana de Estudios Teológicos- Laurel University/FLET) in 2006.

David Rivera lives in Grabs, Switzerland. He has been married for 16 years to Renate and they have four children (Hanna, Josué, Rafaela, Timothy). At present he works as a youth pastor in the Freie Evangelische Gemeinde FEG Buchs (free Evangelical Church). Having completed this dissertation, in January 2016 he will extend his working brief to work among foreigners and refugees.

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## Abbreviations

ASVIDAS	Asociación para la Vida Digna y Solidaria de los Montes de María
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
CCN	Comisión de Conciliación Nacional
CEAS	Church Coordination for Psychosocial Action
CEDECOL	Consejo Evangélico de Colombia (Council of Evangelical and Protestant Churches of Colombia)
CINEP	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (Jesuit Centre of Research and Popular Education)
FARC–EP and FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia Ejército del Pueblo (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army)
JUSTAPAZ	Just Peace (The Christian Centre for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action)
MENCOLDES	Fundación Menonita Colombiana para el Desarrollo Social
M-19	Movimiento 19 de Abril (April 19 <sup>th</sup> Movement)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PC	Partido Conservador (Conservative Party)
PL	Partido Liberal (Liberal Party)
SEMBRANDOPAZ	Sowingpeace
UNDP/PNUD	Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (United Nations Development Programme)
UN	Las Naciones Unidas (United Nations)
UTC	Catholic Working Union

All biblical quotations and references have been taken from the NASB (New American Standard Bible Deutsch –English)

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Lastly, I thank God for giving me wisdom and perseverance through all these four years of studies.

Grabs, October 2015

# **1 Introduction**

This thesis has two primary aims. The first one is an evaluation of the peace process in Colombia during the presidency of Andrés Pastrana Arango between 1998-2002 in light of John Paul Lederach's integrated framework for peace-building. A further subsidiary aim is to investigate how Mission as Transformation might contribute practically to mobilise and support the Colombian churches to find sustainable peace in the land.

## **1.1 Problem Formulation**

Personal experience of living in Colombia has shown the author of this paper that sustainable peace has not been achieved through diplomatic encounters between the main Guerrilla Group FARC and the government of President Andrés Pastrana between 1998 and 2002. The thesis of this study is therefore that the Church, both the Catholics and Evangelicals, have a role to play through Mission as Transformation to build the peace the Bible talks about in the country of Colombia.

Colombia is a country which has experienced more than four decades of civil war. When investigating why Colombians have not been able to find sustainable peace, it is necessary to consider the factors that have contributed to the nature and persistence of the problem. Meacham, Farah & Lamb (2014:6) and Kline (2007:1) point out that to some extent the problem in Colombia is due to the lack of law enforcement in a large area of the country. In addition to this, the creation of guerrilla and paramilitary groups plus the emerging business of the drug trafficking organisations, have increased the complexity of this unresolved problem.

Safford and Palacios (2002:ix) add that Colombia's history has been shaped by its geographical fragmentation. Politically, this dispersion has manifested itself in regional antagonism and local rivalries, which were expressed in the nineteenth century in civil war and in part of the twentieth century through intercommunity violence. To the geographical and political divisions, were added regional ethnic and cultural differences that were settled in part by the varying economic functions of the different regions.

In the last four decades much has been discussed, studied and written about the internal armed conflict in Colombia, but without any apparent success. Since the

early 1990s Colombia has seen its enduring and progressive internal armed conflict escalate even further.

During the two decades from 1982 to 2002, four separate Colombian presidents endeavoured to bargain at the table with rebel groups (Nasi 2009:39).

The attempts by Andrés Pastrana to negotiate the end of the guerrilla violence in Colombia constituted the third major effort (1998-2002). The first was during the presidency of Belisario Betancur (1982-86). Betancur granted amnesty to the guerrillas, and more than 400 guerrilla combatants accepted the deal. Betancur's next step was to establish a National Dialogue. Unfortunately this was not well planned and it never took place during his presidency. Atrocities increased and by the end of 1985, the M-19 seized the Palace of Justice in Bogotá and killed many senators of the Republic.

Barco never thought of a peace initiative, so the continual fighting in the land and the increase in paramilitary activities led guerrilla forces and government to negotiate once again. As a result the M-19 was demobilized in 1999 and became a political party.

Gaviria entered negotiation with FARC and ELN, unfortunately not much was done because he only started his dealings with the guerrillas at the end of his mandate.

Kline states that the peace processes of Barco and Gaviria were not successful because of the way guerrilla and government understood the concept of peace. For the government "peace" was the absence of armed conflict and for the guerrillas, it meant a change in the social order of Colombian capitalism (Kline 2007:17).

But why then was Pastrana's peace process not successful? Pastrana came with a new vision to build sustainable peace in the land, a vision where peace needed to be built by looking at the social problems as the root of the internal conflict in Colombia (Pastrana 2005:21).

His vision was ambitious and he made efforts to look at the real causes of the ongoing problem in Colombia. Unfortunately, Pastrana did not consider the involvement of the Church as a possibility to find solutions through an integral mission, a mission that seeks solutions to the problems in the social and spiritual aspects of mankind, which is the case of "Mission as Transformation".

## 1.2 Missiological background

The Mennonites, which are a small group among Evangelicals<sup>1</sup> in Colombia, will be investigated and presented as a “Historic Peace Church”. This paper is interested in the contribution this group may have for the building of peace in the Colombian context. The Mennonites are making a big impact in the land by working together with Catholics in a country where ecumenism is not accepted, due to the many hurts inflicted on the Evangelicals by them in the past. This paper suggests that there needs to be reconciliation between the two groups; if this is achieved, these two groups would be an example that peace among enemies could be obtained.

Mennonites and Catholics are working towards a sustainable peace at a lower level. They believe that God’s mission in this world intends to establish peace with mankind, and that’s why it is necessary to reflect on a better solution to the peace process, based on the relevance of the Christian Gospel to this situation. The Catholic Church has joined efforts with the Cedecol, which is the Evangelical Alliance in Colombia. They both have studied Colombia’s problems from an ethical viewpoint. The Catholic Church, in its book “La Iglesia en Colombia, la realidad que nos interpela” (The Church in Colombia, and the reality that questions us) (Henaó Gaviria 2009:16-17), describes Colombian society as a society that is going through an ethical crisis. This crisis has led people to behave in a way that does not reflect the nature of the Gospel. For instance, it has resulted in the culture of illegality, where injustice and corruption are accepted as normal, and many people neglect the pain caused to the victims of the ongoing war.

It is in this context that the churches in Colombia, both Catholics and Evangelicals, including the Mennonites, are working together with a new understanding that their mission needs to be a mission that transforms the whole of society. On the Mennonite side, they are working together with John Paul Lederach, a Mennonite, widely known for his pioneering work in conflict transformation. Lederach<sup>2</sup> is a professor of international peacebuilding. He is involved in conciliation and work as a peace building design consultant in Colombia with the Mennonites and the Catholic Church. Lederach has not only been chosen as a dialogue partner because of his professional record in the field of sociology and conflict transformation, but

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<sup>1</sup> The term Evangelicals refers to those who have accepted the Gospel of Grace of Jesus Christ.

<sup>2</sup> <http://kroc.nd.edu/facultystaff/faculty/john-paul-lederach> [status 15.06.2016].

because his definition of conflict transformation weighs heavily in favour of choosing his method, one which has not been tried in the country before. Human relationships need to be re-established by finding solutions in the social realm and more importantly in finding reconciliation amongst the different parties in the conflict. Lederach (2003:14) states: “Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.” Furthermore, although his integrated method for peace is based on sociology, it incorporates an important part of the missiology task of the Gospel. Also, unlike statist diplomacy, his method is not based on finding solutions through the top leadership; rather, he claims that solutions are to be found by dealing with the middle-range leadership as these actors have great influence on both the top leadership and the grassroots leaders in society. In addition, the integrated framework for building peace and the thesis proposed by Lederach could be extremely helpful in solving the problems in Colombia. At the very least, he offers a new way of thinking that there is another approach to dealing with protracted armed conflict. Lederach has developed the concept of an integrated framework for building peace in divided societies. This has been encapsulated in his book “Building Peace, sustainable reconciliation in divided societies”.

### **1.3 Purposes of the research**

This research is intended as a voice and a contribution to the ongoing processes that both the Catholic and Evangelical churches and different organisations are undertaking with the goal of establishing sustainable peace in Colombia.

Furthermore, this research is also intended to be a contribution or a help to the church in Colombia and different aspects of society. For instance, it is hoped that the peace of God will be reflected in the structures and social programs of the church, that the peace of God will be reflected between the churches and their members, and among families. The aim is that the peace of God will be lived in a practical way.

## **1.4 Relevance**

Talks about finding peace have so far been held between the Colombian government and FARC Guerrillas or what Lederach calls top leadership.

This study is relevant for the normal Colombian, because Lederach's method for sustainable peace involves consulting people who are not normally taken into account in the effort to find solutions for their own land.

In addition, Lederach ([1997]2010:23) argues that the affected population should be envisioned in the peace talks. He also claims that it is a mistake to think that by merely having the right plan in mind and the right materials, skills and resources in hand, peace would just fall into place. He states that anyone who has lived in settings of protracted conflict or engaged in peace-making activities in divided societies knows that standardised formulas do not work.

Lederach, the Catholic Church and Evangelicals, offer us a new perspective. Although their proposals are not alike, they all agree that the talks should not involve only the guerrillas and top leaders of the government. And they insist that peace building should focus on reconciliation, and on building relationships. This is also the recommendation from Justapaz and Cedecol in their magazine "Prophetic call amid the peace talks" (2013:10), where they urge the FARC and the Colombian government, in the agreements they reach, to focus on the reconstruction of the social fabrics and on reconciliation among the various actors in the ongoing conflict.

## **1.5 Definition of key terms**

When reading the literature for this research, it is necessary to be aware of what is understood by the following terms:

In this research, the meaning of peace has been investigated from both sociological and biblical perspectives. On the basis of this investigation, peace is not just the simple fact of putting weapons aside. Peace goes beyond that and has its origin in the biblical word shalom, and the word shalom is reflected in the message of the Gospel and the person of Jesus Christ.

Terms like Integral Mission, Holistic Mission and Mission as Transformation have been current in the missiological discussion for years. They were born out of the question of Christian social involvement as an issue related to evangelism (Padilla 2001:no pagination). The first to appear was Integral Mission. This term had a long

process before it came to be. Everything started after the Wheaton Conference in 1966. There a new attitude was born concerning the responsibility of the Church towards this world. Then this attitude was followed in Berlin 1966, where speakers posed the question of Christian social involvement as an issue related to evangelism. It was only with these antecedents that after Lausanne 1974, the term “Integral Mission” found support among Evangelicals in the Two-thirds World. Then in Wheaton 1983, the term took another direction to be called Mission as Transformation, but having as the central thought an integral mission. René Padilla calls it “Integral Mission” and states that when the Church practises Integral Mission and communicates the Gospel, its goal is the transformation of the individual in all its dimensions.

Furthermore Padilla (2004:no pagination) introduces the term “Holistic Mission” as a concept that has been much accepted among evangelicals in the Two-thirds World, since Lausanne 1974. He claims that the adjective holistic was born to correct a “one-sided understanding of mission that concentrates on either the vertical or the horizontal dimension of mission”. Detlef Blöcher (2013:1) agrees with him and states that Integral Mission is the preaching and living of the Gospel. In an Integral Mission, the Word and practical help are not separated from each other, but they are integrated and closely interlinked. In this research Lederach’s term Integrated and Mission as Transformation are going to be used. Lederach calls his framework for peace “integrated framework”: the word integrated has in its centre some components of transformation but not in its fullness. That is why the term “Mission as Transformation” will be used here, because it speaks of the task Christians are meant to be doing in this world: not just preaching the Gospel, but living it out in practical ways like Jesus did. Or just as David Bosch (1995:407) states that the Church has to be involved in the needs of this world through evangelism and social involvement, but without ascribing priority to either. To summarise, although Integral Mission, Holistic Mission and Mission as Transformation are different terms, they all have one thing in common and it is mission. It is a mission based on what Jesus did: he looked with compassion on his hearers and he responded to their human condition.

Reconciliation, a key word in building peace through reconciliation, is based on the Gospel in 2 Corinthians 5.18-20. Following this, Lederach (1999:165) recognises that the Pauline vision leads us to conclude that God is working to bring all things together. The purpose God has with humankind is to reconcile people with

each other and with God. He emphasises that God's mission is also ours and he has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

By using the concept of reconciliation in his framework for building peace, Lederach ([1997]2010:84) makes it innovative and different from many other frameworks for building peace. Furthermore, by talking about conflict transformation, he recognises the importance of reconciliation as a paradigm that "is oriented toward changing the nature of relationships at every level of human interaction and experience" (:84).

Although reconciliation will be presented from Lederach's viewpoint in this research, reconciliation will be treated as one of the components of Mission as Transformation. According to Samuel and Sugden (1999:231) the relationship between reconciliation and Mission as Transformation is the Gospel, because it is the message of the Gospel that reconciles God and humanity. Furthermore, they state that from the moment that the breadth of the Gospel is extended from the personal to the social, then "reconciliation as mission becomes the focus". In support they claim that Christians are called to address the violence that is local to society and that is the mystery hidden in the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 3. In this sense reconciliation goes beyond the relationship between people and God, to include the relationship between people and people. And this in its essence is the most powerful message of the Gospel (:231). Furthermore, the Lausanne movement (Cape Town Commitment 2010) places emphasis on reconciliation in order to obtain sustainable peace. This movement states that reconciliation to God is inseparable from reconciliation to one another. It states that reconciliation to God and to one another is also the foundation and motivation for seeking the justice that God requires, without which, God says, there can be no peace.

## **1.6 Positioning in the subject area**

The theme of the Gospel of peace is anchored in the field of missiology, more specifically in the mission of God, whose goal is to establish peace between God and humankind, and also among the people involved in conflict. The fact that guerrillas and Government both use weapons in their bid to establish peace in Colombia raises the perplexing question of what these groups have in mind when they speak of peace. Furthermore, the affected population should be heard.

Perry Yoder (1987:10) claims that it is necessary to have a clear vision of what kind of peace one is talking about. He states that if the definition of peace is so broad that achieving it even includes the use of violence, then it is evident that not everybody has the same understanding of what peace means, especially in the Colombian context. This study will discuss the kind of peace that is needed in the Colombian context. Yoder (:16) states that in order to understand how *shalom* can be related to our context today, one needs to keep in mind the three aspects of the meaning of the word *shalom* in the biblical context. *Shalom* refers to material and physical conditions, but sometimes to relationships, and moral behaviour. In the book “Transformierender Glaube” by Andreas Kusch (2007:17), René Padilla is quoted as stating that the biblical word *shalom* contains everything that God thought about people in his creation. *Shalom* embraces the whole of life, *shalom* is harmony with God, with our neighbour, and with creation.

Faix, Reimer & Brecht (2009:7) claim that God wants to change the world and he does so. But he does not use violence or power; he does it through the work of the Holy Spirit and the spread of his kingdom. The spreading of the kingdom started with Jesus and continues to this day through his followers. Jesus showed this spreading of the kingdom through better justice. He took care of the poor and the outcast in society. In doing this he turned all the worldly criteria concerning people upside down. Jesus always desired the healing of people and the land. Jesus wanted people to be healed in an integral way, and that they would participate in public life, be respected and recognized as a valuable part of society.

Al Tizon (2008:17) states that Mission as Transformation was born as a result of thinking about social ethics. But in a sense, this transformation was already in the plans of Jesus for society. Roland Hardmeier (2009:v) says that the idea of thinking of an integral mission is growing more and more in the evangelical churches, and adds that the task of the church in this time of change needs to be evaluated once again.

Vinay Samuel (1999:226) states that one of the ways to see Mission in our days is to see it as Transformation. By this he means that tension between justice and love forms the whole contemporary missiological reflection and action.

This study proposes implementing this Mission as Transformation as a catalyst to find sustainable peace in Colombia. Mission as Transformation is anchored in the field of missiology. This study intends to look at the theological basis for this mission, to see what this mission looks like in Colombia, and what kind of answers

this mission might have for the conflict in Colombia. It also intends to examine how the church in Colombia understands such a mission and what the practicalities are in the current situation in Colombia. Or is there something that the Colombian Churches need to learn from this paradigm?

The topic of “building peace” is anchored in the field of peace studies. Among different proponents, it is proposed to use Lederach for the purpose of this study. He is a Christian researcher, and his thesis seems to be a contribution based on the Gospel to find peace in the Colombian situation. From observing many conflicts and resolutions, Lederach works out a framework that can now be applied to this process as well.

The peace that the Colombians need is a sustainable peace; Lederach has been providing training and supporting peace building in different nations. In his book, “Building Peace - sustainable reconciliation in divided societies”, Lederach explains why there is a need to move from beyond “traditional” diplomacy. His thesis as developed in his book could be a catalyst for peace in the Colombian context. The goal of the author of this book is to lay the foundations for sustainable peace in countries which are currently torn apart by division and violence. Lederach ([1997] 2010:ix) maintains that sustainable peace requires long-time antagonists not merely to lay down their weapons, but to achieve profound reconciliation that will endure because it is sustained by a society-network of relationships and mechanisms that promote justice and address the root causes of enmity before they can regenerate destabilising tensions.

Yoder (1987:6-7) states that peace is a middle class luxury and that *shalom* is needed by the poor, the oppressed and the dispossessed. He exhorts us to have a better understanding of the biblical *shalom* or Greek concept of *eirene* in the hope that the biblical message can revitalise and move Christians to authentic *shalom* action. He adds that the vision of *shalom* is a vision for the poor and oppressed. It is a good message for Christians who are committed to the struggle for justice. In order to understand the meaning of the concept of *shalom*, Yoder lays emphasis on the understanding of how *shalom* is related to other core aspects of the biblical faith. He states that having this wider understanding could provide us with a rich and authentic grasp of the biblical notion of *shalom*.

In its effort to build peace in different countries, the Catholic Church has released a book called “Peace-building” (Schreiter, Appleby & Powers 2010:3). The

book is a contribution showing how the Catholic Church is involved in peace-building activities and operations around the world. This book explores the different resources, concepts, and practices which the church contributes to the process of transforming conflict and building sustainable peace.

Both the Catholic and Protestant churches in Colombia have become aware of the situation in the country. In their effort to contribute something towards the peace of the country, they have carried out studies and investigations into how to build sustainable peace in the land.

The result of these studies is a document entitled “Propuestas para la construcción de políticas públicas para la reconciliación y la paz en Colombia” (2013) that proposes eight theses or minimum proposals for developing public policies for reconciliation and peace in Colombia. This document shows the contribution of the Catholic Church towards finding sustainable peace in the country.

The Mennonite Church, through its mission organisation Justapaz and in association with the peace commission of the Evangelical Council of Colombia CEDECOL, has published a research study called “A Prophetic Call” (2013:63); in chapter 4 they describe what is called the “Seeds of Hope” to show the peace building activities run by the Protestant and Evangelical church.

Finding literature to cover the different aspects of this research was a challenge. The different authors chosen helped towards better understanding the kind of mission needed in the Colombian context so as to try and attain peace. Missions performed in the past were carried out with force. Their goal was that people would accept a message that promised peace in their hearts. The focus was to save the soul but not to aid in the social needs of people. In the Colombian context, a new mission is needed, a mission that transforms not only the social environment, but also the heart of a person through a message that can heal the wounds caused by their own brothers in times of violence and during the ongoing conflict in the land.

There are other studies and research that complement the literature to be used for this research. The ones listed here are considered to be the core resources for this research and the ones that deal with the current situation of the Colombian context. The written material also supports the thesis of Lederach and other Christian contributors, which offer answers to questions that remain open in the effort to find sustainable peace in Colombia.

## **1.7 Research Questions**

Based on the problem formulation and to be able to fulfil the objectives of the study two main research questions have been formulated followed by several sub-questions.

Main research questions and sub-questions:

1. How should we assess the attempts at a peace process under the presidency of Andrés Pastrana, in the light of Lederach's integrated framework for building sustainable peace?

Sub-questions:

How do the historical periods of the Colonial Era and time span between 1930-1964 help us understand the origin of the Colombian conflict?

2. What potential does Lederach's method hold for churches that would contribute through transformational mission to building sustainable peace in Colombia?

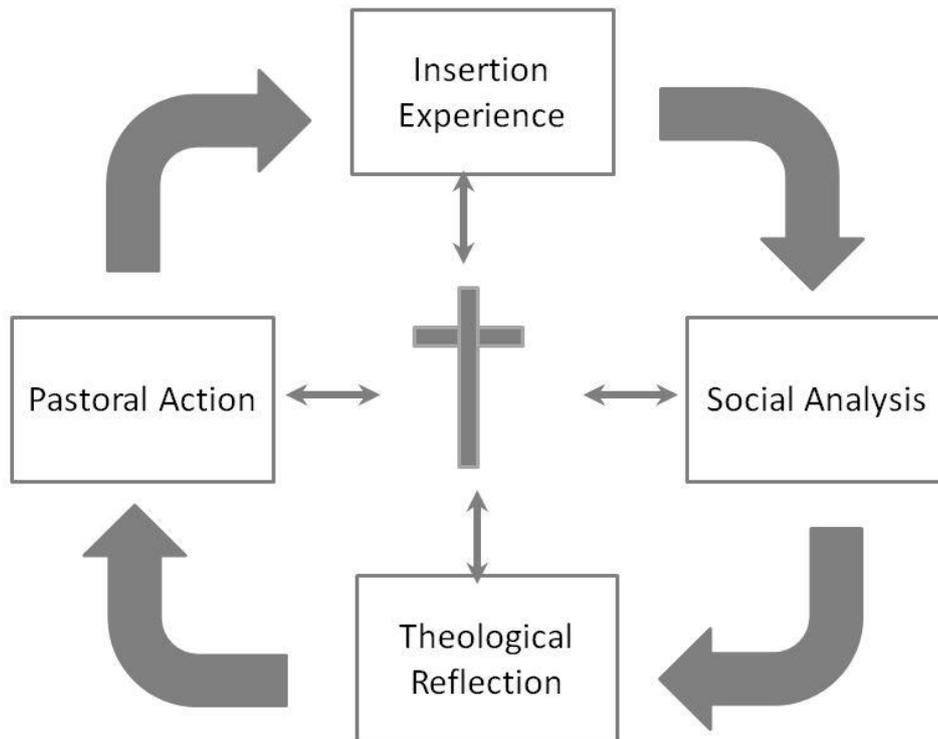
Sub- questions:

- a. How is the concept of peace understood in the Colombian context, as well as in the Church and the political arena?
- b. What could be the major contribution of Mission as Transformation for the Churches and society to build sustainable peace in Colombia?

## **1.8 Methods of Study**

Firstly, the study will begin with a critical literature review of the recent attempts at building peace in Colombia, focusing on the era under President Pastrana; but framed within modern Colombian history.

Access to the context of this research will be obtained first by using a contextual approach (Insertion and Social Analysis) which is part of the pastoral circle devised by Holland and Henriot (1983). This will be done by analysing, evaluating and comparing the relevant professional literature on the topics of Colombian history between 1930- 1964, and the peace process in Colombia between 1998-2002.



*Illus. 1 Pastoral Circle Source: Holland and Henriot<sup>3</sup>*

Secondly, a theological reflection will be used to gain a broader and deeper understanding of the context, and determine what kind of action (pastoral planning) needs to be taken in light of experiences analysed and reflected upon, and what kind of response needs to be designed in order to be most effective in order to build sustainable peace in the Colombian context (1983:8-9). In this section, the concept of Transformational Mission including the literature by John Paul Lederach will be analysed and is proposed as the basis for the response to the Colombian situation.

This study will be conducted in three different phases.

During the first phase, historical studies from the Colombian context between 1930 and 1964 will be analysed to gain not only a better understanding of the beginning of the ongoing war in Colombia, but also to obtain a glimpse of what the Colombian government has done to solve the problem. For instance, the peace process under President Andrés Pastrana between 1998 till 2002.

To complement this historical, archival method, in the second phase the theological foundation for sustainable peace will be analysed, together with an investigation into how transformational theology might have an impact in the Colombian context.

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<sup>3</sup> Holland, Joe and Henriot, Peter 1983. *Social Analysis: "Linking Faith and Justice"*.

In the third phase of this study, missiological results from phase one, as worked out by peace studies conducted by John Paul Lederach and others, will be applied to the Colombian situation, in order to show their potential in building sustainable peace in the Colombian context at its different levels.

## **1.9 Literature review**

In order to understand the concept of *shalom* and *eirene* the following literature was read and evaluated.

Perry Yoder and William M. Swartley (1992) give a better understanding of the meaning of peace in the Bible. The authors state that visions of peace abound in the Bible, but its pages are also filled with the language of war. They state that it is crucial to understand what the Bible says about both topics. These two words have always divided Christians and have carried negative consequences for the whole world. A better understanding of these two concepts will not resolve problems in the world, but gives hope which will help in the way we go about building peace.

Perry Yoder (1987:5) states that biblical peace is clearly against injustice and oppression. *Shalom* demands a transformation of the unjust social and economic orders. In the Bible, *shalom* is a vision of what needs to be and is a call to transform society.

In “Covenant of Peace” Swartley (2006) deals with the historical background of *shalom* and *eirene*, and then does profound research into the meaning of peace in the New Testament. He then develops themes like love for one’s enemies and reconciliation, which are related to the word peace.

In his book, Robert L. Ramseyer (1979) presents peace and reconciliation as an integral part of the Gospel, thereby clarifying its meaning. The author also suggests that the emphasis needs to be kept on evangelism and peace in the mission of the church throughout the whole world.

Transforming Mission will be analysed through the following literature:

David Bosch (1995) in “Transforming Mission” gives a profound study of what Mission is but also helps understand the development of the paradigm of Mission and changes through the ages.

Tobias Faix, Johannes Reimer, and Volker Brecht (2009). The three editors of this book on the theme of transformation have collected different essays in order to

bring into discussion how this transformation appears in theology, in church history and what it looks like today in practice.

Andreas Kusch (2007) deals with the theological and missiological question of how Christians assume their responsibility in this world, and what Integral Mission looks like in mission practice around the world.

Al Tizon (2008:xiii) deals with the dramatic changes that have occurred in evangelical circles in the last fifty years. This book offers perhaps the best overview of that historic transformation. The author shows us how more and more Christians around the world are combining word and deed, and effectively linking the task of evangelism and social action in holistic ministries, which result in leading people to Christ and also in transforming people who are broken and impoverished.

The aim of Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (1999) is to understand the practice of Mission as Transformation. In this book they deal with the biblical and theological foundations of the theme under discussion, and also with practical issues from the perspective of holistic mission.

Roland Hardmeier (2009:1) has written a book about the church and its mission in the 21st century. His main question in this work is: how should the church and mission look if they are to fulfil the task that Jesus Christ gave in a postmodern and global world?

Johannes Reimer (2013) has written a very important book to help understand the task of the Church in evangelisation in which he also lists all the opportunities and challenges the church faces in taking on the task of Mission as Transformation. He describes the church doing such mission as a church that welcomes the culture. His book also deals with practical ways of doing this kind of mission.

In various articles Padilla gives a lesson in how to understand integrated and holistic mission. Also, his contribution to the field of mission comes across in all these articles.

The historical context of Colombia will be researched through the following literature:

In their book “La Violencia en Colombia” (2010) Monsignor Guzmán Campos, Fals Borda and Umaña Luna (2010:28-29) agree that knowing the history of the conflicts in the Colombian context not only enables us to understand the difficult situation that this land has been going through for many years, but also that knowing this history can help us to find solutions to the internal conflict. They emphasise that

Colombians need to understand how the violence started and what are its consequences.

Marco Palacios ([2006]2007) offers important research into the historical background of Colombia between 1875-2002. In this book he deals with details of important historical facts which give a better understanding of the inequalities in the land, but also presents useful information about the role of the Catholic Church in this period of Colombia.

Gonzalo Sánchez's and Donny Meertens' book "Bandoleros, gamonales y campesinos" (1983) enriches the literature on the theme of groups outside the law whose goal was to fight for better conditions for the farmers of the land during the violence time, but these groups were also in a sense the inspiration for what later became the current guerrilla groups.

In their book "Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society" (2002), Frank Safford and Marco Palacios give details of the role that geography has played in shaping Colombia's economy, society, and politics, and in encouraging the growth of distinctive regional cultures and identities.

To understand the mentality of the Colombians and all the troubles during the colonial period Emilio Yunis Turbay (2009) has written a very comprehensive study into why Colombians behave as they do, and also gives an inside view into all the differences Colombians have as a result of living in different regions and cultural groups.

The peace process and its failure under President Pastrana were researched by Harvey F. Kline and the result of his research was compiled in his book (2007). Kline (2007:ix,1,22-25) argues that the peace process of Colombian President Andrés Pastrana was doomed from the beginning. While other Colombians experts would place the blame on the Pastrana administration itself, Kline claims that there was another fundamental reason and his thesis is that the Andean nation is made up of a multitude of political archipelagos, in many of which the national government is not the strongest actor. He also argues that the peace process failed not only because of the many errors that his government committed, but more basically because of the complex political economy of the country. Kline develops five themes which he examines in depth in order to present his argument as to why the peace process did not succeed. The themes are: lack of unity, lack of government continuity, symbolism, the imperial presidency and the devils in the details.

Colonel Luis Alberto Villamarín Pulido (2014) presents a very interesting analysis of the political situation in Colombia during the peace process of Andrés Pastrana. He gives details of the different strategies the FARC and the government used in those years.

To understand the person of President Andrés Pastrana, his goals, fears and his desire for peace, two books were of great value for this project. Gonzalo Guillén (2013), a Colombian journalist, compiles all this information in his book “Andrés Pastrana: Memorias Olvidadas” (forgotten memories).

President Andrés Pastrana himself wrote two volumes of “La Palabra bajo el Fuego” (the word under fire) (2005). In this book, he allows the Colombians to know what he went through even before he became a president of Colombia in 1998. He gives minute details of his political campaign, as well as of the difficult time when he was kidnapped by Pablo Escobar<sup>4</sup>. Then he adds vast information about the peace process with the FARC and his talks with the top leader of FARC Manuel Marulanda Vélez “Tirofijo”.

Virginia M. Bouvier (2009) gives an insight into the current Colombian situation, and also looks back to different peace efforts both by the government and also the Colombian Church, so examples of all these projects are dealt with in detail by some other authors within the book.

In the Foreword to Lederach’s book ([1997]2010:ix) Richard H. Salomon describes Lederach’s framework as being as ambitious in its breadth and depth as it is in its goal. Lederach’s goal is the creation of “sustainable peace” in societies currently riven by division and violence. As Lederach notes, this amounts to a “paradigmatic shift”: it is essential to get away from the traditional framework and activities that make up statist diplomacy and from a concern with the resolution of issues, and move towards a framework providing a focus on the restoration and the rebuilding of relationships.

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<sup>4</sup> Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria (December 1, 1949– December 2, 1993) Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria was a Colombian drug lord and leader of one of the most powerful criminal organizations ever assembled. During the height of his power in the 1980’s, he controlled a vast empire of drugs and murder that covered the globe.  
<http://latinamericanhistory.about.com/od/20thcenturylatinamerica/a/bioescobar.htm>  
[status 09.10.2015].

In his book “Preparing for Peace”, Lederach (1995) explains in detail how to work towards peace, so he develops his theories from his main book ([1997]2010) with emphasis on the exchange negotiations in peace talks.

As part of his integrated framework for peace, Lederach (1999) focuses on reconciliation, so in this book he develops the whole concept and how it worked in different situations while helping building peace in different settings.

The literature compiled for the different aspects of this research has led to a deeper understanding of the subject, namely: the investigation of the roots of the conflict in Colombia since colonial times, the different efforts of peace made by the government and the silence of the official religion in helping to solve problems, rather than fuelling the conflict between farmers and government, thereby giving origin to the guerrilla groups and paramilitary. With this context in mind, the question is, whether sustainable peace and agreement could be reached in a country like Colombia. The conclusion of some peace authors is that the human concept of peace is incomparable to God’s concept of peace. God’s concept of peace is integral and mind blowing. Can this *shalom* be obtained in a world full of hatred and selfishness? The thoughts of the authors on this topic give some indication of what could be done in order to experience biblical peace. The easy answer would be to accept the Gospel of Peace of Jesus Christ, but what about in Colombia, where people profess to be Christian and still kill each other? It is in this sense that the author of this paper, based on the literature researched for this project, proposes a method that will help understand the social root problems in divided societies, a method that will focus on forgiveness and reconciliation as a way to experience the *shalom* the Bible talks about. For this purpose the method of building peace in divided societies by John Paul Lederach will be the basis of this research.

## **1.10 Limitation and restriction of the study**

Since this study could be quite vast to research, the following limitations have been imposed:

- To understand the origins of the violence in Colombia, after a brief overview of the colonial era, the study will be limited to the time period between 1930 and 1964. This is a very important time in the history of Colombia as it helps in understanding the beginning of the internal conflict in the land. It shows

clearly the key problems which initiated the ongoing war in the country. It also shows that even now, no solutions have been found and the Colombians are still dealing with and suffering under these problems to this day.

- Although there were peace initiatives before Pastrana, this study will focus on the peace process of President Andrés Pastrana, which took place under his administration from 1998-2002. Whilst this process used another framework to build peace, it granted the FARC guerrillas a demilitarised zone which made them stronger and was one of the main hindrances to find a peace agreement.
- The peace process under the Pastrana administration took place with the FARC and the ELN, the main guerrilla groups. The study will concentrate on the peace talks between the FARC and the government, because the FARC Guerrillas, the oldest guerrilla group in the country, were the first to initiate talks. The government's discussions with the ELN will not be analysed.
- There are other authorities on the subject of peace-building. Lederach has been chosen for this research, because his method has its basis in the Gospel, which better fits the aim of this study.
- This study will concentrate on the efforts of the Catholic and the Mennonite Churches because they promote peace in a very integral and practical way, for instance, the spreading of the Gospel and social projects.
- This study will analyse Lederach's method in the Colombian context, and describe Lederach's terms when talking about middle-range leadership. His concept will be contextualised for both the Church and the political leadership.

## **1.11 Logical sequence and overview of chapters**

- Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the research topic, its background, aims and the relevance of the project. In a more practical way it presents the tools that are going to be used to carry out this investigation.

- Chapter 2: Defining peace and mission as transformation

In this chapter, the theology of peace will be presented. What is meant by peace in the Bible? What is the biblical foundation for an integral or transforming mission?

- Chapter 3: Understanding the conflict situation in Colombia  
This chapter deals with a brief history of the colonial era in Colombia, the creation of the two political parties and the years of violence between 1930 and 1964 which brought the country to civil war. The results of this unrest in the country for years brought as a result the creation of the FARC Guerrilla. In this chapter the role of the Church both in the colonial time and in the violence will be analysed.
- Chapter 4: Peace efforts in history  
Who are the actors in this conflict and also what has been done in order to find peace in the country? The peace process of Pastrana will be analysed to find out what went wrong and why peace was not achieved.  
The method proposed by Lederach will be described and applied to the peace process of Pastrana. This will include an evaluation of the possible results of the peace process under the Pastrana administration by using Lederach's method.
- Chapter 5: The role of the Colombian Church in light of Mission as Transformation: what are the Catholic and Mennonite Churches in Colombia doing to foster sustainable peace? What does Transforming Mission look like in the Colombian church context?
- Chapter 6: This research closes with a general conclusion and some recommendations to pastors and leaders of the Colombian Church. These come from a deep analysis of the models employed in this research.

## **2 Defining peace and mission as transformation**

The aim of this chapter is two-fold: the first part will explore the meaning of the word peace from different perspectives. These include a general definition of the word peace, how the word is defined from the sociological perspective and what Colombians think about peace. Then the word peace will be analysed from the Bible's perspective and finally, a definition of peace will be given as used in this paper. The second part of the chapter will explore the meaning of Mission as Transformation and its theological foundations.

### **2.1 Lexical meaning of peace**

For the Greeks *eirene* primarily denotes a state, not a relationship or attitude. It is the opposite of *polemos* (war). It is linked with treaties of peace or the conclusion of peace. It is also the opposite of disturbance. In a positive sense, it may denote a peaceful attitude, i.e., the absence of hostile feelings. In the age of Augustus it carried echoes of redemption, but in everyday life, it also implies the legal security of the *pax Romana* (Kittel and Friedrich 1974:207).

*Shalom* has a wide range of meanings. These could be divided into two main groups: the first is peace and kindness. The second is well-being, prosperity and happiness (Jenni 1976:922).

*Shalom* in the OT has in general a strong religious content. To arrive at its theological sense, it must be looked at in context and the concept must also be considered, even where the term itself is not used. Its basic sense is not the narrower one of "peace" but the wider one of "well-being." It may be used for the good fortune of the wicked, for health, and for national prosperity, which implies stability. In many passages it denotes friendly relationships, whether between states (1 Kgs. 5.12) or individuals. It is thus linked with covenant; a covenant that initiates or seals it (Josh. 9.15; Ezek. 34:25). In Ezekiel it is God who makes the covenant that results in peace, so that the term expresses the relationship between God and his people (:207).

The third Webster's International Dictionary defines peace in different ways. Peace is firstly defined as "freedom from civil clamour and confusion", but also from

the political aspect as “a state of security or order within a community provided for by law, custom, or public opinion.”

The second meaning of peace, according to Webster’s, is a “mental or spiritual condition marked by freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions.” This kind of peace has to do with the inner sense of “peace of mind”, as well as “calmness of mind and heart: serenity of spirit”. The third meaning is “a tranquil state of freedom from outside disturbances and harassment.” But peace is also defined as “harmony in human or personal relations: mutual concord and esteem.” And according to Barash and Webel (2014:4) this kind of peace could be called interpersonal and intersubjective.

Peace in general is then defined by Webster’s as a “state of mutual concord between governments: absence of hostilities or war” (1993:1660).

## **2.2 Defining peace from a sociological perspective**

As a sociologist Lederach understands peace not as merely a stage in time or a condition. For him peace is a social construct. He uses this term in the sense that obtaining peace requires a process of building, involving investment and materials, architectural design and coordination of labour, laying foundations, and detailed finish work, as well as continuing maintenance. For Lederach, peace building is more than post accord reconstruction. Lederach understands it as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. So this term involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords ([1997]2010:20).

Galtung (1967:9), a sociologist and a pioneer in the field of peace studies and research, understands the word peace in three senses as follows: first, the word peace is generally understood in the sense of security and calmness. This definition also covers the internal condition of a person, for instance, the person who is at peace and tranquillity with himself. Further, it also refers to the “law and order” approach, by which Galtung means that order needs to be brought into place even if this has to be done by means of threats and force. As a result this concept does not prohibit violence, since a person who is fighting in a war could have peace in his heart at the same time. Secondly, Galtung states that there is “the idea of peace as the absence of

organised collective violence” and this violence occurs normally between nations, classes and tribal groups. Galtung calls this state “negative peace”. It is negative because something undesirable has stopped happening (e.g. the violence stopped, the oppression ended). Galtung does not agree with stressing only “collective violence” because it is a limitation of the meaning of the term. He argues that many authors using such a term do not take into account the occasional homicide, which can be considered as individual violence. Galtung states that it is the transition from this type of violence to a violence that goes beyond the individual and affects an immediate group of people and causes group violence, which constitutes a breach of peace. For Galtung then, the concept of “negative peace” excludes “organised group violence” but not occasional outpourings, irregular demonstrations and group behaviour.

For Galtung, there is also the concept of peace as “positive peace”. This concept is defined by Galtung as a synonym for the good things in the world and it is the “cooperation and integration between human groups” without giving less priority to the absence of violence. Further the concept of “positive peace” excludes extensive violence, but accepts occasional violence. For peace to be positive according to Galtung there must be elements of contact and cooperation among nations. And in this cooperation there should also be space for negative and positive interaction. However, peace as described by Galtung also goes beyond the absence of organised group violence: peace incorporates aspects of equality and the absence of exploitation (:12-14).

Senghaas (1997:13), a German social scientist and peace researcher, understands peace and peacemaking as follows: peace should be understood, in both a domestic and an international context, as a non-violent political process that also aims to prevent the use of force. Its purpose is to use understanding and compromise in order to create particular conditions for coexistence among social groups, states and peoples; conditions whereby their existence is not endangered nor the sense of justice or the vital interests of individuals or groups so seriously violated that - after exhausting all peaceful corrective measures - they conclude that the use of force is inevitable. This understanding of peacemaking, therefore, means it is a task demanding constitutional, institutional, material and emotional prerequisites.

A comparison of these definitions of peace by Lederach, Galtung and Senghaas, leads to the conclusion that all of them are based on preventive diplomacy whose goal is to prevent violence and find ways to build harmony among people. On

the other hand, Galtung and Senghaas agree to the use of force in order to restore peace when all corrective peaceful measures are exhausted.

### **2.3 How do people in Colombia define peace?**

It is important for this paper to give some definitions of peace that have been put forward in the Colombian context. Posada Carbó, Deas and Powell (2002:25) state that although people in Colombia have different ideas of what peace is, to find a common meaning would help them to find ways to face the challenge and find solutions that can lead to building the peace they desire.

In order to give some definitions of how Colombians understand peace, it is necessary to start with the Colombian Constitution. The Colombian Constitution of 1991 was the result of various negotiations and talks between people from the government, people from the guerrillas and normal Colombians after realising that the former Constitution did not respond to the social challenges of Colombian society (Moreno Millán 2014:306).

This constitution was known as “Constitución para la paz” (Constitution for peace). Peace in this constitution was defined as “peace as value”. And these values were defined as the general wellbeing of society, justice and peace. These ideas of values were based on Hobbes ([1651]1993:84) who states that there are passions that incline human beings to seek peace.

Peace was also defined as a principle. In defining peace as a principle, peace must be understood as a fundamental and collective right of society. This means that peace is a fundamental right and a necessary condition so that other rights can fall into place. And for this reason, the state of peace will always be protected by the same Constitution<sup>5</sup> (Moreno Millán 2014:310).

Further to this, Bonilla Pardo (2006:2) asks why there is continual armed conflict after all the constitutional reforms of 1991, and after all the socioeconomic and political changes. Posada Carbó, Deas and Powell (2002:24) maintain that the answer to this question could be related to the way peace has been defined in Colombia. Furthermore, in the last decade peace was identified as the need to find

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<sup>5</sup> Art. 22 Colombian Constitution of 1991: “La paz en un derecho un deber de obligatorio cumplimiento.” (2012:8). To protect this article, article 377 states that articles need to be changed by the Congress of Colombia (2012:124).

solutions for the structural problems of the country and not solutions to the armed conflict. It seems that businessmen, politicians, leaders of the church, the government and the guerrilla would agree on such a definition.

Posada Carbó (2002) undertook this project to show what these people in the country think about peace. For instance, Carlos Lleras de la Fuente, ex director of *El Espectador* Newspaper, first asks the question: what is peace? And then he defines what peace in the Colombian context means for him: “Peace is not only signing some papers”. A signature says nothing if there is not a spirit of peace and of living together; furthermore peace comes when things are in place. For instance, there should be good education and readiness to respect what belongs to another, but most needed would be a transformation in Colombian society<sup>6</sup>.

In an interview with the newspaper *El Tiempo* on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1995<sup>7</sup> the Catholic Church, through Monsignor Pedro Rubiano, voiced another definition of peace: “Peace is not only the silence of and the cessation of rifles between the military and guerrillas. Peace is social justice and not making any attempt on life even at the time of conception” (Posada Carbó et al., 2002:26). The former definition was supported by that of Monsignor Alberto Giraldo in an interview given to *El Tiempo* on July 10<sup>th</sup> 1999<sup>8</sup>. He comments that peace is not just the outcome of peace negotiations. “Peace is something integral which is not far from social justice” (:34).

The FARC guerrilla, Raúl Reyes, spokesperson of FARC, said in an interview to *El Tiempo* in November 7<sup>th</sup> 1999<sup>9</sup>: “Peace is not only the silence of the weapons or the cessation of military confrontations. Peace is the way to build up a society. Only in a society with social justice and economic equity will real peace flourish in all its integrity” (:36).

César Gaviria, ex-president of Colombia refers to peace as the reincorporation of the guerrillas into a political democratic system and the need to drop weapons (Posada Carbó 2002).

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<sup>6</sup> Palabras de clausura de Carlos Lleras de la Fuente, entonces director de *El Espectador* en el seminario Haciendo Paz, Cartagena, 9-11 marzo de 2001.

<sup>7</sup> “A este proceso le falta más pueblo”, (“This process needs more people.”) *El Tiempo*, February 12, 1995. By Bibiana Mercado.

<http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-295560> [status 04.10.15].

<sup>8</sup> Mgr. Giraldo at the closing ceremony of the Episcopal Conference on July 9, 1999.

<sup>9</sup> “El compromiso es la paz con justicia social” (The commitment is peace with social justice), *El Tiempo*, noviembre 7 de 1999.

As we have seen, those in a leadership position in Colombia have different definitions, but how is the term understood by those who have experienced violence in the lower classes of society? Young people who have been affected by war and violence in Colombia were asked about the meaning of peace. These are the results of the interviews made by Claudia Constanza Tovar and Stella Sacipa (2011:40). The authors do not mention names but refer to their interviewees as N1, N2 and so on. The first young man, N4, gives his definition of peace based on structural violence. He first calls for equity and then says: “In our region people are very poor, they should be helped by providing them with housing, opportunities for work and studying.”

A young man (N5) who gives his definition of negative peace understands peace as: “No more kidnapping, no more violence, no more gangs of thieves, no more murder, no more fighting at home, no more swindles, no more abuse from the upper class, since many abuse the lower class because they are poor. This for me is peace.” Again (N4) gives the following definition: “Peace is the end of terrorists and that the guerrillas would stop kidnapping. This would be total peace”. Having seen what some of the victims of violence believe about peace, it is also important to know what Evangelical Christians in Colombia think of peace.

Through different interviews conducted in Colombia, Erica Bowler (2014) introduces the concept that Evangelicals, and more concretely Mennonites<sup>10</sup>, have about peace. The interviews were given between mid-April and mid-May 2013. In some cases, the participants were tagged with a capital letter to preserve their anonymity. In order to collect data, Erica Bowler posed the following question: How do Mennonites define or understand peace? (:81)

“Peace for Mennonites in Colombia is the Hebrew concept of *shalom* that involves not only inner peace, but also harmonious relationships with others, including enemies, and taking care of nature, and transforming structures to promote social justice. So peace involves relationships – personal, family, church, social, etc.”(April 23A) (:82).

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<sup>10</sup> Mennonites are a branch of the Christian church, with roots in the radical wing of the 16th century Protestant Reformation. Part of the group known as Anabaptists (because they rebaptised adult believers), the Mennonites took their name from Menno Simons, a Dutch priest who converted to the Anabaptist faith and helped lead it to prominence in Holland by the mid-16th century. Over the years, Mennonites have become known as one of the historic peace churches because of their commitment to pacifism. <http://history.mennonite.net/> [status 09.10.2015]. (Roth).

Bowler also mentions that even though 77% of the interviewers named peace as “*shalom*” they also saw the importance of justice in the whole concept of peace. Furthermore, Ricardo Esquivia, director of Sembrandopaz (sowing peace) answers her question like this: “Peace is a dynamic moment when people can satisfy their needs within an ethical framework. We have conflict when our basic needs are not met.” (April 17) (:82-83).

Some other participants define peace by using other terms such as the word reconciliation (April 23B), non-violence (April 22B) and internal transformation (April 24C) (:83-85). Finally Mennonites know that in order to understand the term peace, it is necessary to go back to the Bible where the roots of this word are found (:86).

## **2.4 Defining peace from a biblical perspective**

Reflecting on all the definitions given by dictionaries, sociologists and people in Colombia for the word peace, does the Bible teach us something different about the words *shalom* in the Old Testament and *eirene* in the New Testament? Yoder (1987:10) makes it clear that our making of peace will depend on our understanding of the concept of peace.

### **2.4.1 Shalom in the Old Testament**

Coenen und Haacker (2010: 544-549) state that in the academic and scientific field, the words *shalom* and *eirene*, introduce many challenges when their meanings are researched. For instance, the word *shalom* is in most cases translated as *eirene*. This in a sense becomes a challenge, because the word in itself has a wide range of meanings which create problems for someone who translates the word from the original into a specific language. For instance, in the LXX *eirene* is almost invariably used to translate the Hebrew *shalom* which occurs 249 times in the OT. It is part of a phrase connected with coming and going, and with greetings, for example: Gen.25:31; 43:23 as well in Jer. 20:10. where *soteria*, *chairein* are used. It is of great value to know that not only lay people have problems when analysing such words in the biblical context. Coenen und Haacker are right to make the reader aware of all the challenges people face in wanting to define the word peace by taking the original as

the starting point when the real meaning needs to be understood. The challenge increases by not having a knowledgeable background of the original language.

The biblical word “*shalom*”, peace, is rich in meaning. This word speaks of God’s saving will for his people. This word embodies the following terms: righteousness (Isaiah 32, 17; Psalm 85,11), truth (Zechariah 8,19), law (Psalms 119,165), life (Mal 2,5; Dt 12, 9ff), being quiet (1 Kings 8,56), social wellbeing (Isaiah 60,17) and health (Gen 37,14). It is only by the incorporation of all these terms in the word *shalom* that peace can be understood as something positive (Eicher 1984:405).

Due to the breadth of meaning of *shalom*, it makes little sense to take a certain meaning and make it a general rule to satisfy those who research the word. In general terms, when the word is seen from the semantic aspect, it means “well-being”, “a collective welfare”. The word is not only a state of being but also speaks of relationships such as in the case found in 1 Kings 5.12 (Liwak 2011).

Paul Hanson (1984:347) states that the word *shalom* underwent many changes in meaning throughout Israel’s history. In early times the word was understood as “something other than a human achievement”. This view challenged the understanding of *shalom* described by the Prophet Isaiah in which trust in God was required (Isaiah 30:15). Furthermore *shalom* came to be interpreted as the achievement of the royalty of Israel and not of God delivering his people.

In seeking to understand the word *shalom*, Swartley (2006:27) states that *shalom* has many levels of meaning and that the common denominators of its meaning are wellbeing, wholeness, completeness. Furthermore, Kremer agrees with Swartley but also adds to the meaning the word “intactness”. For Kremer (1982:22) all these meanings are fundamental for the understanding of *shalom*. He also emphasises the individual instances where the word is used and the variety of meanings that the word has. For instance, the meaning goes from “prosperity” to “retaliation” and “punishment”.

In digging for more meanings of the word *shalom*, Yoder (1987:10-11) states that “*shalom*” can be defined in three ways: *shalom* refers to the material and physical state of events and this is the most frequent usage of *shalom*, then *shalom* is tied to relationships, and finally *shalom* speaks of a moral sense.

In giving his view of *shalom*, he also puts emphasis on not limiting the meaning of *shalom*, for example just to relationships or to one specific kind of relationship. The meaning of *shalom* is so manifold that in putting emphasis on one

part of its range of meaning, there is the danger of losing the real meaning described in the Bible (:17).

Yoder also sees the practicality of these three aspects of *shalom*. He claims that in order to have *shalom* all of them need to be in place. Yoder gives as an example the story in Jeremiah 14:10-13 and 8:11 to illustrate that to have *shalom* it is necessary to have things in order materially, relationally and morally (:17).

In the story, *shalom* has different meanings. The true prophets were condemning the lack of justice as an important part of having *shalom*. On the other hand the false prophets understood *shalom* as having security, and avoiding any negative event such as war, disease, and hunger. But why did they have two different ways of interpreting *shalom*? For the true prophets, to have *shalom* demanded that things should be as they ought. By their critique of society, it could be stated that things were not right at all. On the material side, even though some prospered, this prosperity was growing alongside poverty, so inequality existed in the midst of the prosperity and the poor were part of it. On the level of relationships, the rich were oppressing the poor, and because oppression is not acceptable in a relationship, this was a sign that things were not as they should be. Lastly, the legal and political systems were not working as they should (:17).

In making unjust laws the leaders were looking only after their own interests and not those of the people of Israel. Thus, by acting in their own interest, they were not operating with integrity and were destroying the hope of real material wellbeing for the community. Furthermore, when thinking about the real meaning of *shalom*, unacceptable things could not be covered but were displayed in the open as the true prophets did. Yoder believes that not all prosperity is a sign of *shalom* or God's blessings. It could be the opposite: a sign of oppression which needs the intervention of God's judgement. He comments: "only the prosperity which comes from moral integrity and includes the wellbeing of all is *shalom* prosperity". Still he emphasises: "It could be stated that justice – not prosperity by itself – becomes the true measuring stick for whether or not there is *shalom*" (:17-18).

What Yoder shares is revolutionary because it opens a new way of thinking about what real *shalom* could be in this present world with all its problems. Can we have peace in this world in spite of oppression, exploitation, hunger, poverty and injustice? (:18). The term *shalom* does not only cover an aspect of quietness or rest,

the word also has the connotation that sometimes, and under certain circumstances, war is needed as is the case in 2 Sam. 11:7 (Coenen & Haacker 2010: 544).

Finally Yoder concludes that when people are looking for the meaning of *shalom* they should refer to the vision of Isaiah 2:2-4. Yoder comments that although the word *shalom* is not in the text, it presents what real *shalom* is. In this picture, people submit to the rule of God and learn from God's way, which is the way they should live. By doing this, *shalom* is the result of people's obedience to God and learning to walk in his ways. Yoder emphasises that when the will of God is done by mankind then *shalom* will be experienced (:19).

## **2.4.2 Eirene in the New Testament**

In order to understand the meaning of peace in NT writing, an analysis and understanding of the role of war and peace in the Greco-Roman world is fundamental. Furthermore, the question to ask here is what was the meaning of *eirene* in classical Greek, and what was the meaning of Pax Romana for those living in the Roman Empire?

The meaning of the word *eirene* in Greek literature is not clear, as sometimes it can mean a socio-political condition or may refer to the Greek goddess Eirene (Swartley 2006:35).

Pax Romana came into existence after Augustus introduced it in the Latin west as the Pax cult in the political arena in the Roman environment. He did that some years before the birth of Jesus by combining Pax Romana with the already existing Roman Concordia cult, to form the Pax cult. The Concordia cult was concerned with internal policy whereas the Pax cult dealt with imperial policy, but in joining them with the concept of *eirene* Pax Romana became an entity which had power for keeping foreign nations subjugated while concord and harmony reigned at home.

The Pax Romana was a time of prosperity and this was related to the term *shalom*, but on the other hand, the Pax Romana used oppression to keep people at peace, mocking the meaning of *shalom* (:37-38).

So how was it for the early Christians when the word *eirene* was used? Was the meaning of peace influenced negatively or positively by the Pax of the Roman Empire? Did they relate the meaning of *eirene* to *shalom*, as *shalom* is translated in the LXX as *eirene*?

Erich Dinkler (1992:88) states that although the Pax Romana did have some influence in the eastern provinces of the Empire where there were frequent troubles, one should not overestimate the impact of this on the terminology used by early Christians. Furthermore, it needs to be remembered that the Greek word *eirene* is rich in meaning and in contrast to *shalom* could be used in untheological contexts.

Although the word *eirene* according to Dinkler was influenced by Greek literature and some citations from secular authors are to be found in the NT, for Dinkler it is clear that the NT use of *eirene* is best understood by the OT use of *shalom* (:89).

Dinkler gives some definitions of the word *eirene* as it appeared in the Koine Greek<sup>11</sup> of Attica. For instance, peace can be defined as a “virtue” which is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Peace can also be considered as “security”, but also peace can be defined in contrast to “disorder” (1.Thess. 5:3). The variety of meanings which are found in the NT are not taken at random, but most of them come from the writings of the apostle Paul (:89). But why is Paul so important in giving meaning to *eirene*? Stuhlmacher (1970:21-69) considers that such theological reflections are not only contained in the writing of the apostle Paul but also in the Lukan redaction and the Johannine tradition. But of these, Paul’s reflections focus on the person of Jesus, Christ’s sacrifice and His death for salvation. In Paul’s view peace is christological because through Christ’s death on the cross He himself offers free atonement and reconciliation as gifts.

Expanding on this picture, Dinkler (1992:94) comments on Ephesians 2:16 and how by dying on a cross Christ abolished enmity; the idea of “abolishing enmity” has to do with the reconciliation that Christ’s blood offers and the same blood is the basis for peace. This passage also places enmity and peace as antithetical, and reaches its peak with the crucifixion of Christ as a climax, which helps understand Christ as the bringer of peace. From this, two things could be concluded. First, peace and reconciliation are linked to Jesus through the blood shed on the cross. And although his death on the cross was considered shameful<sup>12</sup>, it is also considered as peace.

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<sup>11</sup> The Greek language commonly spoken and written in eastern Mediterranean countries in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/koine> [status 26.08.2015].

<sup>12</sup> Repeatedly in the beginnings of Christian theology the idea was to take away from the death of Christ on the cross its meaning of offences and to contemplate it as salvation. In several passages such as Ephesians 2; Col.1:20; 1 Cor. 1:8 and so on that is the intent. The theme is the cross, whereas peace is an interpretation of the cross of Christ (Yoder and Swartley 1992:95).

Second, peace observed as the abolition of enmity has in itself two meanings: reconciliation alters the relationship between God and humans, so the person who is reconciled has free access to God; but it also tears down the walls of enmity and people have free access to the unity of the church (:95).

## **2.5 Definition of sustainable peace and peace in this paper**

Taking into account the definitions of peace given by the secular Webster's Dictionary as "freedom from civil clamour and confusion" and "state of security or order within a community provided for by the law, custom, or public opinion" it could be argued that this kind of peace is a reality for people who live in a context where this is the norm. But those who are in the middle of the conflict also experience the absence of "peace of mind" or "calmness of mind and heart". Galtung (1967:12) states that a person could be fighting in a war and at the same time have this calmness or peace in his heart. But is this possible? What kind of peace is Galtung talking about? Galtung talks about negative and positive peace; both concepts are difficult to understand initially, due to one's preconception of peace. We associate the word "negative" with something bad. But when Galtung uses the word negative he means something that in part is positive, such as in the case of a blood test. When the blood test is negative, it means something positive for the patient and when the result is positive then this could mean bad news. So when Galtung uses the term "negative peace", he means something positive, namely the absence of organised violence. But still according to Galtung there is space for occasional outpourings. On the other hand, for him positive peace means cooperation between nations to create the peace desired in a certain context. But still there is space for violence. It could be concluded that Galtung's concept broadens the understanding of what peace is, but still does not reach total peace. In this sense it could be said that for Galtung there is no total peace. So if there is no total peace in the world, it is necessary to talk about sustainable peace; but what is meant by this? If we look at the UN Charter purposes, the UN is determined "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace" (1945:3). The dictionary definition of sustainable is "able to be maintained at a certain rate or level" (Oxford Dictionary).

It could be argued that because there is not total peace on this earth, then peace needs to be maintained or sustained. And for this purpose the UN takes certain measures in order to maintain peace at any costs through preventive diplomacy (1945:8).

Connie Peck (1998:15) states that “sustainable peace has been elusive in the twentieth century”. Furthermore, in order to attain the goal of a sustainable peace, there is the need of a deeper understanding of the root causes of conflict and the creation of strategies to find solutions towards maintaining peace.

This paper agrees with the definition given by Peck but wants to add a broader understanding of sustainable peace as described by Lederach, who describes sustainable peace as something to be constructed and maintained by society through finding root causes of turmoil, reconciliation, education and maintenance of the process toward sustainable peace ([1997]2010:20).

Considering all the definitions of peace given in this paper it could be agreed that most of them approach what Galtung calls positive and negative peace. Some other definitions have been given derived from what sociologists have researched through the years by analysing the behaviour of people in good and difficult situations, also from attempts by politicians to keep the state of peace, and still others from those who have suffered from violence and wish to have peace in their context. Thus they interpret peace differently, with some following the pattern of Pax Romana, which threatens or forces peace in a context of turmoil, others promoting a peace based on *eirene*, a term which in our days has been influenced by Greek culture, and reflects the wish for inner peace.

Due to the lack of precise meaning in all these given terms, this paper chooses to define peace as something that transcends thought and goes beyond human understanding. This peace is based on *shalom*, a term that contains all the ingredients for the peace humankind is looking for. Furthermore, Pedersen (1926:313-314) writes of *shalom*: “He who has *shalom* has everything, because it implies all the harmony and happiness which anyone can take. Therefore peace is the first and last in life”. This definition sounds good, but this paper perceives a deficit in this meaning because there are people in the world who are in need and are also living in places where war is killing many. Considering the social context, this is also a world full of injustice. This paper also recognises that *shalom* does not promise the absence of injustice, conflict and war in a world where people are cut off from the source of the real

*shalom*. The words of Jesus in Matthew 10:34: “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.” confirm this aspect of division and hatred in the world. So the proclamation of a Gospel of peace does not guarantee that those who hear this message will experience the biblical *shalom*. Furthermore, the book of Acts 5:17-42 shows this reality in context. This paper, therefore, asserts the importance of returning to *shalom* through what God the creator of *shalom* already has done in bringing *shalom*. According to Jacob Kremer (1992:33), this *shalom* is a gift from God and came to a world which was in need of reconciliation between God and mankind. Through his life, death and resurrection, Jesus Christ brought God’s *shalom* to humankind so that they can experience the *shalom* he brought with himself.

That *shalom* brings forth reconciliation between God and humankind. As a consequence it aims to bring forth reconciliation among humans and peoples of the earth as well. Peace with God extends to peace with fellow humans and between them. The two are related, and come from God. Having peace with God through Jesus Christ leads Christians to seek this *shalom* among people, e.g. with those they have hurt, as well as those who have caused hurts to others. Establishing peace with God - that is, the *shalom* Christ brings - works in the deepest part of a person's soul and extends into the relationships of a person’s life.

Already in the Old Testament the story of Jacob and Esau shows how *shalom* can be obtained from God, but at the same there is the need to find this *shalom* with others. Jacob betrayed his brother, so he was in great fear and distress. It could be stated that Jacob did not have *shalom*, but he turned to God and God reassured him of His *shalom*.

Having this peace from God, he took the decision to make peace with his brother. In conclusion it could be stated that if *shalom* is a gift from God, when it is received in the person of Christ, then peace between God and humankind is experienced. The *shalom* received from God needs to be worked out between humans. This means promoting peace as a response to Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:9: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God,” (NASB 2010:1685) whenever peace is at risk or has been broken. This process of arriving at sustainable peace, can be sought by different means on a personal or on an organisational level.

This paper focusses on the method for fostering peace proposed by Lederach because it is based on reconciliation with God as the bases for establishing peace among people, and thus transforming societies, which is a goal of the *shalom* from God.

## **2.6 What is Mission as Transformation?**

The concept “Mission as Transformation” was not born overnight. Already during the revivals that took place in the English Wesleyan Movement and in the German-speaking part of Europe between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were different processes of transformation that changed and influenced towns, villages and cities. Later, after the Thirty Years War, the consequences were palpable through poverty, victims of war, epidemics and orphans. Unfortunately the churches, whose view was very hard and orthodox, did not respond to these calamities. But Christians like Spener, Francke and Zinzendorf acknowledged the need of their time and were involved, not only in sharing the gospel, but also did something in the area of social help. For instance A.H. Francke took care of children, the poor, people who were deprived of their rights and also threatened (Faix, Reimer & Brecht 2009:13-14).

Mission as Transformation was born out of concern for Christians not only to be involved in sharing the Gospel but also to have responsibility in social matters affecting society. Of course, this idea was not at first welcomed and embraced, because of the fundamentalist belief that Christians have been called only to share the Gospel. So the idea of combining evangelism and social concern had always been the subject of debate even from the time when Jerry Falwell opposed Martin Luther King for getting involved in politics instead of preaching the Gospel. Furthermore, evangelicals understood that people were precious to God and their souls needed to be saved first instead of preaching salvation that included body and soul.

Reflecting on the Colombian Church context, the main concern of the Evangelicals in Colombia has always been to save an individual’s soul. On the other hand, the Catholic Church has always taken the lead in social matters concerning the poor and the needy. The idea of implementing Mission as Transformation in Colombia is growing because leaders have discovered that when people’s hunger and needs are satisfied, they hear the message of hope better.

It was in this time that Vernon Grounds ([1969]no date:i-ii) challenged the new evangelical movement growing from fundamentalism to embrace a strong social

concern. To speak about this in Vernon Grounds' time was a very controversial topic, which could have had consequences for his ministry. It was because of his courage in speaking out no matter if controversy would arise that makes him a pioneer in what is called today holistic ministry or Mission as Transformation. Grounds spoke about these ideas in 1967, six years before the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern in 1973 and seven years before the Lausanne Covenant's section five which was urging evangelical social responsibility.

But Vernon Grounds continued the process of developing Mission as Transformation. It was the year 1970, Mission as Transformation was taking shape and it was being practised by many international Evangelicals who were involved in social ministries. Despite the enthusiasm to do this, Mission as Transformation failed to motivate more Evangelicals in the task ahead of them, because basically Evangelicals lacked a clear biblical basis for understanding and being involved in holistic ministry.

It was then in the year 1973 that Evangelicals in the United States prepared the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Concern in which in one of the paragraphs they proclaimed that "they have not demonstrated the love of God to those suffering social abuses" (Samuel and Sugden 1999:ix, 501).

It is good to recognise mistakes, but it is also sad that papers like the declaration of Chicago could be filed away, and people living in individualistic societies forget that there are needs in the world today. There is an urgent need to keep demonstrating the love of God to one's neighbour, no matter their race or religious affinity.

Latin America is blessed by having people like René Padilla and Samuel Escobar, who continued the development of Mission as Transformation in a continent where there is an urgency for this kind of mission. Terms like "Integral and Holistic Mission" were already used in the past before Mission as Transformation came into place, focusing on the "whole gospel to the whole person". By this is meant that "the message of salvation implies also a message of judgement upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist" (:ix).

In 1978 there was the beginning of a concern to explore a theology of development. Through discussions about the topic, in 1983 at the Wheaton Conference a statement on Transformation<sup>13</sup> was issued (:x).

After the Wheaton Conference, the term Mission as Transformation became international and this term was used to mean an integral mission which describes the integration of the gospel and social response. But the term also describes the change that happens in the communities, in the cities and towns, and also in the capitals. Changes happen according to the values of the Kingdom of God and the justice of Jesus as described in Matthew 5,17-20 (Faix, Reimer & Brecht 2009:15).

These changes are going to happen when the Church accepts the challenge to go out of its comfort zone and becomes willing to digest, process and put into practice the words that David Bosch addressed to the Church: the Church “should find a way beyond every schizophrenic position and minister to people in their total need, that we should involve the individual as well as society, soul and body, present and future in our ministry of salvation” (1995:399).

Finally Vinay Samuel explains what Mission as Transformation is: “Transformation is to enable God’s vision of society to be actualised in all relationships, economic, and spiritual, so that God’s will may be reflected in human society and his love be experienced by all communities, especially the poor” (1999:0).

Vinay’s definition looks good at first sight, but on analysing his proposal, one could challenge his definition by saying that to enable God’s vision to be actualised in all aspects of society, there should be first transformation in those who already know God’s vision for this world. The story of the Good Samaritan could be used here to illustrate what needs to happen so that people can experience this transformation. The Priest and the Levite were two people who knew God’s vision for this world, but when the opportunity came to put into practice Mission as Transformation they failed due to their traditions and prejudices. Instead the Samaritan practiced Mission as Transformation in demonstrating compassion and love, giving his time and money

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<sup>13</sup> “According to the biblical view of human life, then, transformation is the change from a condition of human existence contrary to God’s purposes to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God (Jn 10:10; Col 3:8-15; Eph. 4:13). This transformation can only take place through the obedience of individuals and communities to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whose power changes the lives of men and women by releasing them from the guilt, power and consequences of sin, enabling them to respond with love toward God and towards others (Rom 5:5) and making them “new creatures in Christ” (2 Cor 5.17) (Samuel and Sugden 1999:xii).

and did not care about what others thought. To practice Mission as Transformation, it is necessary to have a heart moved with compassion like Jesus and the Samaritan.

## **2.7 Theological Foundation for Mission as Transformation**

Both Bosch (1995:22) and Hardmeier (2009:251) agree that it is not possible to talk about Mission as Transformation without looking at the person of Jesus. Furthermore Kramm (1979:213) put it like this: “A theological foundation for mission is only possible with reference to the point of departure of our faith: God’s self-communication in Christ as the basis which logically precedes and is fundamental to every other reflection.” (Bosch translation).

Bosch (1995:22-23) also states that it is important to see what mission meant for Jesus, but this could not be applied literally to the present time in the practice of missions. It must be remembered that the sociological context of Jesus was different compared to the present.

Bosch describes four notable features of Jesus’ person and ministry (:31) which help in understanding the character of his transformational mission. These four features are: Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of God, his point of view of the Jewish Law, calling disciples and preparing them for ministry, and the great significance of Easter.

Like Bosch, Hardmeier (2009:251) argues that to understand the mission of Jesus, it is necessary to see him from four perspectives which are: Jesus as a person, as a teacher, as a prophet and finally as the one crucified. Because Christ is the basis for mission, it is important to see Christ from different perspectives in order to understand his task on this earth. Hardmeier argues that it is necessary to discover Jesus once again as a person, because he lived a life that is an example of the kind of ministry Christians should perform in this world. He goes on to state that Jesus should not only be seen as the Son of God. Instead Jesus needs to be understood as a person, his incarnation, since becoming a person teaches a lot of the way mission should be lived. Also Jesus needs to be seen as a teacher. He focuses on his mission to the poor and those in different kinds of need, a mission that has a lot of meaning for Christians today. As a prophet, Jesus was able to debate with those in power; the results of these discussions could be used in our society today to confront those in authority in the

way Jesus did. As the crucified one, he teaches Christians both the theological and missional meaning of the crucifixion (:252).

In the theological foundation of transformational mission, this paper puts emphasis on understanding Jesus as a person because of the current discussion among theologians of the West and those in the Two-Thirds World.

Hardmeier (2009:253) develops the discussion by saying that Christians in the West tend to see Jesus as the Redeemer, as the one who was crucified for the sins of humanity and the one who was resurrected from the dead. While this view is correct, it misses other aspects of the life and ministry of Jesus. As a result Christians in the West only have a one-sided view of him.

On the other hand, Christians in the Two-Thirds World view Jesus differently. For instance, in Bangkok in 1982, there was a discussion about the meaning of Christology in a context of poverty and powerlessness. The Christology of the West has little relevance to the issues of the Two-Thirds World and was considered to be too strongly influenced by the occidental mindset.

This discussion was a challenge for theologians in the West, who then tried to find out what this question meant for them in their own contexts, to understand what Jesus really means for them and how they should fulfil their mission (Gitari 1987:10).

Here, Padilla (1987:29-44) helps in understanding the two different views, i.e. of those in the West and of Two-Thirds World Christians.

First, Christians in the Two-Thirds World start by seeing Jesus from the historical perspective and they then develop a Christology from this viewpoint. They try to understand Jesus first as a person and then as the one crucified. So they observe Jesus and his life, the way he moves among people and his reaction towards the problems of his days. This way of looking at things allows Christians to see the social dimension of the Gospel and creates world respect. This view also prevents Christians from having an abstract Christology with little understanding of the reality of the world (Hardmeier 2009:255). However, Padilla (1987:41) stresses here that by rediscovering the historical person of Jesus, his service will become a central focus in our mission to this world. His life will also provide an example of the one who came to serve and not to be served.

Second, Padilla stresses that for the theologians of the Two-Thirds World the death of Jesus was a historically conditioned outcome (:42). By this Hardmeier (2009:255) means that when Jesus died, he suffered not only as the redeemer but also

as a person who suffered the consequences of acting out of his convictions. This allows Jesus to identify with those who suffer as he also suffered at the cross.

Thirdly, the theology of the Two-Thirds World highlights the historical dimension of the Christian life. The contemplation of the Christian dimension and the right view of Jesus lead to a very strong commitment to the world and identification with those who are suffering in the world.

Not all of these views from the Two-Thirds World are in agreement with certain theological statements, but they are more related to the practice of the Gospel. On the other hand, the perspective of the West is less practical but tends to be more doctrinally correct (:256).

Hardmeier states that discussion of this matter could continue, but he also sees the importance of knowing the perspective of the Two-Thirds World, because having the right view of Jesus could be more relevant to Christians in the daily challenges they face in this world (:256).

Hardmeier now turns to another important fact of the person of Jesus: his incarnation. He states that by the end of the 1980s, the concept of transformation was completed by adding the idea of the incarnation. Especially in Manila in 1989 it was stated that mission must be incarnational. This brought a change of thought where not only Matthew 28 was seen as the basis for mission, but the whole life of Jesus: not only the cross and his resurrection, but the model of how he served people in social need (:13).

This new way of thought has also brought changes in the way people need to be approached in missions. It is no longer necessary to treat people as in colonial times, approaching people as though missionaries had the whole answer and truth, but to treat people as they are and also to serve them in their world of needs and with the Gospel. This way of seeing mission has a lot of potential in today's postmodern world. This theological foundation of Mission as Transformation closes with the words of Hardmeier when he sums up as follows: the development of the evangelical mission towards Mission as Incarnation and Transformation corresponds to the task of Jesus, to be sent as he was sent, and this concept can claim to have a solid Christological foundation (:295).

## 2.8 Conclusion

Looking at the different meanings of the word peace, it is amazing to discover so many different perspectives, depending on the lenses used to look at them or the way the professional fields have defined them. Not having a consensus on the meaning of the word, it is necessary for this paper to choose a definition that is relevant to the Colombian context. This definition is twofold. First there is the ideal definition of peace, which goes back to the root of the word from a biblical standpoint. *Shalom* is chosen because of its range of meaning. Also, *shalom* cannot be limited in its meaning, as can many other definitions of peace. Instead, *shalom* helps in keeping an open mind as to what peace in the Colombian context might really look like. In choosing *shalom* in the vision of Isaiah 2:2-4, an ideal definition of peace for this research, it is suggested that this is the thread that Colombians may have to follow if peace is to be found.

Colombians dream of a country where massacres, injustices, kidnapping and, inequalities are stopped and where people are able to live the dream of Isaiah 2.4; where those in the guerrilla and government convert their weapons into ploughshares, and where differences between them do not lead to war, but rather to dialogue and finding solutions for the country; and where instructions to fight are changed to instructions to build their nation, exemplifying what *shalom* is.

Secondly, a more down to earth meaning of peace is based on Ephesians 2. 14 “For he Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.” Contextualising this verse in Colombia, this is very relevant to the ongoing hatred and conflict in there. This concept of peace based on the person of Jesus Christ is closer in meaning to those who are facing the division between guerrilla and government. This concept of peace allows Colombians to make mistakes in their desire to reach that peace, because in the person of Christ there is enough room for it. This concept of peace needs to be presented to the Colombian society through Mission as Transformation as a vehicle in order to go back to *shalom*. Mission as Transformation offers this possibility by getting to know the message of the Gospel and the person of Jesus. It also presents the opportunity of enjoying the benefits of the practical side of this mission, through all the different projects run by Christians who see the need for bringing a helping hand to those who are suffering in the midst of internal conflict.

The following chapter deals with the historical situation of Colombia and what brought the country to an internal armed conflict.

### **3 Understanding the conflict situation in Colombia**

The aim of this chapter is to go back in history and look at the different facts which brought the country to war. So this chapter will concentrate on the colonial era and the position of the Catholic Church, the origin of the two traditional parties, a description of the violence in Colombia in the period 1930-1964 and the response of religious communities, and finally the creation of Guerrilla FARC<sup>14</sup> as a consequence of the violence.

#### **3.1 The Colonial Era**

Colombia has known violence and division among the indigenous people, since even before the Spanish conquerors came to the Colombian territory in 1499. An analysis of the Pre-Columbian groups reveals that they were chronically at war with each other. Some researchers of these cultures assumed that the reason for these wars was to secure possession of the land (Safford and Palacios 2002:21).

When Spain came to invade the area now known as Colombia, they intensified the division and violence in two respects. First, they entered the area of present Colombia from several directions, and claimed authority over various parts of the land. As a result, they confirmed the fragmentation that was caused by the mountainous topography (:27).

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<sup>14</sup> Farc ( Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia- Ejército del Pueblo) The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army.



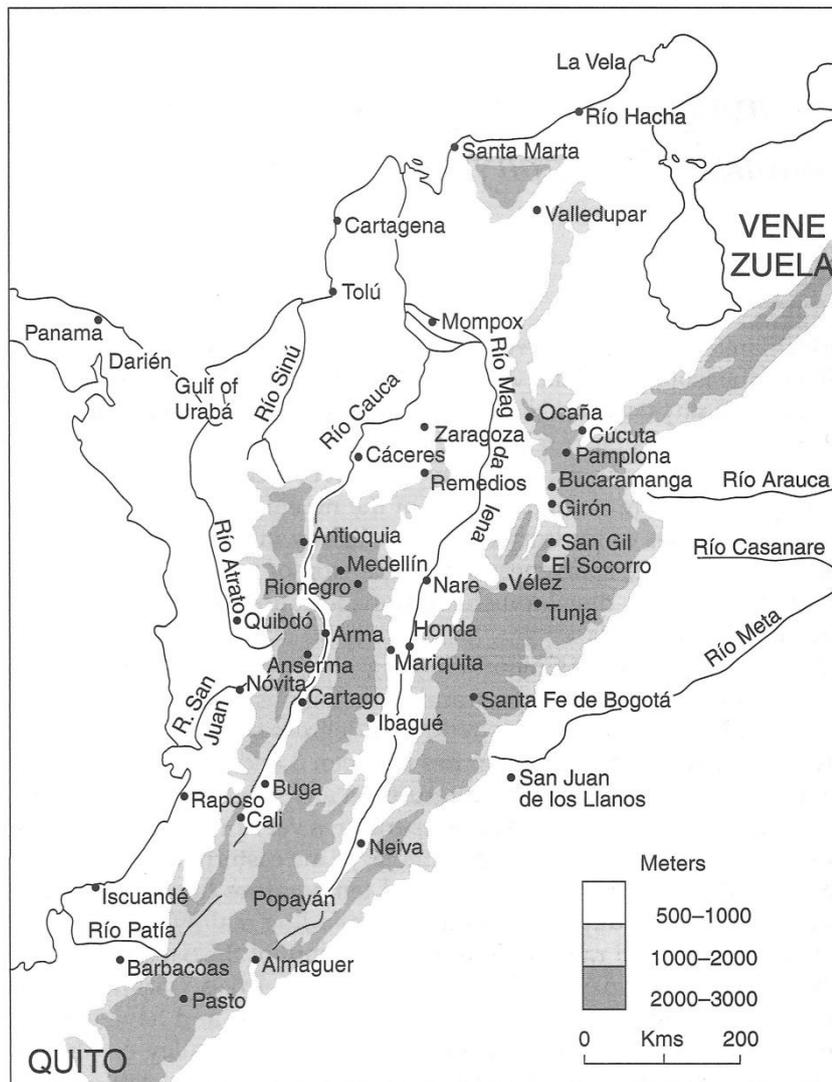
Illus. 2 Routes of Conquest Source: Warwick<sup>15</sup>

Secondly, they increased violence by expecting the indigenous people to feed them as well as to enrich them with gold. The relationship between these two was peaceable as long as the indigenes provided the conquerors with goods. As a result, whether they were peaceable or bellicose at first, many indigenous people ended up rebelling against their European masters or fleeing from their harsh demands (:29).

As the Spanish conquerors started to settle, they also experienced difficulties in two respects. First, due to the topography<sup>16</sup> of the land, they controlled only islands of territory (:27).

<sup>15</sup> Illus. 2 Routes of conquest. From Warwick Bray, *The Gold of El Dorado* (London, 1978). In: Safford, Frank and Palacios Marco (2002).

<sup>16</sup> Colombian topography is divided into three major zones- the eastern highlands; the West, centring on the basin of the Cauca River; and the Caribbean coast, including the basin of the lower Magdalena River.



Illus. 3 Relief Map Source: McFarlane<sup>17</sup>

So in the interior of the country they dominated only the eastern parts of the highlands. They settled in cities in the Upper Magdalena Valley, but they did not have control of the country as a whole (:35).

Secondly, they could not subjugate all the Pre-Columbian cultures who were settled in places which the Spanish invaders could not reach. An example of this was the rebellion that happened by the end of the 1520s when Spanish demands and violence caused many natives to flee into the Sierra Nevada in Santa Marta, where the Spanish found it difficult to use horses. This consequently motivated the Spanish governors to start new incursions further inland, in the hope of finding gold or enslavable Indians (:30).

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<sup>17</sup> Illus. 3 Relief Map, with some of the cities at the end of the colonial period. From Anthony McFarlane, *Colombia before Independence* (Cambridge, England 1993). In: Safford, Frank and Palacios Marco (2002).

The studies by Safford and Palacios (2002:ix) suggest that the topography of Colombia is one of the main challenges to the unity of the Colombians. It is the topography of Colombia that has fragmented the land and has found its expression in economic atomisation and cultural differentiation. Also, the country's historically most populated areas have always been separated by its three mountainous regions: the East, the West and the Caribbean. As a result, the three regions developed distinct racial and cultural profiles (:7).

The topographical challenges and the inability to control the whole country produced crises of authority on the part of the Spanish invaders. They sought to strengthen the effective authority of the state throughout the eighteenth century. They saw the need to strengthen the military, collecting more taxes and achieving greater administrative effectiveness. But by doing this, they only sowed the seeds of colonial rebellion (:54).

Another problem that created conflict later on for the different groups living in the colony and after the colonial era was miscegenation<sup>18</sup>. When the Spanish conquerors arrived in the Caribbean Islands they found many indigenous people living there, but sadly these people were subjugated and in many cases killed. This was also the case in the Colombian territory, and in addition to this, by the end of the colonial era in Spanish America, miscegenation among the white, indigenous and black people had produced a rich ethnic mosaic. For instance, the indigenous people represented 4.5 percent of the population, the white people, although they multiplied very quickly, were only less than a fifth part of the population, the mestizos no matter their origin surpassed the third part and the black people made up four percent (Yunis Turbay [1937]2009:51-62). This multicultural pot brought with it problems of identity and the desire for power on the part of the Spanish people. Simón Bolívar<sup>19</sup> in his famous "letter from Jamaica" (1815) already states that the problems of Latin America were not due to race but to different political opinions and the ambition of some people that had afflicted many American nations. He continues by saying that there had never

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<sup>18</sup> Miscegenation: a mixture of races; *especially*: marriage, cohabitation, or sexual intercourse between a white person and a member of another race. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/miscegenation> [status 14.08.2015].

<sup>19</sup> Simón Bolívar, byname The Liberator or Spanish El Libertador (born July 24, 1783, Caracas, Venezuela, New Granada [now in Venezuela]—died December 17, 1830, near Santa Marta, Colombia), Venezuelan soldier and statesman who led the revolutions against Spanish rule in the Viceroyalty of New Granada. He was president of Gran Colombia (1819–30) and dictator of Peru (1823–26).

been a cry of protest against any colour or race, except against the Spanish conquerors. In the Colombian territory there had always been perfect harmony among those who were born in this land.

So by the end of the colony, there was a territory full of disorder and anarchy, where regions had their own government and corruption. By the end of May 1781 the Comuneros<sup>20</sup>, tired of ever more taxes, got together in an estimated group of 15,000 or 20,000 in number to hand in a list of thirty-five Comunero demands. They wanted the taxes to be ended or reduced (Safford and Palacios 2002:66). They also requested that future administrative appointments should preferentially go to Creoles<sup>21</sup> rather than to the Spanish. This demand was based on the anger the Comuneros felt against the Spaniards.

In the midst of this riot, the Catholic Church mediated through the archbishop in order to cool down the fervour of the rebellion. Having understood the Comuneros' demands to avoid convulsion in the capital, the Archbishop persuaded the rebels to stop and return to their places. Once this was achieved, the royal government carried out exemplary punishments. José Antonio Galán, who had continued in rebellion after the capitulation, was hanged with three other Comuneros in January 1782; some parts of their bodies such as heads, hands, and feet were placed on poles in public places and squares of the capital (:67).

Not all the Spanish officials agreed with the brutality with which the rebels were treated and killed. For instance, Francisco Silvestre, the governor of the province of Antioquia, believed that a policy of conciliation was needed to overcome distrust between Spanish and Creoles. He suggested placing them reciprocally in political, military, and church positions. With the absence of such a policy, he predicted constant envy, disunion, and rivalry, which would cause Spain to lose New Granada, the present Colombia (:68).

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<sup>20</sup> The comuneros were those from the lower class and from the mestizo race. They were in majority artisans, landlubbers and farmers.

<sup>21</sup> The term "*Creole*" in the Colombian context is applied to those who were born in the Colombian territory whose parents were Europeans. The Creole represented the Upper class due to the level of education and knowledge of the country. They should be considered the first Colombians as they were the ones who awoke the feeling of liberty and led the revolution against the Spanish. "Los habitantes y la población de Colombia". <http://www.banrepcultural.org/node/22755> [status 14.08.15]. American-born Spaniards (creoles) also played a role in administration, but generally at middle to lower levels. Creoles tended to be subordinated for a number of reasons. It was a general principle of Spanish administration that royal administrators should not govern in the lands of their birth. Spanish rulers believed that men governing outside their homelands would be more loyal to the Crown (Safford and Palacios 2002:56).

Although the Creole discontent with Spain and the Spanish conquerors was great, the decisive moment for the coming independence of New Granada, as well as the rest of Spanish America, was accelerated by the crisis, and the disappearance of the Spanish Monarchy (:80).

It was the disappearance of legitimate authority in Spain, all the uncertainties about the future fate of Spain, and the insecurity of colonial officials that activated and intensified the mutual distrust of Spaniards and the Creole elite, and which led to a series of revolutions on the continent and the fight for independence from Spain (:82).

It was under the leadership of Simón Bolívar, and his decisive victory over the Spanish army at the battle of Boyacá in August 1819, that General Bolívar became the preeminent leader of the independence movement. He also became, not surprisingly, the first elected President of the Republic of Colombia (:104-106).

Building the new Republic was a challenge for Bolívar as a new President; the challenge of bringing together Venezuela, New Granada and Ecuador was not easy. In the constitutional convention at Cúcuta, the question debated was about the best kind of government for the Republic: should it be centralised or more loosely federative? The majority of the delegates were in favour of a unitary or centralist system (:107).

The constitution adopted in Cúcuta in 1821 turned out to be centralist and set the pattern for Colombian constitutions until the 1850s (:108).

During the 1820s, more conflicts emerged that are important to note as they foretell the breakup of Colombia, and also because they found long-term expression in national politics: for instance, the developing contention over the power and privileges of the church. The aspiration of the educated elite, especially of lawyers, to introduce liberal ideas and institutions into Colombia generated much controversy among the population. The clergy felt threatened as such ideas would undermine the traditional authority of the Church. Even before the beginning of the independence era, the Enlightenment had made its way into Colombia and it appears to have begun to discourage the entry of members of elite families into the professional clergy. Their interest turned to politics as this opened new career possibilities for the elite.

On the other hand, the clergy was also not unified in attacking elite liberalism, as some priests supported these ideas and policies (:112-113).

Colombia was collapsing in the early months of 1830, and Bolívar was clearly in decline. He was physically atrophied and visibly close to death. By April 1830, many, including Bolívar, doubted that even he could hold the republic together (:129).

Bolívar's vision was vanishing for multiple reasons. The independent administration in Caracas and Quito made it difficult to accept being governed from Bogotá; lack of representation in civil government contributed to the sense of regional rivalry in both Venezuela and Ecuador. Regional economic and social differences also played a role. Finally, with the decline of Bolívar's fame and health, the destiny of Gran Colombia was sealed (:131).

Bolívar died in Santa Marta, Colombia and before he died he pronounced the following words: "Colombians! My last wishes are for the welfare of the fatherland. If my death contributes to the cessation of party strife, and to the consolidation of the Union, I shall descend in peace to the grave" (Vargas Martínez [1934] no pagination).

Bolívar died in the midst of many challenges and political party strife. Furthermore, the Catholic Church, by its extreme connection to politics, failed to fulfil the task of building peace in the colonial time.

### **3.2 The Clergy in the colonial era**

The position of the church in the colonial era in Colombia was one of conquering no matter what method was used to accomplish their goal of evangelisation in the newly discovered continent. To understand its mission, it is necessary to go back to the words of Cyprian's famous dictum, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("there is no salvation outside the [Catholic] church"). This phrase was conceived in a time of turmoil in the first half of the third century. Added to the Papal bull *Unam Sanctam* of Pope Boniface VIII (1302), Cyprian's phrase ended with "we declare, state, define, and proclaim that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff" (cited in Bosch 1995:218).

Bearing this goal in mind, the time of colonisation was a savage time for the indigenous people living in Colombia. Melvin E. Page (2003:128) states that the sixteenth-century Spanish conquistadores' goal was to extract the wealth of the new world. So using savage methods they subjected the Indians, leading them to believe that through labour and the ministrations of the Catholic Church, civilisation was to come to them. Orlando Costas (1974:245) is right to say that mission in the colonial

era was an instrument for dominating the Indians. But in the midst of this scenario, the Catholic Church also contributed to the wellbeing of the Indians. For instance, they brought pressure for the New Laws of Indies in 1546 to be put into power. These Laws sought to curb the power of the conquistadores and provide good treatment and preservation of the Indians. The priests showed a lot of compassion to the Indians as they evangelised them. These were the first sources of unrest between the Catholic priest and the conquistadores, which led to hostilities between governors and bishops. It is worth mentioning the work of Fray Tomás Ortiz, O.P., Protector of the Indians, who worked in Santa Marta, northern Colombia, Father Domingo de las Casas and St. Pedro Claver, S.J., who worked among the Negro slaves in Cartagena (Magner 1940:197).

The situation of the Catholic Church remained much the same throughout the colonial era up to the nineteenth century with the creation of the political parties. In order to keep its status, the Church always sided with one of them.

### **3.3 Origins of political parties**

Colombia is a nation that has been politically ruled up to the present day by two parties, the liberals and the conservatives. These two parties emerged in the nineteenth century. Safford and Palacios (2002:134-135) state that the division between these political groups that later became Colombia's Liberal and Conservative parties may be understood from several perspectives. The conflict started between liberals and Bolivarians in 1826-1830. In 1831 the victorious liberals began to split into two factions: liberals exaltados ("extremists" or "purists") a group who wanted to exclude Bolivarians from political office, versus moderate liberals, who sought a broader political peace through the reincorporation of the Bolivarians. Conflict between the two liberal factions became more explicit in the presidential elections of 1836, which induced antagonism and bitterness over the distribution of power. It was the civil war of 1840-1842 that brought a virtually irreconcilable antagonism between liberal dissidents and a moderate Bolivarian government party, which in 1848 took the name of the Conservative Party.

Palacios ([2006]2007:1) travels to the nineteenth century and states that the four civil wars (1876-77, 1885-86, 1895, and 1899-1902) provide evidence of

disagreement among those in the Colombian bourgeoisie about how to structure the relationship of the state with the individual, the Catholic Church, and the regions.

Carlos Sixirei (2011:17) comments that one of the characteristics of the contemporaneous history of Colombia is the use of violence in political relationships. He adds that these roots of violence come from the past. In Colombia, over two centuries, the fight for power was engaged physically with weapons in hand.

He also adds that to be a conservative or liberal in the beginning was not based on principles or doctrines established by the political group. People were conservative or liberal depending on the rivalry they had with a relative, neighbour or with the civil or ecclesiastical authority (:17).

On the other hand, another factor that contributed to the rivalry of these two parties was the intimate relationship between the Catholic Church and the conservative party that was known at the Catholic Party. This in a sense was not the best move to find solutions between the two parties. Furthermore after the Colombian priests had been summoned by Pope Leo XIII in 1898 in Rome, the Church hierarchy in Colombia put into practice the Syllabus of Errors<sup>22</sup> (:28).

This Syllabus was against liberalism, naturalism, socialism, and rationalism. In Colombia, both the high hierarchy and the most remote priests were guided by “The Teachings of the Church on Liberalism”, a document that describes the sinful nature of the anomaly called liberalism and how to fight it. The Bishop of Pasto, Fray Ezequiel Moreno, a radical in his hatred towards liberalism, expressed his fervour as he wrote:

“Liberalism has made unspeakable gains, and this horrible reality is sadly proclaimed by the failure of all efforts to reconcile those who love the altar and those who despise it: between Catholics (that is to say, Conservatives) and Liberals (that is, atheists). Once more I testify that LIBERALISM IS SIN, fatal enemy of the Church and of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, ruin of the peoples and of nations; and desiring to teach this even after my death, I request that in the hall where my body is displayed, and even in church during the funeral, a large sign should be displayed which says: “LIBERALISM IS SIN” (as cited in Palacios [2006]2007:73).

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<sup>22</sup> The Syllabus of Errors (Latin: *Syllabus Errorum*) was a document issued by Holy See under Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1864. The Syllabus was divided into ten sections which condemned socialism, rationalism, liberalism and others.

In support, Sixirei (2011:29) states that the antiliberal obsession reached such an extreme that for example during the 1922 presidential campaign, the Bishop of Medellín, Monsignor Crespo, made a political tour and refused to give public absolution to the Liberals who did not renounce their political ideologies and vote against their own presidential candidate. Sixirei considers this a negative result for the Conservative Party in building peace, which also led to the consequences of the violence that was to come to the country in the years to come, more specifically in the time of La Violencia<sup>23</sup>.

This first part of history already shows some of the roots of the current problems in Colombia. As indicated by Sixirei, anyone who has lived in Colombia knows that when talking about the violence, people tend to show negative feelings such as fear and uncertainty. It is like being caught in crossfire and nobody knows where the first shot will come from, and it was common in the days of violence for someone to be killed simply by being in the wrong place or by having the wrong label, either liberal or conservative.

The average Colombian tends to believe that the problem was caused by certain people who imposed their authority on the weak ones. Sixirei states that it was like this in the beginning of the history of Colombia, but it is wrong to blame just a few individuals for 150 years of continual massacres and civil wars. To believe this is not to recognise that the country has failed to create instruments that allow Colombians to replace massacres by dialogue (:11).

The next 34 years in Colombian history are marked by so much violence initiated by politicians and sadly supported by the Catholic Church. As a result of this era, the Guerrilla FARC was created as a way of retaliation because of the violence the government used against farmers.

### **3.4 The Violence in Colombia - Colombia between 1930 -1964**

“Photographic documentation reinforces the memory of our identity which is blurred by each act of destruction, by the death of each person concerned and by the

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<sup>23</sup> La Violencia (The Violence) was the ten-year (1948–58) period of civil war in Colombia, between the Colombian Conservative Party and the Colombian Liberal Party whose respective supporters fought most battles in the rural countryside.

increasing lack of oral transmission, effectively and efficiently discredited by pragmatism” (Marinello 2002).



*Illus. 4* “The Farmer Christ” Source: Guzmán<sup>24</sup>

The period from 1885 to 1930 was called the “Conservative Hegemony”. In this period the Conservative Party was in power. In these years from 1914 till 1930 there was an apparent political peace in the capital and the main cities of Colombia. However in the small towns and valleys, inter-party political violence was animated by fanatical priests and local political bosses (gamonales) who assassinated liberals at the hands of conservatives: the response of the liberals was to organise guerrillas whose purpose was to attack the big farmers in the East of the country (Sixirei 2011:27).

Monsignor Germán Guzmán Campos, Orlando Fals Borda and Eduardo Umaña Luna ([1962]2010:37) state that the nation of Colombia has no exact idea of what the period known as “La Violencia” (The Violence) was and that the Colombians never suspected the brutality of it, nor the consequences with regard to structures. Violence dissolves many things in the social dynamic of people; it creates psychological challenges, tensions and a moral crisis that was transcendental for the peasants.

They also state that the Violence cannot be understood without having some historical antecedents. These dates are key to understanding this period.

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<sup>24</sup> “The Farmer Christ” Source: Guzmán 1962.

### **3.4.1 The 1930s and the conflict stage initiated by the government of President Enrique Olaya Herrera, member of the Liberal Party**

President Enrique Olaya Herrera inaugurated what is called “the Liberal republic”. When compared to the happy 1920s, the Liberal years were rigid. For instance, between 1930 and 1945 annual growth of GDP slowed from 3.8 percent to 1.6 percent. Colombia was facing the external shocks of the Great Depression and the Second World War (Palacios [2006]2007:94).

The election of President Olaya somehow changed the horizon of Colombia. Olaya was a man of strong personality, of individualistic ideologies, and with great capacities to govern. He carried out a centrist, solid and very tidy administration (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:38).

Although he was a capable man to govern, it needs to be remembered that he was leading a government where the majority were from the Conservative Party. It is interesting to note that the Conservative Party gave power to the Liberals without any opposition, in a way that was not known in the country hitherto. There was no reason to believe that the victory of the Liberals would exalt the political sectaries in these years. The Conservative Party was very helpful to the government of Olaya Herrera. However, the Liberals who had triumphed in the 30’s started persecution against the defeated conservatives in two specific regions of the country: Boyacá and Santanderes<sup>25</sup>.

Olaya Herrera’s government endeavoured to stop the violence, but it was impossible because once the Liberals started, the other party desired to take revenge.

The Conservative Party was persecuted and many people were killed or they were submitted to a relentless system of terror, and conservatives shed their blood daily on the ground of the fatherland (:39).

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<sup>25</sup> Region in middle Colombia which was a main focus of the violence time.

### **3.4.2 The 7<sup>th</sup> of August of 1946 with the change in power under President Mariano Ospina Pérez, member of the Conservative Party**

In 1946 Colombia registered another political change under the presidency of Mariano Ospina Pérez, a member of the Conservative Party. His wish was to have national unity and he invited the political parties to set aside their hatred. He wanted to be the president of all Colombians (:41).

During his administration there was great political and social tension leading towards anarchy. This was reflected in strikes in all the important economic sectors all over the country in September 1946 (:43).

The Colombian system started crumbling, possibly with the populist challenge of Gaitán in 1944-1948, but it was also weakened by the partisan violence that brought to an end the Liberal Republic in the presidential election of 1946.

### **3.4.3 The 9<sup>th</sup> of April of 1948 with the assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitán and its consequences**

Gaitán's populist movement had its beginning in the urban growth and inflation of the 1940s, which established the basis for mass mobilisation. Gaitán condemned those who had become wealthy by hoarding in time of famine, and attacked the ostentation of the rich (Safford and Palacios 2002:316-317).

Jorge Eliecer Gaitán, turned out to be the first accuser of the acts of the government and also one of the most outstanding figure in Colombian politics. For instance, in his young years as a lawyer, he investigated in situ The Banana Massacre (Massacre de las bananeras) that was illustrated in a fictional version by the Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez in his novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude". This massacre of workers for the United Fruit Company that occurred on December 6, 1928 in the town of Ciénega near Santa Marta, Colombia, shook political consciousness and determined the beginning of the end for the Conservative Hegemony. In doing this research he was able to show the extent and range of the government repression (Sixirei 2011:32).

In the local elections of 1946 and 1947, violence erupted once again. It is estimated that in 1947 some 14,000 people died. As a protest against the violence, some 100,000 followers of Gaitán gathered together in February 1948 in the Plaza

Bolívar in Bogotá dressed in mourning black. On this occasion Gaitán not only called for moral restoration but also in his speech that is known as the “peace prayer” he made an effort to think about the peace the Colombians at that time were in need of (Safford and Palacios 2002:318).

Gaitán also stood up and published in the local newspaper “No más sangre” (no more blood). He also asked the president to do something to stop the ongoing violence (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:43).

Gaitán was assassinated on 9 April 1948. Almost every Colombian condemned it, but nobody thought of the consequences of his death. Gaitán was leading a movement that was needed in those days, a movement of hope for a solution to the secular problems that the country was facing. His voice was the voice of the peasant, so that on learning that he was killed, they remembered his words:

“If I advance, follow me; if I go back, push me; if I betray you, kill me; if they kill me, avenge me” (:51).

The words of Gaitán “If they kill me, avenge me” started to be a reality first in Bogotá and then escalated in many regions of Colombia (Palacios [2006]2007:141-142).

On the same date of 9<sup>th</sup> April, many inmates escaped from many prisons in the country, among these prisoners a man who had changed his name to “Tirofijo”<sup>26</sup> escaped from the prison in Ibagué. This man found refuge in the mountains of Castel in Huila. There he got together with José Leal (Giradot), Reinaldo Pérez (Carasucia) and Cicerón Murillo (La Hipa). They were all peasants of the region.

Tirofijo talks about revolution, in order to avenge the blood of Gaitán, to oppose the Government and protect these men from the threatened revenge by the police. He warns them to be on the alert and then on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1948, the first meeting in the north of Huila takes place to organise the fight that later on was called “The Violence” (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:54-55).

The violence increased with the election of the President Laureano Gómez Castro (1950-1953). Castro was elected on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1949. It was declared that his election was invalid due to corruption in the whole process of his candidature.

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<sup>26</sup> Manuel Marulanda Vélez (Pedro Antonio Marín; “Tirofijo”), (born May 12, 1930?, Génova, Colombia—died March 26, 2008, unknown mountain encampment, Colombia), Colombian guerrilla leader who was a founder (1964) and commander of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Manuel-Marulanda-Velez> [status 09.10.2015].

Laureano Gómez could not finish his mandate as president because of changes in the way the president could be replaced, and because of his sickness. So the government was handed over to the ministry of Doctor Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez.

But this change increased the violence in the country even more. Guerrillas were organised better and the government fought back drastically. In the middle of this violence some priests wrote to the government criticising the way things were being handled. For instance, the way to bring peace to the regions was not by attacking the peasant population, burning their houses, stealing their animals. It was because of these things and assassinations and rape that people in the fields were joining the guerrillas and wanting to die fighting for justice (:59-60).

The violence found its first truce by the establishment of the Military government that started on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1953, when it rolled out a peace campaign towards those who were armed by the army officers (:117-118).

Many guerrilla fighters and contra guerrillas responded to the call of the Government by giving up their weapons and their people. It was a very dramatic agreement where 3,540 combatants gave up their weapons in August and in September 1953. In the whole Colombian territory a total of 6,500 tired and sick combatants wanted to come back to their homes and families. There was a decrease in the violence that year for about a year. Unfortunately, the second wave of violence started in 1954 and went on till 1958.

People were still hurt and wounded by the violence; only a spark was needed to reinitiate the conflict once again. Sadly this spark came in the form of violence. On 12<sup>th</sup> November 1954, the army massacred some peasants. Also a guerrilla leader David Audio Cantillo, alias “Triumphant captain” was assassinated. Then once again Army and peasant confronted each other to the death. This period of violence was even more barbaric and intense than the first one. The fighting was restricted to some departments such as Tolima, Huila, Caldas, Valle, Cauca and part of Casanare (:117-120).

The country was on the brink of catastrophe, but in order to avoid this, Alberto Lleras Camargo was elected President on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1957. Through decree number 0942 dated 27 May 1958 Camargo gave power to the “Junta Militar” which was formed by five Generals of the Army, to investigate the causes of the violence. The goal set by this commission was to go to the small towns to investigate the source of violence. This brought a positive reaction from those who had experienced loss in the

midst of the conflict and the country entered the second truce after the years of violence (:129).

### **3.5 Creation of Guerrilla FARC**

The ideology of the Guerrilla FARC is marxism-leninism whose objective was and is to finish with social, politics and economic inequalities in Colombia and its goal is to establish a socialist and a bolivarian State (Brienza 2007:43).

Guzmán Campos, Fals Borda and Umaña Luna ([1962]2010:161) state that the armed conflict and coercion resulted in the creation of different warlike offensive-defensive groups that constitute the nucleus of violence in Colombia. They mention some groups such as the displaced people<sup>27</sup>, the guerrillas<sup>28</sup>, the command<sup>29</sup>, la cuadrilla<sup>30</sup> (gang) and the birds<sup>31</sup> (los pájaros). Their educational level is not very high. The majority cannot read or write. In all these groups the majority is constituted by peasants. They are aged between 14 and 35 years old. They are dedicated to working the land and raising cattle. Many of them have lost their land because of violence, but they still hope to return as they believe that with their fight, one day freedom and justice will come. A particularity of these people is that they profess to be Catholic. Furthermore Guzmán Campos, *et al.*, ask why they kill each other. Why does hatred surpass all their religious values, if not all their values? (:161).

Further to this, some of the peasant bandit leaders became popular heroes. Characters such as Sangrenegra, Chispas, Capitán Venganza filled the police records and newspapers and left a strong memory in the peasant community. Some of these leaders wanted to start a revolutionary fight following the example of Cuba. They already had contacts with Communists and they were creating the cuadrillas (squads)

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<sup>27</sup> Peasants were no longer secure in their land so they decided to flee for their lives. Wanting to preserve their lives, they joined a new group unknown to them: a group that would fight against the current government, a group that would provide them with security.

<sup>28</sup> The Colombian guerrillas are not something new; they have existed since the time of independence. For instance, priest Mariño led a group of Guerrilleros in Casanare, east Colombia. Guerrillas were formed by men and women that voluntarily wanted to fight for the national and social freedom of the Colombian people (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:175-176).

<sup>29</sup> The command was a group of guerrillas which had a chief in charge. The command plans, appoints leaders, punishes, teaches, and organises different attacks in the land (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:181).

<sup>30</sup> La cuadrilla is a group of farmers whose goal is extermination and death. They were not part of the guerrillas (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:182).

<sup>31</sup> The birds (pájaros), are born from the conservative party. These are people who are hired to kill liberals. They can be also called hired assassin (Guzmán Campos *et al.*, [1962]2010:184).

in self-defence groups in which more peasants could join and protest in favour of an agrarian reform. These groups took control of municipalities, which later on functioned as an independent organisation or the so-called “repúblicas” outside the law. This rebellion was not accepted by the government, which was trying to enforce the presence of the State in the whole country and pursuing a centralised policy. Among all these “repúblicas”, Marquetalia was a symbol of the peasant protest; that’s why President Guillermo León Valencia, under the programme of his government “Pacificación” (pacification), decided to eliminate all the repúblicas. On May 1st, 1964 the Army received orders to take Marquetalia and enforce the authority of the central regime. The army with 16,000 soldiers fought the battle but at the end, although they won the victory and control of the zone, the leader of Marquetalia, Pedro Antonio Marín Marín, alias Manuel Marulanda Vélez, managed to escape (Sixirei 2011:66).

After this attack, the insurgent groups approved the so-called Agrarian Programme of the guerrilla, which became the Agrarian Programme of the Guerrilla Group FARC. With this programme it was hoped for a radical agrarian reform of the land, taking the land from the owner of a large estate and giving it to the peasants to exploit (:67).

After Marquetalia was taken by the government, the remnant of peasant combatants moved to other regions that were still fighting. At the end of 1965, when the violence situation in Colombia appeared to be improving, the first Guerrilla Conference took place and the “Bloque Sur”, which after its second conference gave birth to the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) (:68).

It is interesting to note that before Marquetalia was taken by the military, the workers tried to inform many people within the government, the Church, and different organisations. They wanted no more war because they were tired of the years of war between 1946 to 1953. According to Manuel Marulanda Vélez (García Arenas 1999:38-39), it was only the Catholic Church that showed an interest in listening to what these men were saying. Sadly the government disagreed and declared war on the men of the future Guerrilla FARC.

### **3.6 The role of the church during the time of violence**

As seen already in this chapter, the intimate relationship between the Conservative Party and the Catholic Church was a disadvantage and also the cause of many troubles in the Land.

How can a church respond to a period that, as already seen, was marked by sectarian violence, a period likened by Rafael Azula Barrera (1956:30) to the second Spanish reconquista with all its cruelty and savagery? And how can a church respond to the phenomenon of violence in a country where its inhabitants claim to be Catholic?

The fact that Liberalism was considered sinful by the Bishop of Pasto, Fray Ezequiel Moreno, brought awful consequences for those who followed the Liberal political party. In this scenario the Protestants living in Colombia experienced persecution from the Catholic Church and the Conservative Party. John D. Martz (1962:26) states that the 1950's were years stained by persecution of evangelical believers and this was all because of the religious conflict.

For instance a young evangelical pastor was kidnapped by a group of men who threatened him if he did not renounce the gospel and the liberal party (Valentim González B 1980:118). Another example among many were the words of the Archbishop of Popayán when he warned his church attenders not to join with the protestants as they were considered a danger against the Catholic belief (Marín Gómez 1956:2).

During this period the Catholic Church, in the bishops' conference, began to see the problems they were causing by supporting violence in the country. Their political stance only increased violence, so to regain the trust of the population the Archbishop of Bogotá, Monsignor Ismael Perdomo, promoted unity inside politics and banned priests from preaching in favour of any political party (Levine and Wilde 1977:230).

Of course, as in the colonial era, there were those who did something to contribute towards spreading the Gospel, like for instance Acción Cultural Popular (Popular Cultural Action) which was founded by a young priest in Sutatenza (Boyacá). In 1948 he established an educational radio station and distributed five

thousand radios, which brought a lot of change through the message spread in the region (Palacios [2006]2007:148).

### **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that Colombia as a country has gone through many difficult situations starting with the colonial era and differences between political parties. Consequences of this fight were the violence period, and the latest was the creation of the guerrillas due to all the injustices on the part of those in government positions. In the midst of all that Colombia has undergone in history, the church has faced a lot of challenges to respond to the crisis of the population. In some cases the church failed to be a transformative focus for society and instead compromised in its own interest. In Chapter 5 the position of the church will again be reviewed to see what the Church has learned from all the mistakes it has made in the past and what it has to offer to a society which has experienced a lot of pain and is still divided.

The next chapter will deal with the different peace efforts in the history of Colombia. Sadly, from the creation of FARC Guerrilla in 1964 until 1982, there were no intentions expressed by either the Guerrilla or the Colombian Government to enter into dialogue and find peace. In the next chapter, the peace process of President Andrés Pastrana will be evaluated in the light of John Paul Lederach's method for peace.

## **4 Peace Efforts in History- Analysis of President Andrés Pastrana's peace process in the light of John Paul Lederach's method for peace**

The aim of this chapter is three-fold: the first part will deal with some peace efforts in the history of Colombia. Secondly the person of Pastrana will be analysed and how he engaged in a peace process with the Guerrilla FARC; thirdly the method of how to foster peace proposed by Lederach will be described and applied to the peace process of Pastrana with the aim of finding out how the peace process of Pastrana could have been affected by using another method for peacemaking.

### **4.1 The regeneration period under President Rafael Nuñez**

It was under the Presidency of Rafael Nuñez and Vice-President Miguel Antonio Caro that the period called La Regeneración (the Regeneration) started. This period was between 1884 and 1900. When Rafael Nuñez took office as president in 1884, he set in motion a programme to repair a society that was damaged by blind faith and private projects.

The extreme federalism and do-nothing policies of the preceding Liberal period had resulted in a weak central government and political instability. Although the Liberals tried to build a stronger state, it was Nuñez and his adherents who, with the Constitution of 1886, created a centralist and more authoritative national government.

For the first time in Colombian history, a national anthem and a coat of arms were adopted as the symbol of the nation. The Constitution of 1886 bolstered the national government's role in the economy. Public health became a national responsibility. The Constitution also boosted the role of national government in education. The Regeneration movement also saw the Catholic Church as having an influential role in society. Religion and the Catholic Church were assumed to be essential to moral and social order. Nuñez understood that Colombia not only needed regeneration in the political and economic arenas but also required moral edification (Doyle and Pamplona 2006:164).

It is interesting to note here that although this movement was seeking to consolidate Colombia as a stronger state, the alliance between the Government and the Catholics was not, according to Sixirei (2011:21), the best movement towards finding solutions in the land. Furthermore it was the question of the government's social responsibility towards the needed population and differences between the Liberal and Conservative parties that brought this epoch to an end marked by the war of the "thousand days"<sup>32</sup>. After this war the victorious Conservative party were proud of creating a time marked by peace and progress between 1903 and 1930. Between 1930 and 1953 the country experienced plenty of problems in the social and political area, which challenged different Presidents in this time, till the coming of Rojas Pinilla to the presidency in 1953 (Palacios 2007:34-41).

## **4.2 Military Coup and Dictatorship under Rojas Pinilla**

On the night of June 13, 1953, with support from Ospina and most of the Conservative Party, Rojas Pinilla announced a coup d'état. The Church and some other leading groups in the country welcomed and supported the coup: it was certainly one of the most peaceful and widely effective regime changes in Colombian history.

The new regime's first measures included a pardon and amnesty for political prisoners and for guerrillas in the field, and the restoration of freedom of the press.

Under Rojas Pinilla's administration there was bipartisan unanimity in favour of peace. Violence deaths fell from 22,000 in 1952-53 to only 1,900 in 1954-55 (Palacios 2007:150-151).

Sixirei comments that Rojas Pinilla's programme was simply "No más sangre, no más depredaciones, paz, justicia y libertad para todos". (No more blood, no more pillage, peace, justice and freedom for all). These words were like music to the Liberal Party as they had suffered greatly under the violence. In particular, they had seen how their leaders had been killed for wanting to reform the country.

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<sup>32</sup> The Thousand Days' War (1899–1902) (Spanish: *Guerra de los Mil Días*), was a civil armed conflict in the newly created Republic of Colombia, (including its then Department of Panama) between the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and its radical factions. This war brought about the secession of Panama and starkly illustrated the consequences of a political culture characterized by extreme political partisanship and on the other hand by a growing gap between the political elites and the common people (Palacios 2007:1).

All the peace measures of Rojas Pinilla had an initial success, but the Liberal Party was not invited to share power under Rojas' administration. He only shared with them diplomatic posts to keep the most important Liberal leaders abroad.

In 1954 the National Constituent Assembly, whose majority was made up of the Conservative Party, confirmed Rojas Pinilla as President for a four-year period. But not everybody was happy with the Military-Conservative regime. Members of a movement born in the National University, called the Colombian University Federation (Federación Universitaria Colombiana), were protesting because one of the students had been killed by a policeman. This protest was dissolved by shooting and as a result 13 more students were killed.

This University Movement was composed of many of the future leaders of the Liberal party and they were hoping that the government would invite them to share power in the country. But this was a mere illusion. In 1955 it was clear that Rojas Pinilla had no intention of doing that; instead he established his own political party and workers' union. These had already caused problems between the parties but a disagreement also arose between the Catholic Church and Rojas Pinilla. At that time the Catholic Church controlled the UTC (Catholic Working Union). To regain the support of the Catholics, Rojas Pinilla persecuted the Protestants and Communist.

The peace efforts of Rojas Pinilla did not succeed and after new riots in the country he was advised by the military to step down from power. So on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1957 he gave up the Presidency (Sixirei 2011:54-56,58-59).

### **4.3 The National Front**

On July 24, 1956 Alberto Lleras Camargo and Laureano Gómez signed a statement, which called for a return to civilian rule under a bipartisan power-sharing arrangement. The National Front<sup>33</sup> administration was inaugurated in 1958 and lasted till 1974 (Palacios 2007:153-154).

According to Sixirei (2011:61), the National Front did not satisfy the needs of the Colombians, but some advances need to be recognised. The Violence, as it was known in those days, came to an end. Peace was not established overnight, but the

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<sup>33</sup> National Front (Spanish: Frente Nacional 1958–1974) was a period in the history of Colombia in which the two main political parties; Liberal Party and Conservative Party agreed to let the opposite party govern, intercalating for a period of four presidential terms (Safford and Palacios 2002:324).

death rate due to political fighting decreased very rapidly. Religious freedom returned and the Catholic Church lost its influence. It was the first time since independence that religious issues stopped being a cause of conflict among Colombians.

However, the National Front did not bring any solutions to what was going on in rural Colombia. Although violence in the main cities ceased, reality was very different for people who had known the Violence as a way of life, and it was very complicated for the government to offer them any means of restoring normal life. As a consequence, the decisions taken by the government in Bogotá were not accepted by the peasants in the mountains of Colombia.

At the same time, Sánchez und Meertens (1983:74) say that in fact the violence did not end in Colombia. They agreed that violence assumed a different character in the National Front period. The Violence then initiated a new phase between 1958 and 1965. This new form of violence was characterised by political banditry. It is estimated that by 1964 this movement had more than 100 active bands made up of peasant groups. These groups were more or less organised and they did not recognise the peace agreements made by the political traditional parties. In doing so, they prolonged the bipartisan conflict. From 1964 till 1982 there were no peace efforts in the country. It was only in 1982 that President Belisario Betancur started a new movement towards finding peace in the land (Palacios 2007:200).

During a period of two decades from 1982-2002, four different Colombian Presidents went to the bargaining table with the Guerrilla group FARC. Of these four, only President Virgilio Barco and President César Gaviria, managed to reach a negotiation settlement, but no peace. On the other hand, although President Belisario Batancur and Pastrana prioritised seeking peace, they did not manage to reach durable deals with the FARC (Bouvier 2009:39-59).

#### **4.4 President Andrés Pastrana 1998-2002**

Why does this paper choose to analyse Pastrana's peace process with FARC Guerrilla and not the other three former Presidents of Colombia? One of the reasons is that Pastrana became President of the Republic of Colombia in one of the most difficult times in the modern history of Colombia. For instance, in the 1980s and 1990s there were three competing groups of traffickers: the Medellín Cartel, the Cali Cartel and the Atlantic Coast Cartel. These increased violence and death in many places in the

country. They murdered tens of thousands of Colombian judges, police officers, soldiers, journalists and three presidential candidates (Kline 2007:15). Pastrana (2013:17) comments that before he became President of Colombia, he was threatened by Pablo Escobar, leader of the Medellín Cartel, but this did not stop him from speaking out against all the things that were happening in the country in the 1980s and 1990s. Santos (1998) states that seldom has a President been confronted with such complicated problems and challenges. Pastrana inherited a country that was in ruins and he was going to need a lot of help to start its reconstruction, in three ways: in the material, spiritual and institutional.

#### **4.4.1 President Andrés Pastrana's life, peace process and motivations**

Andrés Pastrana Arango, (born August 17, 1954, Bogotá, Colombia), Colombian journalist and politician, served as president of Colombia (1998–2002).

Pastrana, the son of Misael Pastrana Borrero, president of Colombia from 1970 to 1974, earned a graduate degree in public law from San Carlos College in Bogotá and later studied at the Centre of International Affairs at Harvard University. During the 1980s he worked as a television journalist and a city councilman (Britannica 2015)<sup>34</sup>.

It was during this period that Colombia was living the era of “narcoterrorismo”<sup>35</sup>. Daily, journalists, judges, politicians, policemen and military people were being killed by the terrorists. Journalists in the country got together to overcome fear and create an alliance to bring the Cartel de Medellín<sup>36</sup> into the open. It was Pastrana who took the lead in dismantling this organisation in a televised programme. This of course was the reason that Pablo Escobar wanted to kill him. On January 18<sup>th</sup> 1988, Pastrana was kidnapped by John Jairo Velásquez, alias “Popeye”, the leader of hired assassins of Pablo Escobar. The reason why he was kidnapped was because Pastrana was a candidate as the mayor of Bogotá and he was preparing a legal

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Andres-Pastrana-Arango>

<sup>35</sup> Narcoterrorism: terrorism financed by profits from illegal drug trafficking <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/narcoterrorism> [status 25.08.2015].

<sup>36</sup> The Medellín Cartel: Cocaine trafficking and shipments grew from individuals carrying small amounts to large quantities on boats and low-flying airplanes. Two major Mafia-like organizations dubbed drug cartels—evolved from this illicit, lucrative trade: the first in Medellín, led by Pablo Escobar, and the second in Cali. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/drug-cartel> [status 25.08.2015].

reform to face the problem of drug addiction through a prevention campaign and systematic education. With this background, Pablo Escobar asked him and his father to do something against extradition<sup>37</sup>. To that Pastrana replied that they were demanding an impossible task as he and his father were from the opposition (Guillén 2013:17-50,75).

While in captivity, Pastrana's time to register as formal candidate for the post of mayor in Bogotá was running out. His last chance to register would have been the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 1988. Meanwhile, Pablo Escobar was preparing a place to confine Pastrana for an indefinite period. But according to Pastrana (2005:13), he was set free by chance as the National Police was searching for Carlos Mauro Hoyos, general attorney of Colombia, who was kidnapped by the men of Pablo Escobar on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Sadly with the liberation of Pastrana came the execution of the attorney.

So Pastrana was able to register his candidature and later on he was the first mayor of Bogotá elected by popular elections. As mayor, his main concern was to do something against drug trafficking and the consumption of drugs, so in 1989 he organised a mayors' meeting from all the important capitals from Latin America, the United States and Europe. In this meeting he proposed to fight together against the drug problem and to share responsibility as a principle to fight the challenge of the producing and trafficking of drugs. While Pastrana was in his mayoral position, Bogotá and the Cundinamarca County experienced much violence and many important political leaders were killed in this geographical context, for instance, Luis Carlos Galán<sup>38</sup> and Carlos Pizarro<sup>39</sup>. According to Pastrana, in the last nine months of his mayoral office there were 130 terrorist attacks against the Bogotá citizens by gun mafias and events in Bogotá; according to Pastrana he wanted to build hope through

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<sup>37</sup> Extradition, in international law, the process by which one state, upon the request of another, effects the return of a person for trial for a crime punishable by the laws of the requesting state and committed outside the state of refuge. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/extradition> [status 25.08.2015].

<sup>38</sup> Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento (29 September 1943 – 18 August 1989) was a Colombian journalist and liberal politician who founded the new liberalism party. He ran for the presidency in 1990. He was leading and promised to be the new president of Colombia, but sadly was assassinated on 18 August 1989. <http://www.banrepcultural.org/blaavirtual/biografias/galaluis.htm> [status 25.08.2015].

<sup>39</sup> Carlos Pizarro León Gómez (6 June 1951 – 26 April 1990) was the fourth commander of the Colombian guerrilla group 19th of April Movement (*Movimiento 19 de Abril*) (M-19). After twenty years of fighting against the Colombian government, Pizarro abandoned his weapons and ran for president of Colombia after the demobilisation of M-19 that transformed the group into the political party, M-19 Democratic Alliance (*Alianza Democrática M-19*) (AD/M-19). Pizarro was assassinated while flying between Bogotá and Barranquilla on 26 April 1990. His dream was to be able to live in a country with justice where poverty would have vanished from the land. <http://www.banrepcultural.org/blaavirtual/revistas/credencial/noviembre2006/personajes.htm> [status 25.08.2015].

music in the middle of violence. Pastrana comments that he was able to awaken a sense of belonging to the city of Bogotá in the inhabitants of the capital, which in a sense had been lost after the 9<sup>th</sup> April 1948 with the assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitán (:14-16).

In 1991 he won a seat in the Senate and with his colleagues, they started to purge political customs and managed to pass important legislative initiatives such as the famous “Law 100 of 1993<sup>40</sup>”.

“Backed by the Colombian Conservative Party (Partido Conservador Colombiano; PC), Pastrana first ran for president in 1994 but lost by a slim margin to Ernesto Samper Pizano, of the Colombian Liberal Party (Partido Liberal Colombiano; PL). Shortly afterwards Pastrana publicly released audio recordings of Samper campaign officials soliciting donations from the Cali drug cartel. Although Samper was eventually exonerated, the allegation of corruption tarnished his administration and led to further civil unrest. The situation also produced a backlash against Pastrana for having brought the charge to light, forcing him to spend much time outside Colombia as a consultant to the United Nations” (Britannica 2015).

But these circumstances did not stop Pastrana from wanting to be the President of Colombia. Furthermore, Pastrana had a twofold motivation: firstly, he wanted to find sustainable peace for the Colombians. Pastrana ran his presidential campaign, by supporting “el mandato por la paz, la vida y la libertad” (Mandate for peace, life and freedom). On 26<sup>th</sup> October 1997 Colombians, tired of so much violence, voted to approve this initiative. The Mandate for peace, life and freedom was initiated by Redepaz, País Libre and the PNUD (The United Nations Development Programme) and was supported by 10 million Colombians in the polls. It was a figure never equalled in the elections history of Colombia. In this mandate people were asking to stop war, to respect International Human Rights, to stop recruiting underage children for the purpose of war, to stop kidnapping, to stop attacking towns, to stop unlawful executions and the disappearance and displacement of people (Guillén 2013:141).

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<sup>40</sup> Ley 100 (Law 100) in Colombia was ratified in 1993 and essentially linked the government pension plan with a radically redesigned government-sponsored and controlled yet, privatized health plan. Article from International Section News (Society of Actuaries) October 1999- Issue No.20. <https://www.soa.org/library/newsletters/international-section-news/1999/october/isn-1999-iss20-hierro-wrede.pdf> [status 25.08.2015].

Secondly, Pastrana had personal motivations and he knew it was not going to be easy, as two other presidents had already tried to end the internal conflict without any success. Pastrana states that like any other Colombian, since his childhood he could not recall a day without a terror act in the country and that war and peace were the main topics of conversation and study in his family. His grandfather was the famous liberal leader Carlos Arango Vélez (1897-1974), who was a political friend and co-worker of Jorge Eliecer Gaitán. Pastrana's father, Misael Pastrana Borrero, who belonged to the Conservative Party, was the last President of the National Front. So Pastrana states that he learned a lot from these men, especially his father who through his entire life was always concerned with matters of peace, protection of human rights and ecology. Misael Pastrana Borrero left him a treasured legacy of his initiatives to find peace and all these are recorded in the books he wrote. Pastrana used them as the road to be followed and in his head was always a phrase his father used to recite, "No hay paz mala ni guerra buena" (there is neither bad peace nor good war) (:142-143).

Pastrana (2005:20) also states that all the experience he gained through being the Mayor of Bogotá, his position in the Senate, his job as a journalist and his past presidential candidature allowed him to present a clear proposal of peace based on his personal belief that dialogue was needed as the only way to find this desirable peace.

His proposal, which was the governmental programme that he launched for his presidential campaign, consisted of ten important points<sup>41</sup>.

Pastrana also believed that Colombia needed a government where all the political forces would participate in the construction of a new country. His presidency if won would be a multitudinous mandate that would oblige him to walk towards finding the peace the Colombians were looking for. Also he was aware of the social problems in the land, because he believed that the social problems were affecting the Colombians more than the internal armed conflict (:21).

Furthermore, Pastrana saw Colombia in a state of economic and moral ruin. He states that the weight of many difficult years in Colombia have led the people to a collective exhaustion that makes them long for quick solutions and dream of

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<sup>41</sup> To promote a new economic plan to create more jobs, to reduce the IVA tax, to reduce the cost of living, to support the agricultural system and their crops, to build housing and infrastructure for the poor, to build a more humane state by offering equality to all Colombians, to guarantee a good balance of nutrition and education for children, to recapture citizens' security, to guarantee a clean hand with the public funds, and a good structure for peace to be led by the President himself (Pastrana 2005:20).

miraculous formulas which are impossible to attain. Pastrana's main challenge was to bring to reality this hope of reconciliation and the desire of many to live without sudden scares due to violence and without the feelings of hatred and ill feeling that are deep in the hearts of many Colombians.

Having this in mind, Pastrana set as a fundamental principle to sow a seed for a better future in Colombia, a seed that would allow the Colombians to solve the problems from the bottom to the top. Although he was aware that this task was not going to be easy in a period of four years as President, he did not see time limitations as grounds to postpone doing something for the future of his country.

For Pastrana it was also very important to reform and modernise the Military Forces, to rebuild international relationships, and to launch a plan with social investment, as well as fighting against the drug dealers and seeking to find reconciliation among Colombians (:22).

However, Pastrana won the elections after one of his campaign advisors, Esteban Víctor G. Ricardo, managed to visit the FARC leader and discuss his plans for the new peace process before the coming presidential elections. In this meeting, the FARC made it clear that if Pastrana were elected President of Colombia they wanted to meet him before taking office. Pastrana also promised more than the other presidential candidate Horacio Serpa Uribe: the latter promised the FARC only one demilitarised municipality for the peace talks whereas Pastrana offered them five municipalities. This meeting concluded with the taking of a picture of these three men. This picture was published all over the country and the world. So for the Colombians it was clear that Pastrana was making efforts to pursue peace in Colombia and they elected him as President of Colombia for the period from 1998 till 2002 (Guillén 144-149).

In July 1998, in the midst of his "for peace, I risk everything" moment, President-elect Pastrana himself paid a visit to Marulanda and Jorge Briceño in the jungles of Caquetá department. After some discussions Pastrana informed Marulanda about the "Plan Colombia". This plan resembles the Marshall Plan in Europe after the end of World War II (:168).

The FARC leaders said that they would agree to enter into dialogues if the Colombian Government met their five conditions:

1. To recognise the guerrillas' political character
2. To "decriminalise social protest"

3. To stop paying citizens for intelligence (a system known as recompensas that President Uribe reinstated at the beginning of his presidential term)
4. To dismantle paramilitary groups
5. To pull security forces out of five municipalities (counties)

Pastrana and Victor G. Ricardo agreed to all five preconditions without consulting the zone's mayors, the military, the Congress, or other advisors. Consequently, Pastrana's unilateral decision was to be the "original sin" of the peace process (Isacson 2003:8-9).

The decision to grant the zone angered some; for example Colonel Luis Alberto Villamarín (2014:25-26) comments that this was of importance for the FARC in developing its systematic revolution in the country. Villamarín argues that the FARC appealed to Mao Tse Tung's theory of war, which says that guerrillas need geographical zones without the presence of the State or the adversary. Having obtained such zones they can fortify the armed and propagandist potential. In Colombia the FARC has always asked for such zones in order to dialogue about peace, but the real goal of the zones was to prepare themselves better for war.

Bouvier (2009:55-56) argues that in the peace process of Pastrana, there were many spoilers that contributed to the failure of the talks. For instance, by granting the demilitarised zone to the FARC as a precondition for sitting down at the negotiation table, right from the outset Pastrana was jeopardising the whole way the process was to continue. This decision favoured the FARC but somehow did not contribute to the success of the whole process. On the other hand, the FARC did not renounce its engagement to its military and strategic advantage; by doing this they were spoiling the peace process.

For instance, on the day that President Pastrana and FARC Guerrilla had arranged to sign a cease-fire in order to stop a guerrilla practice called "pesca milagrosa," (miraculous catch) where people on the road were stopped and kidnapped, the FARC kidnapped an airplane on January 20, 2002. After this the guerrilla group intensified their attacks, leading President Pastrana to end the three-year-talks with the FARC on February 20, 2002.

As he was delivering his message to the nation, Pastrana emphasised two things which are relevant to this paper: firstly, the FARC were asking for social reforms to improve the situation in Colombia, but their actions did not match what they were demanding from the government. Pastrana answered that a social revolution

is made with projects and not terrorism. For instance, Plan Colombia, initiated by President Pastrana, was one of the biggest social plans in the history of Colombia. Secondly, he recognised that the peace process, although not successful, left him and the people of Colombia with many strengths to continue seeking their desired peace (Pastrana 2013:231-233; 241). As his televised talk was finishing, the Colombian air force was being ordered to bomb the demilitarised zone (Kline 2007:121).

Kline states that even though there were many actions that contributed to the failure of the peace process they were not the basic reason that the negotiations failed. There were more general reasons that Colombians thought the process was not a success (:122-123).

#### **4.5 John Paul Lederach – Building peace beyond traditional statist diplomacy**

Through the years, the Colombian government has tried to build peace using diplomatic methods, but with no success. This paper proposes applying the method developed by John Paul Lederach to build sustainable peace in divided societies, because Lederach's method presents a new alternative that has not been yet implemented in the Colombian context and conflict.

Lederach ([1997]2010:200) is widely known for his pioneering work in conflict transformation. Lederach is involved in conciliation work in Colombia, the Philippines, and Nepal, plus countries in East and West Africa. He has helped design and conduct training programs in 25 countries across five continents.

What does Lederach's method for peace have to offer to a country like Colombia that has been at war for more than 60 years? Lederach's method is very relevant in the Colombian context as this method focuses on building sustainable peace in divided societies.

Lederach (:ix) presents what he considers a modest thesis and states that the nature and characteristics of contemporary conflict suggest the need for a set of concepts and approaches that go beyond traditional statist diplomacy.

### **4.5.1 Nature of contemporary conflict in divided societies and reconciliation**

After presenting his thesis in general terms, Lederach claims that it is of great importance to look at three things before a peace-building framework is developed: first to look at the nature of contemporary conflict; second the characteristics of divided societies; and thirdly the most important component for Lederach, which is the role of reconciliation in the peace process (:3-4).

What does Lederach mean by understanding the nature of conflict? In adopting the “Armed Conflict” report by Wallensteen and Axell (1993), Lederach helps understand the nature of the current armed conflicts. He states that the sum of armed conflicts could be categorised as what many researchers are now calling “protracted”<sup>42</sup> conflicts, and these conflicts continue to be one of the main challenges to honestly achieving stability in the world. Lederach also states that most current wars are intranational<sup>43</sup> affairs, and the main factor of conflict is the fight for power, but also that these armed conflicts have to do with possession of the land, state formation, or fight for controlling a state.

Furthermore it is of primary importance for Lederach to understand the characteristics of deeply divided societies. These societies are defined as societies experiencing armed conflict at one of the three levels laid out by Wallensteen and Axell. They have suggested categories for assessing armed conflict by death tolls, locality, and issues. They also divide armed conflict into three subcategories, i.e. minor, intermediate and war. The difference among them is the number of casualties occurring in a given year. For instance, in a minor conflict fewer than twenty-five people have died, in intermediate conflict, at least one thousand deaths have occurred during the conflict. War describes a conflict in which at least one thousand deaths have occurred in a given year (:4,11).

But turning to the characteristics of a divided society, Lederach states that cohesion and identity are important characteristics in these societies. Furthermore, in times of conflict people seek security by identifying with something close to their

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<sup>42</sup> Protracted conflict: these conflicts are by nature lodged in long-standing relationships. Part of the challenge posed by many armed conflicts is the long-term nature of the conflicting groups’ animosity, perception of enmity, and deep-rooted fear (Lederach [1997]2010:14).

<sup>43</sup> Intranational: that is, these conflicts are fought between groups who come from within the boundaries of a defined state (Lederach [1997]2010:11).

experiences. In today's conflict this unit of identity may be the clan, racial group, religion, or geographical affiliation. These dynamics in turn develop two other important characteristics, which are factionalisation and diffusion of power. Lederach claims that one of the complications found in many conflict settings is the number of groups and collectivities striving for recognition and power, often represented by armed groups. One of the downsides is that power is diffuse because it does not operate out of a statist hierarchy and this leads to consequences such as the difficulty of evaluating the ability of individual leaders either to control the actions of the groups they represent or to convince their followers. On the other hand, it is not possible to find adequate mechanisms for establishing representation within a population and the taking of decisions is not always constant.

Further to this, these conflicts are rooted in long-standing relationships. Part of the challenges presented by these long-term conflicts is the deep-rooted fear which is increased with the immediacy of having the enemy living virtually next door. This is the case in many areas of Bosnia, Somalia and Colombia (:11-14).

Having described the characteristics that are present in conflict situations, both externally and internally, Lederach adds that it is also necessary to identify characteristics that are not available or present. In doing so, Lederach recognises that due to the internal nature of most current armed conflicts, formal and governmental international mechanisms for dealing with conflict are limited. For instance a statist approach assumes that groups in conflict operate according to given hierarchies of power. The key to facing the conflict is to identify those in authority and then work with them. This approach works where there are clear structures of authority, but otherwise not (:16).

Another example would be that traditional diplomacy tends to consider an armed conflict to be motivated and sustained by substantive interests. So solutions from the statist point of view are sought within a framework of compromise on these interests and often within a short-term frame of reference. But Lederach states here that the dynamics of intermediate and war level conflicts are equally driven by psychosocial elements – long-term antagonism rooted in a perceived threat to identity and survival. Further to this, contested affairs of substance such as territory and governance are personally rooted in the cultural and psychological elements that drive and sustain the conflict (:17).

For these reasons, Lederach (1995:6-10) states that nevertheless, despite its inadequacies, statist diplomacy is being used to resolve conflicts around the globe. There is the need to explore critically at a much deeper level both the content and the approach to conflict resolution training and its relationship to culture. In order to explore critically the content and approach to conflict resolution, it is necessary to see what can be learned from different approaches to conflict. Although Lederach uses different approaches to understanding the nature of conflict, he focuses on the perspective of the social constructionist view of conflict. This perspective states that social conflict appears and expands on the basis of the meaning and interpretation that people affected attach to actions and events. Although authors like interactionist Alfred Schutz or Herbert Blumer are not viewed as conflict theorist, they provide the field of conflict with important perspectives and lenses on social interaction. They provide theoretical frameworks which are crucial for developing a social constructionist understanding of conflict. They claim that the building of social meaning, as an intersubjective process, lies at the heart of how human conflict is built. Social meaning is embedded in the accumulated knowledge and from this point, Lederach states that conflict is attached to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and the foundation of knowledge is rooted in culture.

Furthermore Lederach understands conflict to be a socially constructed cultural event. He understands culture to be anchored in the shared knowledge and schemes built and used by people for discerning, clarifying, expressing, and responding to social real matters around them. Lederach assumes that understanding the connection between social conflict and culture is not only a question of sensitivity or of awareness. It requires a more profound adventure of discovering and digging in the accumulated shared knowledge which is common to a set of people. He states that people from different cultural contexts have developed many ways of building and expressing as well as interpreting and handling conflict. Lederach claims that the process to understand conflict and develop appropriate models of handling it, must necessarily be rooted in, and must respect and derive from, the cultural knowledge of people.

Lederach ([1997]2010:25) disagrees with the way statist diplomacy deals with the contemporary conflicts in the world because they have not demonstrated the capacity to control the conflict, and much less to transform conflict into a constructive and peaceful outcome. In contrast, he states that contemporary conflict demands

innovation, and this innovation leads him to probe into the realm of the subjective, for instance, perceptions accumulated throughout the years and deep-seated hatred and fear.

In dealing with the challenge of contemporary conflict, a very important meeting point between reality and innovation is the idea of reconciliation according to Lederach. But how was this concept conceived and why is the concept of reconciliation so important for Lederach?

Lederach states that while teaching about resolution in Central America he was able to mediate negotiations between the Sandinista government and the Yatama, the indigenous resistance movement in Nicaragua.

At the opening of each meeting, Psalm 85 was read by the Nicaraguan conciliators. The Psalm refers to the return of people to their land and the opportunity for peace. At the heart of the text (85.10) it says: "Truth and mercy have met together; peace and justice have kissed".

Lederach wanted to know how people in such meetings understood the words written in this text. As a result they came to the conclusion that reconciliation is the place where truth and mercy, justice and peace meet. But reconciliation also balances these four.

For Lederach, reconciliation, in its fundamental sense, represents a place, a point of encounter where burdens about both the past and the future can meet.

Lederach lays emphasis on three working assumptions that reinforce the concept of reconciliation: first he talks about relationship as the basis of both conflict and its long-term solution. Also, relationships are the climax, the beginning and the end for understanding the system. Reconciliation conceives protracted conflict as a system and focuses its attention on relationships within the system.

Second, in order to put those in conflict into contact with one another, an encounter is needed. In this encounter, reconciliation must find a way to deal with the past without being stuck in a cycle of reciprocal exclusiveness deep-rooted in the past. People need time and space to express their trauma of loss and pain caused by their enemies, as well as the memories of injustices experienced. Furthermore in this encounter, acknowledgement is fundamental to the reconciliation dynamic. Acknowledgment through hearing one another's stories represents an important step towards restoration of the person and the relationship. Further to this, there also should be time for both parties of the conflict to envision a future together (:26).

The third assumption is that reconciliation necessitates those involved in the conflict to look outside of political traditions, discourse and operational modalities if innovation is to be found. Lederach claims that in today's conflict, transformation must be rooted in social-psychological and spiritual dimensions that traditionally have been regarded as irrelevant or outside the field of international diplomacy. It is in this sense that reconciliation is an innovation from Lederach's point of view (:29).

The question to ask at this point is how the practice of reconciliation looks in today's world. Lederach claims that the field of peace-building and conflict transformation is still working in establishing this application, both conceptually and practically. However, Lederach points to a number of approaches that have been implemented, but also to some specific experiences that fall into the conceptual paradigm of reconciliation (:31).

Lederach states that in order to reach reconciliation in a practical way, a social space needs to be created where the two parties can meet and validate truth and forgiveness. This was the case in the signing of the Israeli-PLO peace agreement in 1983. This space was created with the help of the Norwegian scholar Terje Rod Larsen and his wife. They provided this social place and reported that the participants stayed in a summer lodge, slept together under the same roof, shared meals together, and were able to work together. Relationships were developed in a different way. Furthermore they did not see each other as enemies or political adversaries; instead they shared many things and as a result saw each other as individuals as well as antagonists.

It would seem that the experience of living together contributed towards transparency of feelings and viewpoints, and by focusing on the future permitted the participants to put on new lenses for looking at old problems. It took seven meetings and over five months to prepare the ground so that the level of participants in the talk would be upgraded. The main contribution made by the middle-range players was that they prepared the practical and psychological terrain that permitted the professionals to join after the seventh meeting (:32-33).

Furthermore, this example shows the importance of establishing relationships and providing a space for the parties to encounter and engage as people and a place where they can express their feelings openly and think about a future together.

This example also shows that a comprehensive approach to peace-building in the Israeli-Palestinian context is greatly needed in today's conflicts. There is the need

to explore how to integrate a reconciliation paradigm at the middle-range and grassroots levels of society (:34).

#### **4.5.2 Conceptual Framework for building peace**

Moving from the concept of reconciliation, whose purpose is to build the relationship between the parties in a conflict before major things of the problems that divided them are discussed, Lederach proceeds to the conceptual framework for building peace.

Before the conceptual framework for peace developed by Lederach is unfolded, it is necessary to define key terms which are used by Lederach in his concept.

By conceptual framework, he means a practical way of looking at the peace-building enterprise. Lederach develops a set of ideas and analytical lenses that help to see how conflict can be understood in present-day conflict and how features and factors of peace-building as a social process are described, interrelated, and interact.

Lederach states that his method has elements of theory, but also has been enriched by personal experiences in contemporary conflict situations. In combining the two elements, Lederach has found a frame of reference which is useful for approaching and dealing with conflict in deeply divided societies. The empirical approach of his method was shaped by his own experience in different parts of the world especially in Somalia and in Central America.

So regarding peace-building, Lederach proposes a conceptual framework that responds to the needs and challenges found in armed conflicts. Lederach's framework is based on a comprehensive approach to the transformation of conflict which handles the structural issues, social dynamics of relationships, and the development of a supportive infrastructure for peace (:21).

However, Lederach states that with the right plan in mind and the right material, skills and resources, one might think that peace would fall into place! But experience has shown that peace activities in divided societies do not work with standardised formulas. Lederach illustrates that conflicting groups live in close geographical settings. They have experienced violent trauma that is related to their enemies, and this trauma could also be tied to a history of injustice and antagonism that has accumulated over the years and generations (:23). Contemporary conflicts in

such contexts are characterised by deep-rooted, intense animosity; fear; and severe stereotyping.

Due to the dynamics of contemporary conflict where people's experiences, subjective perceptions and emotions are involved, rational and mechanical processes aimed at conflict transformation are in many cases ineffective and in many settings irrelevant or offensive. According to Lederach, peace-building in such contexts must be rooted in and responsive to the experiential and subjective realities shaping people's perspectives and needs. Furthermore, he states that is why the conceptual paradigm and practice of peace-building must undergo an alteration and move away from the traditional framework and exercises that make up statist diplomacy.

Lederach proposes a paradigm that makes a move away from the resolution of issues towards a frame of reference that lays emphasis on the restoration and rebuilding of the relationships. This framework goes beyond a mechanical strategy, the framework must deal with the relational aspects of reconciliation as the fundamental component of peace-building (:24).

### **4.5.3 Lederach's own and borrowed resources to build up the integrated framework for peace-building**

To develop the integrated framework for peace-building, Lederach first introduces what he calls a set of lenses. From this set of lenses, the concept of types of actors in peace-building is his own creation, whereas the nested paradigm and the dynamics and progression of a conflict are resources borrowed from other authors such as Maire Dugan (1996) and Adam Curle (1971).

#### **4.5.3.1 Types of actors and approaches to peace-building and the nested paradigm**

In answering the question of how the house of peace should be built, Lederach ([1997]2010:37) shows an example of how two Somali friends think about building the house of peace. One argues that the head of the house needs to be established before the body can function. The other states that the foundation needs to be laid before the roof is to be held up.

One argues that peace is built from the top down, whereas the other argues that peace is built from the bottom up. Lederach claims that before arriving at any conclusion about how peace is constructed, it is necessary to develop an analytical framework to illustrate the levels of an affected population.



*Illus. 5 Types of Actors* Source: Lederach [1997] 2010

In order to do this, Lederach suggests the need for two basic sets of lenses: the type of actors and the nested paradigm by Maire Dugan. The first one is looking at the levels of actors' interest in peace-building in the affected population and the resources available at each level.

Lederach examines the leadership of the affected population through the pyramid of leadership which can be divided into three categories: top level, middle range, and grassroots.

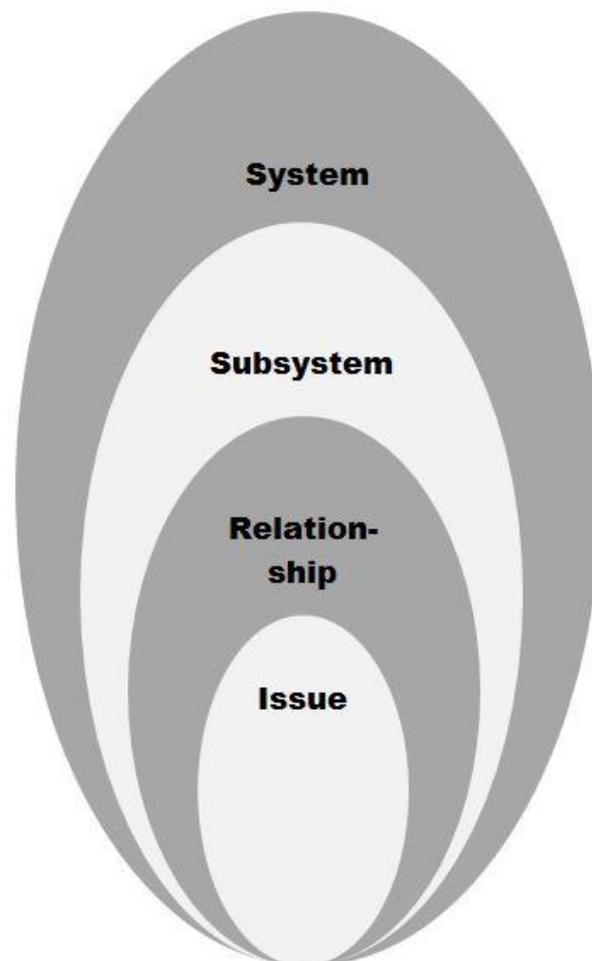
The top-level political and military leaders are highly visible. They are in a sense the key element in the politics and military. These leaders are under tremendous pressure to maintain a strength position before their adversaries (:38).

The middle-range leaders are people who are highly respected as individuals in the community and they are to be found in formal positions of leadership (e.g. leaders of academic, religious, business, professional, agricultural, and nongovernmental organisations who have ties to upper-level and grassroots leaders);

they conduct problem-solving workshops, train people in conflict-resolution skills, and lead peace commissions. One key issue of this group is that they are not in the international frame and their position of work does not depend on how famous they can be. This allows them to move without security problems. This group in sum have many advantages when compared to the top leaders. They are more numerous and they have connections to many influential people across the country (:41).

Grassroots leaders represent the crowd, the base of society. These are the people who understand better what fear and suffering means in a protracted conflict. Leadership here happens on a day-to-day basis (:42).

The second set of lenses is used to look at both the immediate issues in the conflict and the broader systematic concern. For this, Lederach follows the “nested paradigm” concept, proposed by peace worker and theorist Maire Dugan.



*Illus. 6* Nested Paradigm Source: Dugan 1996

This is a mechanism for looking at both the narrower and the broader aspects of conflict resolution and peace-building. Dugan developed this to explain how the

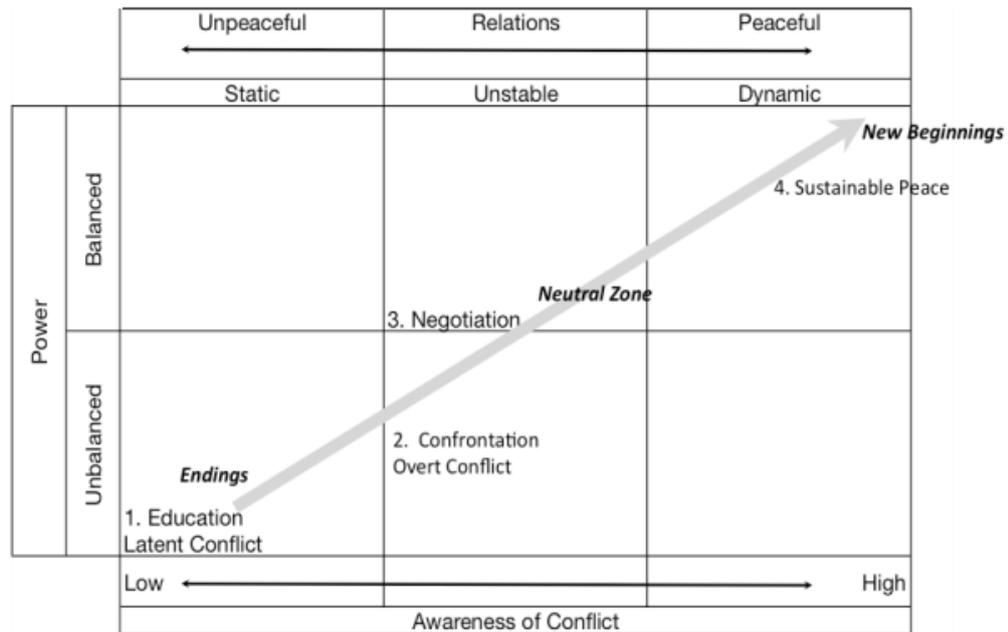
approach of a conflict resolution practitioner to a given situation contradicts that of a peace researcher. In order to understand the nested paradigm, Dugan gives an example in a school where a violent conflict had emerged between African American and white gangs of young boys. The conflict resolution practitioner would see this conflict as an issue of dispute and this case needing to be resolved between those who had been fighting. The answer then would be to resolve the issue that brought the fight. But on some occasions, the practitioner would see beyond the issue to be resolved, also recognising a relationship that needed to be addressed. So the practitioner would promote reconciliation among the parties. On the other hand, a peace researcher might see the fight in the context of a society built both on racial discrimination and economic injustice. So the problem would be seen as racism and the solution would be to change a society and social structures that build and maintain racism.

Lederach recognises the importance and value of implementing the nested paradigm in a specific area of concern in a protracted conflict, where the nested paradigm helps not to concentrate on one particular issue to find solutions in a conflict, but to look always at the broader context of systematic issues (:55-59).

#### **4.5.3.2 The dynamics and progression of conflict**

Having looked at the structure, Lederach turns now to examine the dynamics and progression of conflict.

For Lederach conflict is never static. He describes it as a process that is always changing. In order to show this, he adopts Quaker conciliator Adam Curle's matrix.



*Illus. 7* Progression of Conflict Source: Curle 1971

In this matrix, conflict moves along a continuum from unpeaceful to peaceful relationships. But how are the four stages of movements in this matrix to be understood?

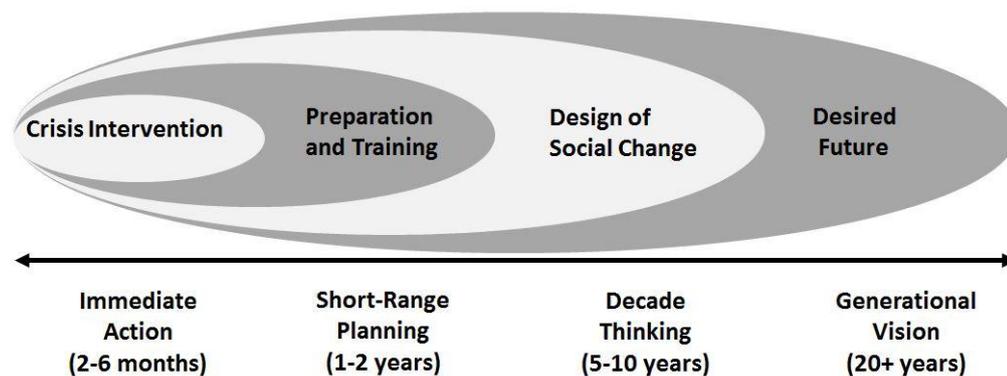
Curle describes 4 principle stages in the progression of conflict. In the first, conflict is latent. By this he means that at this stage people are unaware of the inequality and injustice that affect their lives. In order to know their situation, Curle claims that education is the best way of conscientisation. Through education, awareness of the unequal relationships and the need to address problems are developed. When people realise that there are situations to be changed, they need to move now to the second stage, which is confrontation of the reality they are experiencing in the conflict. So at this stage conflict is no longer latent or hidden. The danger at this stage is how people confront each other: it could be in a violent or nonviolent mechanism or, according to Lederach, in the combination of both.

Also at this stage people who are facing the conflict are aware that there is an imbalance of power, and this also needs to be changed by rebalancing the power in the way people see each other in the midst of conflict. By rebalancing the power, those who are in the lowest position of power would be able to reclaim their needs and rights. This takes the progression of the conflict to stage 3, which is negotiation. At this stage people won't look to impose their views over the other but rather they work together in order to achieve together the goal of sustainable peace. In the last stage, sustainable peace is only achieved if there is successful negotiation and

mediation leading to a new restructuring of the relationship between the parties. On the other hand, Lederach is aware that a conflict does not always go the way described in this matrix of Curle, but the matrix is helpful because it provides a visualisation of the progression of the conflict.

If conflict is understood as a progression, this opens a new vision reinforcing the idea that peace-building involves more than a peace agreement or a cease-fire. Peace-building needs to be understood as a process made up of manifold actions, roles, and activities, which correspond to the vision of conflict as progress.

For Lederach it is clear that building sustainable peace is a dynamic process that often requires more than weeks or months, it requires decades (:63-71). So after this statement, Lederach introduces his nested paradigm which shows the time dimension in peace-building. This nested paradigm is going to be used in the integrated framework for building peace.



*Illus. 8* Nested Paradigm Source: Lederach [1997] 2010

#### 4.5.4 Integrated Framework for Peace-building

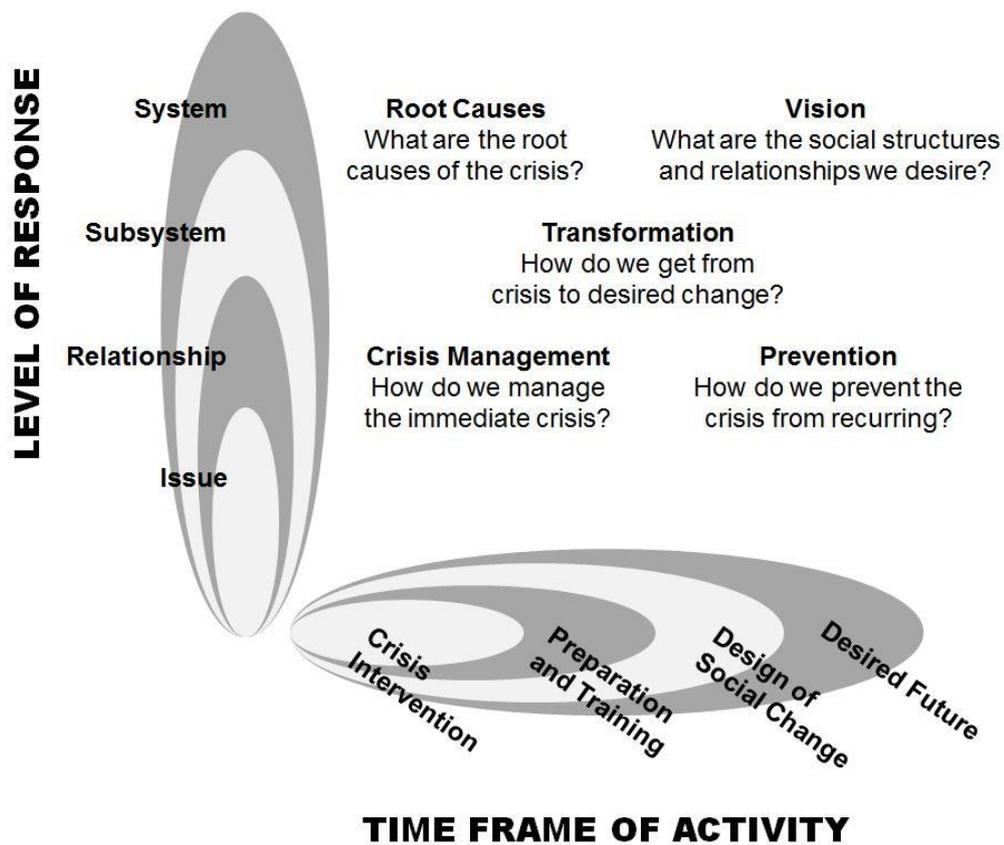
After describing the different components of peace-building, the challenge according to Lederach is to bring all these components into a framework that meets the realities of present-day conflict. By joining the set of lenses described up to now, and bearing in mind the dynamics and progression of the conflict, Lederach proposes an integrated framework that might meet the needs of today's conflict in the world.

A very important aspect of this integrated framework is that time frames for the different activities in conflict management need to be rethought. How is this done? Lederach looks back to Curle's matrix and states that many conflicts in today's world seem to be locked in a vicious cycle of confrontation and negotiation, where talks collapse, restart, and collapse again. In this process, violence comes back and

produces a serious humanitarian crisis. It is only then that the international community deals with the problem under a frame of disaster-management, so the response is to focus on quick political solutions, often through intense negotiations and peace agreements, and this is only done with those in the top leadership. The problem with this frame, according to Lederach, is that insufficient preparation is given for assisting the peace process over the medium and long term.

Here is where Lederach sees the importance of Curle's matrix by giving an idea of what stage the conflict has reached, but then he expands by adding that central to an integrated framework is the thought that any given immediate help should be connected toward working to a longer term goal, or in better terms, to sustainable development. In sustainable development, the idea is to bring immediate help but to keep in mind the long-term goal of reaching peace. Sustainable development is built on the concept of transformation. By transformation, Lederach means changing from one stage to another. This transformation is seen very practically when there is movement in Curle's matrix from the latent stage to confrontation and then to dynamic or peaceful relationships. Furthermore every movement needs to have sustainability. By this Lederach means that while keeping moving towards the goal of peace there should be put into place a "proactive process" which is able to reproduce itself over time. For instance "a spiral of peace and development instead of a spiral of violence and destruction" (:74-75).

Lederach combines the two terms transformation and sustainability and states that "the process of building peace must rely on and operate within a framework and a time frame defined by sustainable transformation." Furthermore he adds that seeking a cease-fire in war conflict is the immediate necessity, but this movement should not be confused with the long-term goals of building peace. He states that by having a sustainable transformative approach, it is essential to see that the key for solutions lies in the relationship of the involved parties.



*Illus. 9 Integrated Framework Source: Lederach [1997] 2010*

The graphic shows how Lederach brings together the nested paradigm from Maire Dugan in the vertical lens (level of response) which shows and targets the levels of intervention in the conflict. In the horizontal, Lederach places his nested paradigm (time frame of activity) that links short-term crisis with long-term perspective for change in society.

The two elements intersect at five points, which are root causes, crisis management, prevention, vision and transformation.

- Root causes questions the causes of the conflict, so to reflect back on the long history of the conflict helps understand the current conflict and the broader systematic factors that must be taken into account for future solutions (:79).
- Crisis management is not interested in the origins of the conflict, but how to respond practically to the current situation (:80).
- Prevention deals with the immediate issues, but looks to the future and tries to understand what lessons can be learned from the crisis so that they can be anticipated and prevented from happening once again. At this stage it is very important to understand the circumstances that trigger the conflict, to help

society to better handle conflict in the future, and publicise the lessons of wrongs and rights learned in this process (:81).

- The vision has to do with the kind of social structures and relationships that those in the conflict desire to have in the future. This vision will focus on the wellbeing of future generations (:81).
- All these components are linked to the question in the middle of the graphic. Lederach emphasises transformation as an important part of the integrated framework. Transformation asks the question: how do we get from crisis to desired change? But transformation alone cannot answer such a question. Transformation needs the input of the other four fields. Also, transformation deals with conflict transformation or the way people confront and find solutions to conflict. Lederach states that conflict transformation can be understood in two ways, descriptively and prescriptively, and these work in four dimensions such as personal, relational, structural, and cultural. He summarises by saying that conflict transformation tries to understand how conflict emerges and brings about changes in the four areas mentioned above. But conflict transformation also seeks to find ways for creative responses in a peaceful way, so the integrated framework is a platform to understand and respond to conflict by developing peace-building activities. Lederach states that the whole concept of conflict transformation is linked to the broader theme of reconciliation and it is focused toward changing the nature of relationships at every level of human communication and experiences (:84).

In order to create an integrated framework for peace-building, Lederach proposes two things: first to reconceptualise the temporal time frame for planning and action. Second, to link the various facets and dimensions of peace-building.

Fundamental to an integrated framework for peace-building is that any given immediate intervention is linked to movement toward a long-term goal (:75).

Both back the idea that the mitigation of immediate suffering must be built upon a concept of transformation. For Lederach, this transformation means the change from one status to another. Transformation is in practical terms the move from the latent stage to confrontation, then via negotiation to dynamic, peaceful relationships. In the idea of transformation, Lederach states that sustainability is also important and for him this term means a concern not only to start a movement but also to create a

proactive process capable of recreating itself over time. Furthermore, Lederach joins the two terms and states that the two suggest a critical point of departure that emerges from the discussion of conflict progression. Lederach claims that the process of building peace must rely on and act within a framework and a time frame which is defined by sustainable transformation (:75).

A very important fact in the integrated framework for peace is that integration begins by recognising that people are the best resource to achieve the goal of sustainable peace. Looking back to the actors to peace-building, Lederach argues that the middle-range leaders play an important role in potential transformation. It is by their locus in the affected population that they are able to cultivate relationships and seek the design of social change at a subsystem level; they also help to make the vertical and horizontal connections in society which are necessary to sustain a process of a desired change (:81).

#### **4.5.5 The integrated framework for peace-building in practice**

Having looked at the theory of an integrated framework for building peace, it is necessary to turn now to the practical steps needed in the process of building peace in divided societies.

Lederach asks in what way does an integrated framework transform the way to respond to protracted conflicts.

Building peace requires resources and Lederach identifies two kinds of important resources: socioeconomic and sociocultural. Lederach is aware that a peace process needs financial support, but for him people and their cultural tradition are the primary resource in making peace (:87).

Furthermore, he states that the international community must regard people as resources, not recipients. This is important because people should be seen as instrumental and integral to sustaining change (:94).

At this point, Lederach emphasises building a peace constituency and he suggests that middle-range actors of the conflict should be involved in this constituency, but also that they need to have the recognition of the international community so that they can function and develop their potential in peace-making (:95).

There is also the need for building on the cultural and contextual resources. For this to happen, the international community needs to change their mindset and move beyond traditional diplomacy for building peace. Lederach gives an example of a project that led to regional peace agreements in Mozambique. The “Circus of Peace” was built on traditional arts, drama and music. This drama focused on children and their understanding of conflict resolution and peace-building activities. This idea falls into place under the time frame activity of how to design social change.

Another practicality according to Lederach is the coordination of different frameworks for building peace. He suggests five things: first to develop a peace inventory, because in his experience in working in protracted conflict, he has noticed the absence of a wide-ranging inventory of who is involved in a peace-building activity. Second, to create open channels of clear communication between the top and middle ranges in the leadership. Thirdly, establish peace donor conferences. These are good to bring together UN officials responsible for the coordination of humanitarian help, and besides that the NGO community should be invited. Fourthly, establish strategic resource groups. It is advisable to invite historians, anthropologists, peace researchers, conflict resolution practitioners and former diplomats who can help specifically in the area of national reconciliation process. Fifthly, to link internal and external peacemakers (:99-106).

Lederach puts a lot of emphasis on training and preparing people to be effective in situations of protracted conflict. When Lederach talks about training, he clarifies that in the field of conflict resolution, peacemakers have relied on the word “training” to mean or to refer to events and programs in which people are taught about specific ways to react to conflict. So peacemakers pass onto others given information to be applied in another context assuming that this would then work in any specific context. But Lederach, on the contrary, claims that training should be a tool for the creation of peace-building and responsive mediation in long-term conflict. If training is to be seen in this way, then it is necessary to create a frame of reference in which training can be allocated. Lederach defines training as a process of strategic capacity and relationship building (:107-108).

To show his idea of how training should be designed, Lederach gives an example based on the Colombian context. He states that Colombia illustrates the challenges of protracted conflict at nearly every level in its society. Lederach had taught several courses in Colombia about conflict resolution, but he noticed that even

though people had shown interest in one-day courses, this training had neither built sustained initiative nor dealt in a proper way with the Colombian violent conflict. So in association with Ricardo Esquivia, the director of Justapaz, they designed a course called “permanent”. This course was to be an ongoing course, but also a teaching laboratory. This course demanded a long-term commitment from the participants to attend. In the beginning only people who were working in peace activities were invited, but then they noticed that the circle needed to be expanded in order to understand the Colombian context of conflict, so they invited peace activists and conciliators from different regions in Colombia, as well as students from universities, government officials, churches and NGOs. The result is that the course is no longer seen as a training process with a beginning and end. The course has become a place where peace practitioners meet and have relationships and at the same time it has helped to strengthen the community justice network and has also supported the teaching of people working in local conciliation centres (:123-126).

#### **4.6 Looking at the peace process of Andrés Pastrana through the eyes of Lederach’s integrated framework for peace-building**

This paper will focus through the eyes of Lederach’s integrated framework for peace-building only on the most important issues that contributed to the failure of the peace process of Andrés Pastrana. The following five points will highlight the intercession of time framework and level of response in the peace process led by Pastrana.

##### **4.6.1 Root Causes**

According to Richani (2007:189) neither Pastrana nor FARC had the idea of initiating the peace process, and they had no motivation to achieve a viable peace. Furthermore Richani claims that the idea of starting the 1998 peace talks did not come from Pastrana. The idea came from a group of academics who were supported by the UNDP (the United Nations Development Program). This group invited all the presidential candidates to sign this accord whose goal was to pursue the starting of peace talks with FARC and the ELN. Pastrana declined this invitation on the grounds that he was not yet an official presidential candidate. This group started to analyse the

conflict situation with the other presidential candidates. Pastrana only got interested when he saw the need for a winning formula in the second round of the presidential election. Álvaro Leyva Durán, Victor Ricardo, Rafael Pardo, and Augusto Ramírez, got together and drafted a twenty-point proposal that developed into Pastrana's official peace platform (:171-172).

Kline (2007:50-51) states that after Pastrana read the document, he became interested in sitting at the table with FARC leaders and proclaimed publically that if to make peace he needed to go to the mountains, he was ready to do it.

So reflecting on Lederach's contention that a deep understanding of the conflict is necessary to create strategies to start a peace process, it could be argued that although Pastrana had lived in the conflict and had a family political background, he still did not have a broader picture of the Colombian conflict and the implications for starting a peace process. Furthermore Kline states that Pastrana was in a hurry to initiate the peace process and that he was more interested in winning the elections as President. He concludes that Pastrana did all he could to win the process in order to establish a place in history (:123).

On the other hand, Pastrana (2005:36) states that in his profession as a journalist he was able to follow the different peace efforts by other Presidents before him. He was able to analyse the day-to-day events of the conflict. He was convinced that the only way to achieve peace was through establishing a dialogue with the guerrillas. In his effort to understand the conflict, he worked with people who knew about peace and had studied the Colombian conflict in depth.

Following on Pastrana's claims that he made efforts to understand the Colombian conflict, the question to ask here is whether Pastrana made efforts to understand the cultural roots and patterns of the conflict. Already Safford and Palacios (2002:ix) have mentioned the cultural differences in the Colombian context. In support of this Yunis Turbay (2009:59) claims that Colombia has been shaped by three main ethnic groups and cultures: white people, indigenous and Africans. Furthermore, Yunis Turbay claims that by looking at the Colombian regions, and especially at its inhabitants, the contrasts are plain to see. Every region has its characteristics, in the family, in the language of expression (:81). With this in mind, it could be argued that a deep understanding of the Colombian cultural context helps appreciate how people understand, react and find solutions for conflict. Kline (2007:51) gives an example in looking at the main characters of Pastrana's peace

process: two Colombians with very different backgrounds. Pastrana, son of a former President, and a member of the oligarchy and Manuel Marulanda Vélez, someone from “the poor people”, someone who lacks education, health care and stable employment.

When examining how Dugan’s nested paradigm as suggested by Lederach applies to the peace process in Colombia, it is arguable that the nested paradigm which provides understanding of the immediate issues and the broader systematic concerns, was not used in the peace process of Andrés Pastrana. Instead, following the statist policy of dealing, they presented their agendas that in a sense were a reflection of more personal interests than the interests of the Colombian people (Kline 2007:72-73). It is worth noting that behind every topic on the broad agendas, there were issues that could have been seen through the lenses of the nested paradigm to understand the broader context of systematic issues that brought the country to war. An example of this is the issue of agrarian reform, which is the historical issue of FARC, as well as democratic opening, security, and human rights, that are essential for finding peace (Bouvier 2009:76).

#### **4.6.2 Crisis Management**

Having superficial knowledge of the root of the problems, President Pastrana (2005:35) responded to the crisis by starting political conversations with the guerrillas. He was aware that the first step was to build trust between the government and the guerrillas. This trust had been broken through years of fighting, and more concretely in December 1990 when the headquarters of the Guerrilla FARC were bombarded. Looking back to what Pastrana did after winning the presidential election, it is worth mentioning that Pastrana took the initiative to meet Manuel Marulanda Vélez personally to start building trust. This meeting was to his advantage, but the downside of the meeting was threefold: first it was done under pressure; it was not well planned; and it only lasted two hours. There was no agenda and even though they discussed important things for the future of Colombia, Pastrana compromised matters by failing to consult the army and the rest of the government and the Colombian people. At the end of the meeting, instead of building trust, Pastrana somehow awoke some feelings of mistrust on the part of Manuel Marulanda, leader of FARC (Guillén

2013:159-170) by communicating about the famous Plan Colombia<sup>44</sup>. On January 7, 1999, Marulanda was to meet Pastrana to officially start the peace process. But Marulana let President Pastrana down by not showing up to this important meeting for the nation of Colombia (Villamarín Pulido 2014:15).

Reflecting on the kind of people who should intervene in this part of the process to find strategies and react to the immediate issues of the conflict, Lederach ([1997]2010:41-42) suggests the middle-range leaders as the strongest group to handle the negotiations. Middle range has the potential for helping to create a relationship- and skill-based framework for sustaining the peace-building process. Through its network in society this group has the capacity to play an instrumental role in working through the conflicts. The activities of this group can be detailed in different forms. For instance, they show efforts at changing perceptions and floating new concepts and ideas among characters approximate to the policymakers' process. They also provide training in conflict resolution, they establish teams, and look for the networks and associations that can play an active conciliation role in the context of conflict.

However, the bargaining structure developed by the government stands in stark contrast to what Lederach suggests. As Kline (2007:52-53) states there were two main problems:

First, those bargaining with the guerrillas belonged to the top leadership of the government. These people were chosen because they met certain political criteria rather than for any expertise in bargaining. Further, it was a closed process in which only the President and his friends took part. Pastrana gave representation to the Liberal Party and high officials of the Catholic Church (top leadership) only when he thought public opinion showed that the process should be broader. Another downside of the three years of negotiations was that Pastrana changed the negotiation team four times.

Second, the government policies were not coordinated and lacked a clear bargaining structure. Good planning was lacking. For instance in giving the guerrillas the demilitarised zone as a part of management of the crisis, and preparing the setting

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<sup>44</sup> Plan Colombia is a comprehensive strategy for bilateral cooperation, whose overall goal is to fight against illegal drugs and organized crime, thus contributing to economic revitalization, and to obtaining peace in Colombia (DNP 2006:8). [https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Justicia%20Seguridad%20y%20Gobierno/bal\\_plan\\_Col\\_ingles\\_f inal.pdf](https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Justicia%20Seguridad%20y%20Gobierno/bal_plan_Col_ingles_f inal.pdf) [status 25.08.2015].

for the talks, there were no explicit agreements on how the guerrillas would use this territory, nor was there a clear definition about the role of the government in the region. This was one of the vague agreements later to cause problems because of lack of specificity (:52).

### **4.6.3 Prevention in the time frame activity**

As for the time dimension in peace-building, Lederach ([1997]2010:78) argues that it takes a longer time to get out of armed conflict than it took to get into it. So he points out that quick fixes do not work to find sustainable peace for protracted conflict, but in Colombia this has not been possible because every President is hampered by the limited term of office, which is a period of four years in Colombia. This was the case affecting the different efforts for peace in Colombia during the presidency of Belisario Betancur<sup>45</sup>, Virgilio Barco<sup>46</sup> and César Gaviria<sup>47</sup> (Kline 2007:17).

Although there were different stages (Lederach [1997]2010:89) in the peace process, the key people with specific roles to keep the peace process rolling were missing. For example, preventive diplomacy which could have been placed at the interface of education and confrontation, where the main challenge is to find ways to move the confrontation from violent to nonviolent (:71).

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<sup>45</sup> President of Colombia between 1982-86

<sup>46</sup> President of Colombia between 1986-90

<sup>47</sup> President of Colombia between 1990-94

April 1999	May 1999	June 1999	July 1999	August 1999	September 1999	October 1999
Second round of Dialogue begins Pastrana threatens end of zone	Acuerdo de Caquetania Agenda Meeting: Pastrana-Tirofijo	Lloreda resignation Crisis of military	Zone extended <b>FARC freezes dialogue</b>		FARC letters	Table Thrid Time

November 1999	December 1999	January 2000	February 2000	March 2000	April 2000	May 2000
Public hearings approved	Progress report FARC unilateral ceasefire	Plan Colombia developing Table again Agenda approved	Trip to Europe	Public hearings begin FARC announces new party	FARC tax	

June 2000	July 2000	August 2000	September 2000	October 2000	November 2000	December 2000
<b>Government freeze</b> Necklace bomb	Cease-fire proposals exchanged		Airplane hijack	FARC armed strike	<b>FARC freeze</b>	Gómez and Tirofijo meet Zone extended Army ready to retake zone Turabay assassination

*Illus. 10* First Phase of FARC Negotiations Compared - Source: Kline 2007

The result of not having such a structure in place was that the peace process was frozen on several occasions from both sides as shown in the illustration.

Lederach who has been working in Colombia over the past fifteen years advises that in the Colombian context there is a need for developing training programs that are contextually relevant and strategically designed to expand their effective impact on a protracted conflict like that in Colombia (:15-16).

He claims that in the Colombian context a framework of education and training should be put into place. The training should be seen as a transformative component of peace-building. This requires the creation of a strategic design determining who participates. Paying attention to the identity of the participants indicates that training needs to be understood as a means of building relationships as well as being process oriented in the way the content and delivery of the workshop is designed. A process oriented design shows that training is approached as a strategic component of peace building. This helps people to link knowledge of their own setting with categories of inquiry that ease the development of people, their institutions, and create strategic responses relevant to their context (:123,126-127).

#### **4.6.4 Vision**

In the first meeting between Manuel Marulanda and President Andrés Pastrana, they agreed on four topics: the fight against paramilitarism, decriminalisation of social protest, the creation of a pilot plan to substitute illicit drugs, and the end of public announcements of rewards for the FARC leaders (Kline 2007:52). Added to it, the FARC Guerrilla stated that the negotiations must take into account political and structural problems which are the cause of violence in Colombia (Chernick 2009:75). By analysing this, it could be stated that there was a vision of the kind of structure both the guerrilla and the government were thinking of. The challenge came as stated by Chernick that for instance the guerrilla agreed to talk about changes in the economic issues and unemployment, not because they wanted to reach agreements with the government but to gain popular support. Chernick states that many in the guerrilla understand negotiations as a way to push forward the revolution (:78). To this can be added that there is no common vision if one party behaves like the guerrilla when they stated that if negotiations failed it would be the fault of the government and not theirs (Kline 2007:55).

#### **4.6.5 Transformation**

Although Pastrana talks about an integrated or transformational framework to build peace in Colombia, his understanding is not the same as Lederach. Pastrana wanted to build peace through political negotiation and at the same time to invest in social

projects, to stabilise the financial system of the country, to open the country to external markets and to fight the trafficking of drugs. It is noteworthy that Pastrana and his team thought about an integrated framework that would work together with the dialogues of peace. Pastrana (2005:116) states that his goal as President would be to visit the industrialised nations to find help to rebuild the nation of Colombia. He was aware that with hunger there would not be peace. It was necessary to bring health, education, and public services, to build roads and improve communication systems and to generate jobs in the most remote places in Colombia. With this in mind Pastrana managed to find help from the United States government and this plan was known as Plan Colombia. According to Pastrana “Plan Colombia” would bring transformation to the social system in Colombia, but would also be a support for the peace process (:117-118).

All these were in Pastrana’s favour, but it could be stated that he was acting, as Lederach comments, on crisis management to alleviate the social situation of the country and at the same time was looking for a political reconciliation between the government and FARC.

Lederach ([1997]2010:83) claims that transformation seeks to understand the cultural patterns that add to the rise of violent expressions of conflict. With this understanding, transformation through conflict transformation develops creative responses that encourage change in the personal, relational, structural and cultural dimensions through nonviolent mechanisms. It is at this point that a process of reconciliation could be implemented.

Although Pastrana (2005:34) stated that his government was to seek reconciliation instead of confrontation, in the whole peace process reconciliation was not a topic for discussion on the agendas of either group. In support Kline (2007:97-98) states that it was only on July 2 2001 that FARC leader Raúl Reyes proposed that President Pastrana should be replaced by a government of reconciliation and reconstruction, a government who understands that solution are found through conciliation, understanding, and social investment. To this Pastrana replied that FARC would not enter into politics in Colombia. As a result, FARC started kidnapping important government people; these facts from both sides brought more mistrust into the whole process.

## 4.7 Conclusion

Peace efforts in the history of Colombia during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were praiseworthy initiatives. When comparing Pastrana's peace process with Lederach's method of building sustainable peace in divided societies, it might be asked: how would it have been if Lederach's approach had been followed in Colombia?

Lederach's method is transformative and faith-based since it proceeds from the perspective of understanding the real causes of protracted conflict and the biblical aspect of reconciliation as the basis for re-establishing relationships. But this requires realistic time frames in order to find solutions after years of conflict.

Lederach's method requires the involvement of people from different groups, especially those who have suffered violence.

Taking Lederach's method as a guideline, this paper shows how the peace process between President Pastrana and FARC could have been approached.

Pastrana came like a new Gaitán with a lot of energy and a strong desire for building peace after seeing all the injustices the country was facing in the midst of much violence produced by the drug cartels and the Guerrilla FARC. His government's goal was to seek peace with FARC at any cost. Sadly, Pastrana and FARC never thought of long-term commitments to a process which could have lasted more years than anticipated.

A careful analysis of the peace process of President Pastrana and Guerrilla FARC indicates that both parties had a vision for stopping the ongoing fighting and digging into the social problems that are the root of the violence in Colombia. This sounds good but in practice there were many spoilers within both sides which prevented an agreement. For instance, the government wanted "Plan Colombia" as a way to improve the social aspect. On the other hand, the FARC opposed this because they understood this plan to be against them. This was because "Plan Colombia" was going to be financed by the United States with the goal of fighting drug trafficking.

The negotiations between the government and Guerrilla FARC did not allow the Church and those who had suffered violence to participate. This was the downside of the negotiations, as this paper claims that the Church could have been a catalyst in finding reconciliation between the parties as well as the affected population.

The final atrocities caused by FARC on January 20, 2002 were one of the main reasons why the peace process was stopped. This paper tends to understand the

motivations of Pastrana in taking such a decision, but on the other hand it criticises it because this decision clearly showed that the strategies for responding to crisis management were not well coordinated and the government reacted on statist diplomacy rather than on opening the doors for national reconciliation talks.

This paper concludes that those in the peace process in Colombia during Pastrana's mandate unfortunately did not consider including those from the Church in their talks, or even consider using other methods parallel to the statist diplomacy.

Peace has not been achieved in spite of good intentions and different plans and methods based on statist diplomacy. So what then is needed to build peace that lasts? This paper proposes two things that may work. The first one is the method of John Paul Lederach, not only in one sector of society as is currently being used in different projects run by the Mennonite Church in Colombia. This method needs to be made known to different levels of society, among them the government. This paper does not claim that Lederach's method is the ultimate solution to finding peace, but it differs from any other method which deals with statist diplomacy. Secondly, there is a need for a mission that brings hope to the Colombians, not a mission like they experienced in their history which was one of cruelty and violence. There is a need for what is known as Mission as Transformation, which combines the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as well as a helping hand to the neediest population in Colombia.

There is enough evidence in Colombia that different projects run as Mission as Transformation and using Lederach's method, have achieved more than many other peace processes in history.

The next chapter will focus on the evidence and different efforts and projects of the Colombian church to foster sustainable peace and how these successful projects show that Transformational Mission has a place in the Colombian context.

## **5 The role of the Colombian Church in light of Mission as Transformation**

The aim of this chapter is to contemplate the role of the Catholic Church and, among all the Evangelical Churches, that of the Mennonites in peace-building. This chapter will describe the different proposals from the churches concerning the way sustainable peace might be built in Colombia, as well as the task of the Church in Mission as Transformation.

### **5.1 The Catholic Church**

Looking back over the history of Colombia, it could be stated that in general during the colonial era and the violence time in the Colombian context the role of the Catholic Church was not one of helping to build peace in the country, but of separation and taking sides in its own interests. But times have changed and the church's historical authority in Colombia has been replaced by a more pluralistic society where openness and dialogue are required to find together solutions of peace for the country. As a result the Colombian Catholic Church has opened its doors and invited other people and organisations to help define the role of the church in peace-building. To this the Colombian Conference of Bishops added: "in each Colombian there is the capacity to build something new"<sup>48</sup> (Bouvier 2009:175).

In his analysis of the population of Colombia, Schreiter (2010:5) states that soldiers, guerrillas, paramilitaries, government officials and victims derive from a Catholic background and therefore he argues that the Catholic Church plays an important role in conflict transformation through different strategies such as education, advocacy, negotiation, accompaniment, mediation, and ministries of compassion, healing and reconciliation. In this matter, Lederach describes the Catholic Church as having "a ubiquitous presence" in Colombia (as cited in Schreiter:5).

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<sup>48</sup> Colombian Conference of Bishops, "Call to Unity and Hope," February 21, 2002 as cited in (Bouvier 2009:175).

### **5.1.1 The Catholic Church's peace-building strategies**

Schreiter (2010:5) states that when Catholics think about building peace they think strategically and in doing so they also invite participation by other religious, ethnic and civil actors in the conflict. Against this background, Msgr. Héctor Henao Fabio Gaviria<sup>49</sup> (2007:176) presents the Conference of Bishops as a platform for a permanent peace policy for Colombia. Henao Gaviria introduces three different peace-building scenarios from the strategy of the Catholic Church for building peace in association with different actors of society. In the first scenario, the armed conflict is negotiated by those in the government, organisations outside the law such as guerrilla and Paramilitaries, and other institutions and facilitators. The second scenario deals with the creation and strengthening of civil society so that they are able to discuss together in the midst of the conflict affecting society. The third scenario deals with building structures from the grassroots, which guarantee social justice and peaceful ways of living together<sup>50</sup>.

Within this context, Fr. Mauricio García Durán<sup>51</sup> (2005:1) states that the Catholic Church has put a lot of effort into seeking peace through the promotion and support of social mobilisation against internal violence and in building sustainable peace. It can be confirmed that the Catholic Church is a pioneer in mobilising the masses among all other social organisations and churches in the country.

Peace mobilisation in Colombia is significant not only because of the collective activity that it has produced but also because of the large number of people that have been involved in such manifestations. For instance, in 1999 there was a notable concentration of more than 14 million people who participated with the goal of promoting peace throughout the country. Out of these demonstrations clear strategies were born to fight the problem of violence in the country. These strategies allow the Catholic Church to organise initiatives and to prioritise their activities in the social and political arenas (:4).

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<sup>49</sup> Director of the Colombian Catholic Church's National Social Ministry Secretariat/Caritas.

<sup>50</sup> Msgr. Héctor Fabio Henao Gaviria, "The Colombian Church and Peace Building," in Colombia: *Building Peace in Times of War*. Presented at the Fourth Annual International Catholic Peacebuilders Network Peacebuilding Conference, Conference of Catholic Peacebuilders Network, Bogotá, Colombia, July 24-29, 2007.

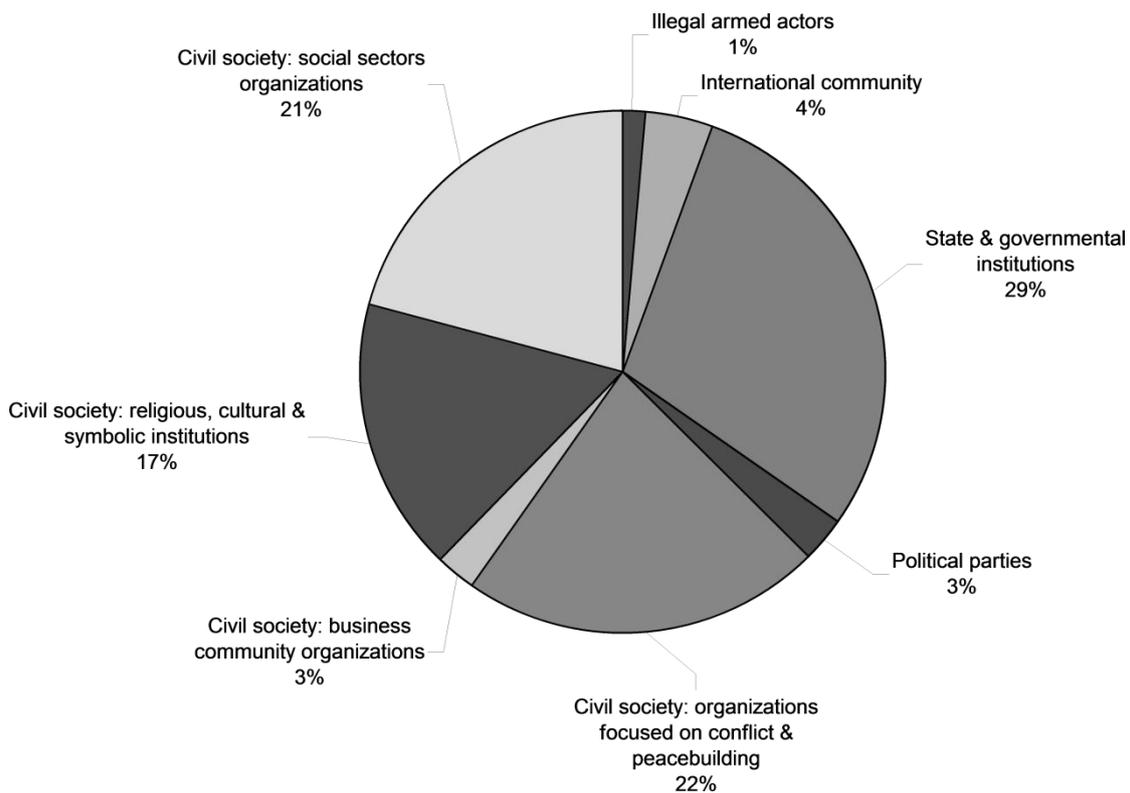
<sup>51</sup> PhD in Peace Studies and researcher at the Centre of Research of Popular Education- CINEP in Bogotá (Colombia).

Following some of the ideas from Lederach's integrated framework for building peace, the Catholic Church has designed the following strategies to foster peace:

- Education: the goal is to train and raise awareness in society and to promote peace and a negotiated solution to the conflict. This is done through forums, congresses and seminars, educational programs and campaigns, cultural and sporting events, as well as religious celebrations and peace awards and honours. All these activities represent 49.8% of the peace collective action that took place between 1978 and 2006.
- Organisation: the goal is to create organisations and networks that foster peace work. This activity represents 3.5% of all the collective activity. This strategy has been crucial to peace mobilisation because it gives weight and identity to it.
- Political action: the goal is to encourage people to participate in different political activities which seek to influence the political arena with the aim of seeking political peaceful alternatives. This is done for instance by participation in voting and elections, referendums, building social consensus, and dialoguing to find alternative solutions to conflict which are a challenge to organisations and local communities. This initiative represents 10.1% of the collective action.
- Protesting: this strategy's goal is to mobilise people against violence and apply pressure for conditions to foster peace. This strategy prefers a non-confrontational style and is carried out practically through marches and demonstrations, strikes and shutdowns, occupations and blockades. Participants of these marches can be counted as workers, peasants, indigenous people, students and the urban community. These types of activities represent 31.9% of the collective action for peace (:5).
- Resisting: in this strategy, people are encouraged to take a more proactive stand against those in the armed conflict. This action is done in two ways, first

by actions of civil resistance and secondly by declaring zones of peace<sup>52</sup>. This strategy represents 4.7% of all collective action for peace developed (:5).

All these initiatives have changed the panorama of the Colombian context when speaking about initiatives that foster peace in the land, and without question the Catholic Church has played an important role in the significant process of peace mobilisation that Colombians have experienced in the last 15 years. But it is not only the Church that has joined in this task but also other institutions in Colombia as shown in the following graphic.



Illus. 11 Peace Mobilisation Organisers, Source: García Durán<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand the Catholic Church has not always been effective in maintaining leadership to foster peace through the years, as was the case during “La Violencia” as seen in Chapter 3 when the Church by wanting to keep its place of privilege took sides with the government, the same scenario was repeated between 1978 and 1985. In this period, the Catholic Church was dormant in relation to different ideas for building peace in Colombia. During this time, politicians and

<sup>52</sup> A “peace zone” can be defined as “an attempt to establish rules or norms that limit the destructive effects of violent conflict within a particular area of during a particular time period or with regard to a particular category of people(Allen-Nan and Mitchell, c2004:5).

<sup>53</sup> Peace Mobilization organisers (distributing responsibility in joint events) (1978-2006). Source: Fr. Mauricio García Durán. PhD Thesis (2005).

humane organisations, workers and educational institutions took the lead in this matter. A real fact during this period was that the Catholic Bishops were quiet about social issues and the violation of human rights in the country (González 1990).

However, the Church used this time to intensify its reflections on the situation of the country with all forms of violence and to prepare a vision that speaks of the role of the church in facing all the challenges that have emerged in Colombia. The Church is looking for alternatives and options for the transformation of the problems which have wracked the country (Henaó Gaviria 2007:173).

After this period, the Catholic Church reassumed leadership between 1986 and 1992. In that period, the most violent in Colombia, the church represented the victims of the growing dirty war in the country. The Church also took an active part in the peace processes as mediator and witness. The Church intensified its work with many dioceses throughout the country and as a result produced important preconditions so that many other organisations were born whose goal was to foster peace in the land (García Durán 2005:11).

In the period between 1993 and 1999, the Church again distanced itself from some initiatives such as The National Network for Peace<sup>54</sup> and against Violence (REDEPAZ)<sup>55</sup>. Instead the Church intensified its activities towards those in difficult areas of the country such as Magdalena Medio, Urabá, Montes de María, areas that were the focus of much violence and poverty. In this period the Church focused its strategy once again and developed a new way of helping those who had suffered in the armed conflict.

The church has played an important role in accompanying victims of the conflict in the most rural areas of Colombia. The idea is to develop methods for approaching people, building trust and establishing dialogues. This was then developed into pastoral dialogue, a mechanism that has been used as a tool to resolve conflict. After this the idea of building a culture of peace was developed in communities. The purpose of this strategy was to help those in the communities to develop positive values, attitudes and behaviour, to establish respect of life, non-

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<sup>54</sup> Network for Peace was set up to continue the work of the National Peace Council, one of the oldest peace organisations in the UK.

<sup>55</sup> Redepaz is the Red Nacional de Iniciativas Ciudadanas por la Paz y contra la Guerra, which articulates the experiments and practices being implemented by social agencies in local, inter-local, regional and national dimensions. <http://www.redepaz.org.co/index.php/quienes-somos/redepaz> [status 01.09.2015].

violent relationships and dialogue as a way to find solutions and build consensus. The whole concept of a culture of peace has been developed through continual education and this has been able to be extended in the whole country (Bouvier 2009:182).

Bouvier asks what kind of strategy for peace-building has been created since 1990. The answer to this question came in a working paper from the Colombian Conference of Bishops on May 2, 1994 that generically can be called a “peace and reconciliation ministry”.<sup>56</sup> In these documents we can read that peace and reconciliation are fundamental in building a society that will secure the human fulfilment of all its representatives. And more importantly, that peace is the cornerstone in the way the Christian message is to be lived (:182-183).

The concept of reconciliation has been implemented in present day Colombia. La Comisión de Conciliación Nacional (CCN)<sup>57</sup> was established by the former President of the Colombian Bishops Conference on August 4<sup>th</sup> 1995. Its purpose was to find political solutions to the armed conflict and to support all the peace efforts in the country. Since then this commission has been working on the topic of reconciliation and in 2013 they published what is called “proposals for building public politics for reconciliation and peace in Colombia”. (*Propuestas para la Construcción de Políticas Públicas para la Reconciliación y la Paz en Colombia*). This proposal can be resumed in the words of Cardinal Rubén Salazar Gómez, President of the Colombian Bishops Conference, “Rubén Salazar is sure that the building of a Colombia being reconciled and in peace, is a permanent task of all Colombians”(Salazar Gómez 2013:4).

After the whole concept of reconciliation was introduced in the search for solutions to the armed conflict in Colombia, some people have understood that it is not enough to stop the war, there is also the need to find truth, justice and remuneration, and if the country wants lasting peace, there is the absolute need of a process of reconciliation for those who have suffered in the midst of the war. The Catholic Church through Rev. Leonardo Gómez Serna has always insisted that peace

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<sup>56</sup> Colombian Conference of Bishops, “Toward a Peace Ministry” (working paper, May 2, 1994); *Peace Ministry in the Current Situation of Armed Conflict in Colombia*. (Bouvier 2009:182).

<sup>57</sup> La Comisión de Conciliación Nacional (CCN) The Commission was established by the former President of the Colombian Bishop Conference on August 4th 1995. Purpose was to find political solutions to the armed conflict and to support all the peace efforts in the country. <http://www.comisiondeconciliacion.co/nosotros/historia/> [status 01.09.2015].

and reconciliation are gifts of God<sup>58</sup>, received through Christ (Gómez Serna [no date] as cited in García Durán 2005:16).

In this matter the Catholic Church is creating space for the victims of the armed conflict to be able not only to identify their pain and deal with the suffering, and also to express their sorrows. The Catholic Church puts into practice what Lederach calls spaces for reconciliation. The Catholic Church provides not only the physical space but they also create space and environment where people can receive pastoral care, an environment where people are not only able to share feelings and sufferings, but also a space where people might dream of a future in peace. This space creates the possibility of transforming hope (Gaviria Henao 2007:183).

## **5.2 The Mennonite Church**

Among all the Evangelical Churches in Colombia, it is worth noting the active participation of the Mennonite Church in building peace in Colombia. Something that is worthy of attention is that, although they are similar to any other evangelical group in the land in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, saving souls, doing duties such as attending Church services, praying and fasting, the Mennonite Church is particularly known for its practicality in social programs as a part of proclaiming and doing Mission as Transformation. What is even more outstanding is that they are working together with the Catholic Church, which is not well accepted by other Evangelical groups. Mennonites also have a long tradition in history as a Church which stands for peace.

Mennonites were already working in Latin America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but most of them arrived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Colombia (Prieto and Snyder 2010:134). Most protestant missionaries came to the country between 1930 and 1948. But the Mennonites came in 1945. These were still years were missionaries did not have much trouble entering the country due to the Liberal political party hegemony. But a year after the Mennonites started their mission in Agua de Dios (Water of God, a famous town where all leper patients were confined, the Conservative party came into power under President Mariano Ospina Pérez. This change brought a difficult time to the protestants (Bowler 2014:65) (Goff 1968:2). So the Mennonites, like all protestant

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<sup>58</sup> Right Rev. Leonardo Gómez Serna, interview published in Sandoval, 2004: Vol.2:48(García Durán 2005:16).

movements, suffered in the time of violence in Colombia, and persecution was real to them. Their houses and Bibles were burned and all their Church buildings were closed through this time (Bowler 2014:66).

Throughout its history, the Mennonite Church has always opposed war and violence. They are one of the traditional “peace churches” (:65).

Up to the mid-twentieth century Mennonites viewed violence as an unchristian response. They were always characterised by a movement of pacifism and non-resistance, and it was only after the Second World War that some felt that the theology of non-resistance allowed evil to happen (Epp-Tiessen 2002). After this they put into practice the teaching of Jesus (“Blessed are the peacemakers” Matthew 5:9) by addressing real problems in society such as injustice and violence (Miller 2000:7). They also concentrated their efforts on education, health and relief work (Bowler 2014:65). Furthermore, driven by this conviction, they became involved in international and human right organisations (Driedger and Kraybill 1994).

## **5.2.1 The Mennonite peace-building strategies**

Mennonites in Colombia went from being quiet about the Colombian situation to becoming active, and began to address root causes of the violence through different organisations and projects (Bowler 2014:70-71).

So after starting development projects in the 1960s, they were able in 1975 to establish Mencoldes<sup>59</sup> whose goal is manifold, for instance medical supplies for the poor, and projects of building rice and sugar mills in the west of the country. They improved and founded schools, promoted the improvement of transportation by constructing bridges and roads, and they founded a home for persons displaced due to the violence in the countryside (Juhnke 1979) (Stucky 2009).

In 1990, they founded Justapaz.<sup>60</sup> Its goal is to promote the respect of human rights, justice, peace education and nonviolent action, as well as transformation and

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<sup>59</sup> Mencoldes goal is to promote development based on social transformation. This is done through an integral mission in the country where worthy life, nonviolence, social justice, truth, and integral peace (shalom), equality, hope and service are the base of Mencoldes.  
<http://fundacionmencoldes.org/index.php/quienes-somos> [status 01.09.2015].

<sup>60</sup> Justapaz will seek to be a catalyst and a reference for the process of constructing a just, holistic and lasting peace through the existence and action of churches and communities that exert active citizenship.  
[http://www.justapaz.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=126&Itemid=223](http://www.justapaz.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=126&Itemid=223) [status 02.09.2015].

mediation of conflict (and training) (Esquivia and Stucky 2000:134). By the year 2003, Justapaz and Mencoldes joined efforts to create the Church Coordination for Psychosocial Action (CEAS), as a part of what they called a “holistic” approach to peace (Stucky 2009:7).

Mennonites work together with other organisations whose goal is to foster peace in the Colombian context. Among them are the Commission of Restoration, Life and Peace of CEDECOL, Pan y Paz, and the Coalition which fights against the recruitment of youth (Hernández 2012:421).

Looking at all the projects the Mennonites run in Colombia, it could be stated that they practice a development and peace-building approach based on the Gospel. They focus their projects on the grassroots level, where the majority of the Colombian population is found. Since the beginning they have concentrated their energies on working with vulnerable people such as women and children who are victims of the conflict. Currently they continue working with this group in society, because these lack support from the government. Mennonites have their differences with the State, as they believe that political involvement could lead to moral and religious compromise. On the other hand, they encourage the Colombian Church and communities to be politically conscious and to participate actively as citizens. The Mennonites’ goal is that making changes at the grassroots levels will bring top-level transformation (Bowler 2014:87-88). In this matter, Paul Stucky stated: “I think there’s been an internationality to build connections at the middle and upper range in terms of that pyramid that John Paul Lederach describes, and I think that’s happened, and there are plenty of examples of that...Ricardo [Esquivia] himself has been a representative at the National Peace Council. Peter [Stucky] right now is the representative at the City of Bogotá Council.” (Interviewed on April 24 2013 by Erica Bowler:89). It could be then concluded that Mennonites are working on every possible level in Colombian society to alleviate the needs of those who have suffered in the conflict, but they are also active in building peace with different projects and organisations.

### **5.3 The task of the Church in Mission as Transformation**

Vinay Samuel (1999:227) argues that in responding to the task of Mission in today's world, such a response might be Mission as Transformation. This is supported by Reimer (2009:40-41) when he claims that according to 2 Corinthians 5,17-20 the Church is called to be a voice of reconciliation and justice, and the will of God should be experienced in society through it. He states that the church is not only ecclesial but also a socio-political body in a town. The Church is understood to be a decision-making entity and also the one responsible for the mission of God in this world. The task of the Church is not only to move individuals to be followers of Jesus, but to encourage the nations to be disciples of Jesus. This demands a spiritual as well as a sociocultural change as appropriate within the meaning of the Gospel. The Church has the responsibility to do something for this world. She should be salt and light, and without that from the Church, the world will remain in darkness. It is with this aim in view that Reimer (2013:76) states that the Church needs to overcome the concept of separating the preaching of the Gospel from social engagement in society.

Hardmeier (2009:13) states that mission and development aid should not be limited only to preaching or assistance but to the transformation of society, and to work with the aim of changing its structures. Mission as Transformation looks not only to an individual who is lost and in need of social help, but to the whole of society.

With this in mind, questions need to be asked in the Colombian context. Does Colombia need Mission as Transformation and the method of Lederach in order to build peace in Colombia, and how would this be done? This paper proposes both as an alternative to finding solutions that have not yet been found through diplomacy. Mission as Transformation is needed because people in Colombia not only need to hear the message of the Gospel, but as already stated in the historical part of this paper, they received a Gospel full of man-made rules and a Gospel that was imposed by force. It is in this sense that Colombians need to hear a Gospel that is full of compassion, and a Gospel that reflects the person of Jesus. When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion. Personal mission experience in Colombia has demonstrated that when the Gospel is presented and at the same time people are

helped to find solutions for their social needs, it easy for them to digest what they hear from the Gospel.

Juan Driver (Driver 1998:160) comments on this and states that when someone advocates peace, justice and reconciliation this needs to be done through social aid. On the other hand, many have taken the stand that the mission of the Church is only the preaching of the Gospel, but a glimpse in the New Testament, shows that a peacemaker is also an evangelist. It can therefore be concluded that if an integral Gospel is to be preached, the evangelist needs also to be a peacemaker.

In view of the investigation done on Lederach's method, how would this method help churches to contribute to building sustainable peace in Colombia through transformational mission? This method complements the concept of Mission as Transformation, particularly because of its principle of reconciliation. Mission as Transformation has the potential to enable reconciliation between God and humankind through accepting the message of Jesus, and on the other hand, the method of Lederach has the potential, through training, to work on reconciliation between people and prepare the church for social transformation. People in Colombia may therefore need to be confronted with these two aspects. For instance, if someone in the guerrilla has killed many people, this person from God's standpoint needs to be reconciled to Him first and then if possible to be reconciled to his fellow man.

This paper agrees with Reimer when he claims that the Church's mission is to proclaim reconciliation and justice. By their different projects based on reconciliation and justice, the Catholics and the Mennonites in Colombia could be categorised as examples of what Mission as Transformation looks like in practice. For instance, Justapaz runs projects and training on community transformation by training churches to promote human rights and the building of peace in remote areas of Colombia. Mencoldes has the School of Peace, teaching churches about development and peace from a biblical perspective.

The Colombian Government, especially through the peace process of Pastrana, was not able to achieve *shalom* in the land, and for this Pastrana, FARC and all those who were involved could be blamed, but this would be to over-simplify the complexity of the Colombian internal armed conflict.

Instead one needs to look ahead and see that the government has continued in its task to build sustainable peace in the land. After Pastrana's efforts to build peace, lessons were learned. For instance, that in a peace process, time-frames may be longer

than planned in order to find an agreement, that victims of the conflict need to be part of future talks, and most importantly is the whole theme of reconciliation in finding peace among the parties in conflict. The church also has to understand that by being passive, it did not assist the government which also had good intentions in reaching peace. An example of how the church helped by complementing the efforts of the government, was clearly seen during the presidency of Álvaro Uribe Vélez in 2007. On this occasion, the Catholic Church was involved so as to have a place of meeting in order to mediate for the lives of those who were kidnapped by the guerrilla but also started mediation between Guerrilla FARC and government (Echeverri González 2009:36-37). It could be stated that Church and government have learned, and they want to improve to work together for the same goal, namely peace in Colombia. In the current peace process between President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC Guerrilla in Cuba, they are avoiding the mistakes that were made in the past. As a result many agreements have been reached.

With this in mind, Lederach stated, in an interview with the *El Espectador* newspaper, that peace can only be reached when every Colombian decides to respect the others' differences and establish constructive relationships with his fellowmen. For over half a century this has not been the case,<sup>61</sup> so this problem needs to be worked out with the help of those who are interested in seeing a land come to rest after more than 60 years of internal war.

The Catholic Church and the Mennonites have achieved many goals which had not been reached with statist diplomacy. Examples of Mission as Transformation are seen in Ricardo Esquivia's<sup>62</sup> projects in one of the most difficult and violent parts of the country, as it is Los Montes de María (The Montes de María region)<sup>63</sup>. (Esquivia and Gerlach 2009:295-306).

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<sup>61</sup> John Paul Lederach interview with El Espectador Newspaper on 24 October, 2015. <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/nacional/paz-construye-cada-colombiano-articulo-594867> [status 23.05.2016].

<sup>62</sup> Mr. Esquivia is Co-founder and Director of the Commission for Restoration, Life and Peace of the Evangelical Council of Churches of Colombia (CEDECOL). He is also the Founder and former Director of both Justapaz, the Christian Centre for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action of the Mennonite Church of Colombia, as well as Sembrandopaz, a peace and development initiative of Protestant churches on the North Coast of Colombia. <https://tanenbaum.org/peacemakers-in-action-network/meet-the-peacemakers/ricardo-esquivia-ballestas/> [status 15.09.2015].

<sup>63</sup> The Montes de María is an isolated group of small mountains near the northern coast of Colombia in the Caribbean Region. The Montes de María are the last part of the Serranía de San Jerónimo which extends from the West Andes.

CEDECOL, the Council of Evangelical and Protestant Churches in Colombia, together with the Mennonite churches, have created a national network called the Commission of Restoration, Life and Peace. The aim of this organisation is to gather theologians, clergy, women and academics to develop a road map for Protestant churches working together for peace rooted in social, economic, and political justice (:295).

Sembrandopaz (sowing peace) is a civil, non-profit organisation focused on bridging the gap between church-based social services and organisations of the Colombian government. The goal of Sembrandopaz is to build a culture of peace through social justice and holistic human development (:308).

Although these projects are not actually called Mission as Transformation, in their very essence that is what they are. These projects are also the result of the many years John Paul Lederach invested in Colombia with the integrated framework for building peace. There is evidence of how normal missionaries and Colombians have understood that simply bringing the Gospel is not enough in a country which has been suffering because of the internal conflict throughout the years. For instance, the words of Barbara Gerlach<sup>64</sup> (2004:302) are a testimony to this. On seeing more than 2000 people being displaced and churches fleeing from massacres, she states that they were not prepared to respond to such calamity. They started with a spiritual response, but they noticed that people needed more than that. They presented Jesus as a solution, but people were in need of housing, medicine, education and doctors. As a result, ASVIDAS, the Association for a Dignified Life in Solidarity was born. ASVIDAS goal is to bring spiritual activities and income-producing projects together.

Furthermore, Justapaz and the Commission of Restoration, Life and Peace developed the vision where churches are to be seen as sanctuaries of peace. By this was meant places where people can find refuge but also centres for local peace-building in their communities<sup>65</sup> According to Esquivia and Gerlach (2009:301) there are about fifty sanctuaries of peace in Colombia).

An example is the Christ the King Church in Tierralta (Montes de María). This place is situated at the heart of the AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia).

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<sup>64</sup> From notes by Barbara Gerlach from a delegation that met with ASVIDAS leaders in July 2004. Cited in Virginia Bouvier (2009:302-303).

<sup>65</sup> See Christians Centre for Justice, Peace, and Nonviolent Action, "Sanctuary of Peace Churches," [www.justapaz.org/-Sanctuary-of-Peace-Churches](http://www.justapaz.org/-Sanctuary-of-Peace-Churches)[status 15.09.2015].

This church operates like a shelter for those who have fled violence and as the same time, the church has purchased land to help people to resettle. Furthermore, it has started different development projects such as health including HIV/AIDS prevention education. This project is directed towards demobilised paramilitaries (:301).

Heaven of Peace is another church whose goal is to receive displaced people, but also they provide education in the area of human rights and how to obtain practical help from the government. Farmers are encouraged to join the security guarantee programme, which is called “return with dignity”. This programme is run by churches and the government and provides those who return to the lands security by police presence in their region (:301).

The Peniel Church in Zambrano is also situated in a “red zone”<sup>66</sup> in Los Montes de María. This Church has developed programmes for food and security for the displaced people, but also is known for its educational program which targets youth at risk of forced recruitment by the guerrilla (:301-302).

The Catholic Church has been running a programme called “Peace and Reconciliation” since 1990. In this context, Monsignor Fabio Henao Gaviria (2007:182-183) asks why it is so imperative to speak of reconciliation in Colombia. He added that the answer is obvious when the roots of the injustice and violence that the country has suffered for so many are deeply investigated. Furthermore Archbishop Rubén Salazar states “we must find what lies behind these trends if we are to encounter the cause and find solutions for attacking it at the source.”<sup>67</sup>

That is why the Catholic Church runs the project called “Pastoral Dialogue”. According to Monsignor Héctor Fabio Henao Gaviria (2007:181), this is an ecclesiastical exercise born from a reflection and understanding of the Gospel and what the current situation demands from the local church. These pastoral dialogues have been used in conflict areas and their goal is totally humanitarian. Through these dialogues they try to put an end to violence and ensure that the region returns to liberty and the rights of the population are respected (:181).

There are some other projects run by different organisations outside the Church context. For instance, since September 2001, some majors from the army initiated a program in eastern Antioquia, one of the areas in Colombia with the highest

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<sup>66</sup> That is, areas of known guerrilla strength (Bouvier 2009:126).

<sup>67</sup> Archbishop Rubén Salazar, Caribbean Region Reconciliation Congress, Documentación de Pastoral Social(July 2001:22).

incidence of violence and displacement. The majors' long-term goal was to replace armed conflict with dialogue and humanitarian *acercamientos* (rapprochements). This project is called "Peace Laboratory" whose goal is to promote respect for human rights through dialogue so as to develop alternative approaches to local security and quality-of-life in the region (Roldán 2009:278-279).

Mission as Transformation as practised in the Two-Thirds World has been regarded with reserve by those in the West, because they are afraid that the goal of mission – the salvation of the lost – could make the Church lose sight of its task (Hardmeier 2009:13).

This concern is also real among Church leaders in Colombia. A study by *Paz y Esperanza*<sup>68</sup> (Peace and Hope), "*Las Iglesias Evangélicas y la Acción Social en Colombia*" (The Evangelical Church und Social Action) shows that when Evangelicals in general think of social action, they think they can do it, but face a challenge to their theology. Thus there is an urgency among Evangelicals to develop a theology of social and political transformation. Until then church leaders are divided about the task of the Church. The question that needs to be asked here is, does the situation in Colombia need more evangelism or social action? This question will be developed in the last chapter of this paper.

When looking at the different projects and their results in the Colombian context, it could be claimed that Colombian Christians have a chance to build sustainable peace through Mission as Transformation; perhaps not instantaneously as Pastrana and others in history wanted, but with persistence, patience and the conviction that the Gospel in its essence has the key to change the most difficult situations in the world.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

The present chapter has surveyed both the Catholic Church and the Mennonites and the role they played in using strategies based on Mission as Transformation to help in building peace, as well as to share the message of hope which is found in Christ in the Colombian context.

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<sup>68</sup> **Paz y Esperanza** es una organización internacional Cristiana evangélico-protestante de derechos humanos, dedicada a defender y promover la justicia a favor de personas y comunidades en situación de pobreza o afectadas por injusticias.  
<http://pazyesperanza.org/somos/somos.htm> [status 24.05.2016].

Observing what is happening with these two churches in Colombia, it is worth noting that the Catholic Church and all the years of hegemony due to taking sides with the Conservative party are now history. It is a church that has grown through all the damage they caused through the history of Colombia. A Church that persecuted evangelicals, among them the Mennonites, now is working in association with them with the hope of building a better country. This example of unity is an example, but also gives hope that barriers among enemies can be destroyed when personal interests are put aside and the vision of building peace is put into place instead. It is in this respect that these two churches are an example to the government, guerrillas, paramilitaries and other church denominations. By working with projects based on Mission as Transformation, these two churches are an important role model to the rest of the Christian communities which are still anchored in one aspect of the Gospel without contemplating the whole spectrum of it. Also their role in society is to be a focus of transformation, not only by living out their belief, but by lending a helping hand to those who are lacking many material things. Furthermore, these two churches have been able to overcome many prejudices between them by working together under the label of ecumenism. This has not been possible in the past due to the tensions. Consequently, the ecumenical movement is growing in Colombia and they were able to hold the first Ecumenical Forum for Peace in April 2012. This forum was attended by some 300 participants from different parts of the country. Furthermore they were able to pray for the unity of all Christians for peace<sup>69</sup>.

The examples of what is happening in Colombia show that Mission as Transformation might be, or indeed is, an alternative which has accomplished so much more in the field of building peace; and starting between long term antagonists like the Catholics and Evangelicals, this transformation and the desire to work together are bringing hope and genuine change not only to these institutions, but through projects based on Mission as Transformation, are also aiming to bring the light of the Gospel to entire regions dominated by violence and fear. It is in this sense that Mission as Transformation is being more successful than sadly all the efforts that President Pastrana made during his presidency.

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<sup>69</sup> <http://www.usip.org/olivebranch/colombian-churches-faith-groups-engage-urge-peace> [status 18.09.2015].

The final chapter of this paper will concentrate on recommendations for pastors and churches who desire peace in a country which has been bleeding for many years, as well an in-depth analysis of the models employed in this research.

## 6 Conclusion and recommendations

Before the aims of this study are given, it is necessary to write about the hopes and dreams of the Colombians for peace. Colombia has been bleeding for more than 50 years due to the internal conflict between the government and Guerrilla FARC as well as ELN<sup>70</sup> Guerrilla (National Liberation Army), which was not a topic for discussion in this paper. Looking at the current scenario in Colombia after many years of violence, iniquities, illegal handling, it can be seen that entire families and towns have been bombed and massacred and have been forcibly displaced, and as a result there are more than 5.7 million internally displaced people now living in poverty or lacking their daily basic needs. One might expect them to have lost hope of building a country where peace will return, allowing them to be able to return to normality and to their places of origin. Well, it is astonishing! But Colombians have not given up hope. The people of the Republic of Colombia are still dreaming not only of the day when violence and injustice will decrease, but also of the day when in the midst of all their differences such as cultural regions and different ideologies in politics and religion, Colombians could live together as one big family. Even though the Colombian soul has been dry for many years due to all the tears shed over the murder of his children, disappointments and frustrations from a government which only looks out for its own wellbeing, hatred among brothers and sisters due to the armed conflict, and the list could go on, nevertheless the Colombian is still searching for tranquillity and food for the soul. It is in this sense that Colombian are known as "hechado pa'lante" (enterprising, resourceful); this is a phrase that sums up the energy that drives them not to give up, but to keep looking for solutions for their own people and land. Colombians are not just looking for a peace that is agreed on paper. No! When all the projects run by the church in Colombia are analysed, it could be stated that they are looking for a peace that goes beyond human understanding, a peace that is summarised in the concept of shalom.

This study then was set out with two aims; first, to explore the reasons why peace was not achieved under the peace process of President Andrés Pastrana and Guerrilla FARC between 1998-2002 by means of statist diplomacy. These results were then evaluated in the light of the integrated framework for building sustainable

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<sup>70</sup> Ejército de Liberación Nacional

peace in divided societies proposed by John Paul Lederach. The second aim was to investigate what might be the potential of Mission as Transformation to build peace through the engagement of the Church in Colombia. The present study sought to answer two of these questions:

1. How should we assess the attempts at a peace process under the presidency of Andrés Pastrana, in light of Lederach's integrated framework for building sustainable peace?
2. What potential does Lederach's method hold for churches that would contribute through transformational mission to building sustainable peace in Colombia?

These two main research questions were followed by some sub-questions, which altogether were the guidance to find the specific professional literature in the field of investigation. With this at hand, the research was carried out in different stages.

The first stage of the investigation was to understand the root causes of the Colombian internal conflict, what were the problematics, and who were the actors who contributed to the escalation of the situation. To find such information, it was necessary to research two important periods in Colombian history. The first one was the colonial era and the second was the period between 1930-1964. These two periods form the basis of the current problems in the land with the continual unrest in the colonial era, the creation of the two traditional parties, the five civil wars in the years to come, the violence years and the official creation of the guerrilla in 1964.

The second stage was to understand the mission and role of the church in fostering peace in the midst of the challenges of the colonial era and the violence time. This information opens the door to understanding the kind of mission the church was practising in those days.

The third stage was to explore the different political efforts for peace in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it was here where President Andrés Pastrana came on stage. His efforts did not succeed, like many other efforts in history, so in looking for a new formula to find sustainable peace, this paper proposes Lederach's integrated framework to build peace in divided societies like Colombia.

To understand Lederach's ideas, his integrated framework for building peace was analysed and compared with Pastrana's peace process with FARC Guerrilla. The result supports the proposal that Lederach's method, which is based on one of the components of Mission as Transformation and is revolutionary when compared with

statist diplomacy, might be a contribution to all the efforts which different organisations in the country are making to find peace, among them the Catholic Church and the Evangelicals, more specifically the Mennonite Church.

The fourth stage was to investigate what has been the contribution of the Church and its mission to build peace in Colombia. The information about the role of the church in the colonial era and La Violencia (The Violence) formed the basis for the proposition that, through Mission as Transformation, the Church in Colombia might be a catalyst to build peace at last.

To round off all these stages, it was necessary to define key words in this paper. That was the case of the word peace.

Peace was looked at from different perspectives such as from the lexical and sociological, the Colombian ideas of peace and the Bible's point of view. As a result shalom, biblical peace, was chosen as a word that contains all the ingredients for the peace Colombia needs.

To understand the potential of Mission as Transformation in general and for the Colombian context, the term was examined as to its origin and the theological foundations of it. This helps to understand the differences between the mission in the colonial era and the transformative mission which the modern-day church is doing.

## **6.1 Main findings**

Some of the findings were summarised within the respective chapters of this research. This section will synthesise the main findings which give answers to the main research questions and sub-questions.

During the historical research for this paper, there is a word that occurred very frequently, a word that can be named as the cause of all the problems in Colombia, and this word is "division". It is important to name this word because it is believed that by looking for strategies that help to close the gap caused by different factors such as the geographical fragmentation, fighting for the land, ethnic and cultural differences among the tribes in the Colombian territory, a solution will be found for peace in the Colombian territory.

But history is there, and history teaches that not much was done to find this solution; instead, this division or gap between the first inhabitants of Colombia was exacerbated by the coming of the Spanish conquerors, which consequently created a

sociological problem with the different groups living in the land. Up to this point, the hope was that the Church, with a message of reconciliation and peace, would have helped to heal and close the wound caused by people whose desire was the possession of the land and to have power to dominate the indigenous people of Colombia.

It is in this sense that the Church, by acting with a message that reflected the conquering thoughts of the Spanish crown, failed to be a light to those in the new Continent. Instead, it can be concluded here that the Catholic Church also showed its power by manipulating people to believe in a God of love and peace that was not reflected in the actions of those coming to conquer. It can also be concluded that the Church added more coals to the fire, so that division might continue to be a problem in the Colombian territory.

Neither politics nor church clergy were able to solve the latent problem of division; more riots were to come with the continual problems in the colonial era between the Spanish people and the locals for the desire to have power to govern the land. As a result, civil wars were fought till the Spanish people were chased out of the land.

One might think that the problem of division was then solved, but it was not so. Already, those in the Colombian territory had developed their own ideologies, represented later on in the two political parties, *Conservadores* (conservative) and *Liberales* (liberals).

So the creation of two main political parties did not help much. Instead, it intensified the sociological and political problems in Colombia. Here it is important to remember the words of Simón Bolívar already quoted in this research, when he said that if his death would contribute to the cessation of the parties he would then rest in peace; but in analysing his words, it could be concluded that the problem of division has not only sociological and ethnological roots, it has also roots in the heart.

So Colombians, by seeking to find peace and rest and reflecting on the words of Simón Bolívar, would try to find solutions through political strategies. However, what is needed is a strategy that deals with the heart.

Here is where the Church has a role to play, but sad to say in Colombia, the Catholic Church again showed its weakness by joining the Conservative party. It did so to keep its own privileges, but thereby neglected the message that is written in its own Bible, that one should not look after one's own interests, but put those of others first. This, working together with a strong Conservative party, created more problems

in politics, and on top of that a sectarian problem with the Liberal party and the Evangelicals, among them the Mennonite Church.

The result of this sectarian problem was the violence in Colombia, which cost many precious and innocent lives both in the main cities and in rural Colombia. It was in this context that farmers sought a strategy to find a solution for the ongoing violence, so the strategy was based on self-defence by the creation of groups that would resist the oppression of the Conservative government joined with a Church who helped shed blood in the land. The continual oppression saw the birth of the guerrilla groups throughout Colombia.

This bloody situation needed an urgent solution. Statist solutions were found for periods of time, but again the country was bleeding from the continual turmoil in the land. A testimony to this are the four civil wars in the 20 century and the current problem with Guerrilla FARC in the 21st century. History again teaches that efforts through statist diplomacy to find solutions to this division were put into place, but sadly without success.

By why is it that Colombians cannot find peace through normal diplomacy? The example chosen in the person and peace process of Andrés Pastrana with Guerrilla FARC shows that although it was a good initiative, it did not succeed because in general terms Pastrana did not have the overall knowledge of the real causes of the Colombian conflict, the strategies to respond to crisis management were not well coordinated, and the people appointed to respond to the crisis were not well prepared. Prevention through training on how not to repeat the same mistakes of the conflict were not put into place, the vision they wanted to share was very narrowly restricted to each party agenda and its own political interests, and Pastrana's understanding about the whole transformation was very limited by the use of statist diplomacy to resolve the Colombian conflict.

Having these results from the first part of this research, it is here that the thesis of this research comes to life in the hope that peace might be found away from statist diplomacy. It is believed in this thesis that the Church, both Catholics and Evangelicals, has a role to play through a Mission as Transformation to build *shalom* in the Colombian context.

As a result of the first part of this research and as a possible solution for finding peace in Colombia, Lederach's integrated framework for peace was chosen as a strategy that deals with the root causes of the division problem in Colombia.

Lederach's sociological and Mennonite background as well as his work together with the Mennonite Churches in Colombia, makes him a person able to understand both the sociopolitical and moral situation of the country.

Research findings indicate that Lederach's framework for building peace is particular because it deals in a balanced way with the conflict that brought unrest to the country. For instance, he takes into account the sociological side of the problem but also keeps in focus those who might have the solution to the problems and these are the human resources which are very important to him. Lederach's framework is close to the situation of the people.

For Lederach it is important to build peace not from the top leadership down as diplomacy usually does, but starting with the middle-range actors because they are more numerous than the top leaders and have a lot of influence towards both the grassroots and the top leadership. It is in the middle-range actors that Lederach, working in Colombia, recognises the important role of the church, both the Catholics and Evangelicals, as potential catalysers for helping to close the wounds of division that have been open for many years and as a result peace will flourish in Colombia. Instead of statist diplomacy, which first tries to find solutions to immediate needs, Lederach's method goes deeper into the root causes of the conflict, seeks practical strategies for handling crisis management, reflects on lessons learned from the past as a way of preventing the same mistakes being committed in the present and the future, then looks for a common vision for those who are in the midst of the troubles, and especially does not seek self-interest but looks out for the interests of future generations.

All these components are linked with the idea of transformation, and transformation requires that people move from the crisis to the desired change, but people are not machines and for that change to happen, time is needed. As a result, Lederach's integrated framework for peace runs within another time frame and not with rushed solutions like statist diplomacy or as in the example of the peace process of Andrés Pastrana.

It could be thought that this might be a disadvantage in the Colombian context where people desire to have peace as soon as possible after many years of suffering. However, Lederach's framework deals not with superficial matters, but also goes into what people are feeling and struggling with internally through the concept of reconciliation. Up to this point it could be stated that even if Pastrana had reached

peace with the FARC, the soul of the Colombians would have been hurting with division and hatred due to the unresolved conflict between victims and victimisers. This makes Lederach's framework fascinating and full of hope for a nation which is still hurting after many years of violence. Considering the position occupied by the churches in Lederach's pyramid showing the types of actors for building peace, and bearing in mind that they hold the two important tools that are the Gospel and Mission as Transformation, it could be claimed that the churches are the key to the wellbeing of the land.

Sadly it was not always like this in Colombia as evidenced by history, but throughout the years the Catholic Church and Evangelicals were enemies because of what they had experienced in the past. There is evidence that in Colombia Catholics and Evangelicals are not good friends and that for Evangelicals working together under the label ecumenism is almost a sin. But today things are changing and the Mennonite Church in Colombia is a pioneer in the sense of working together with the Catholic Church in projects based on Reconciliation and Mission as Transformation. This shows that it is possible to heal the wounds of division in the Land, and it has started by bringing together these two churches to show other Evangelicals that it is possible.

This is only one example, because it is not all done between these two groups. The collaboration of the Catholics and Mennonites is an example of unity in a country which has known division over many years, but also a hope that barriers among enemies can be destroyed when personal interest are put aside and instead the vision of building peace is put into place. Here is where Lederach's idea of sharing a vision together falls into place and this is really important to keep in mind not only for Churches but also for those in the government, and in armed groups in Colombia.

When many of the projects that have been run in Colombia are analysed it is important to say that both the Catholics and Mennonites put a lot of effort into education.

This involves teaching people to understand the current situation in the land, and how to move forward by providing spaces for people to receive material and spiritual support on a regular basis. People have experienced how the walls that separated them have fallen down, and training schemes have set new bases for people to be reconciled and start building new relationships. This indicates that through projects based on the integrated framework of peace by Lederach in Colombia,

Mission as Transformation has reached those at grassroots level who saw no more hope for the situation. It has provided the help they have not received from the government or the guerrilla. Although these projects have shown success in some areas of the country, the downside is that in areas controlled by guerrilla groups it is still a challenge, because just as in the past the Conservative party treated Evangelicals as communists, in today's Colombia Evangelicals are treated by the guerrilla as informants of the government and paramilitaries.

So in closing this part it can be concluded that although there is still a long way to go for *shalom* to be established in Colombia, there is hope that the message brought through Mission as Transformation would change people's lives not only on the outside but also from the inside out.

## **6.2 Recommendations for pastors and leaders of the Church**

Taking into account the main findings, this paper proposes some recommendations for pastors and leaders in Colombia with the goal of sharing a future based on *shalom* and the vision of Isaiah 2:2-4 and Ephesian 2.

Research findings indicate that it is necessary for pastors, leaders and regular church-goers to understand the historical Colombian context that brought the country to war and especially the hatred between Christians, both Catholics and Evangelicals. But why is it so important to have this background? Knowing that Catholics considered those outside the Catholic faith as sons of evil, during the violence time they were labelled as sinners by the phrase "Liberalism is sin" which was related to those who were not believers of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, in the Colombian context there are radical evangelicals, a stream from the Protestant church, who live out what the Bible says in a very literal way and have practices which do not match the biblical message. For instance, they put a lot of emphasis on no smoking, drinking, and dancing, as well as a dress code which does not allow women to wear trousers or have short hair. Sadly there are many groups like these in Colombia and they consider the Catholic Church as the Mother of Harlots as described in Revelation 17.5 and any attempt to work together with Catholics is rejected. These radical Evangelicals are very strong in preaching the Gospel in streets, buses and wherever they go. They believe in healing and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They believe

all problems in life, among them finding peace, can be solved and obtained with fasting and praying. This paper questions the attitudes of both groups and sees a twofold problem when Catholics and Evangelicals keep hurting each other. First, there is a theological problem when Evangelicals name the Catholic Church “The Mother of Harlots” but this is reflected, on the other hand, when Catholics name all those outside their faith “sinners”. Their understanding of the Gospel is also different, a fact which becomes apparent when asked: what is more needed, the message of hope or social involvement? Secondly, there is the problem of past experiences that divided these two groups, because of their taking sides with political parties.

This paper sees the potential of both groups, where one is strong on the social aspect and the other in preaching the message of salvation. Which one is then right? What more is needed in the Colombian context? Personal experience has shown that both are needed, and this can be claimed by looking at the example of Jesus in how he treated people, by giving them not only the message of salvation, but also helping them in some of their material needs.

This paper claims that there is room for both groups to work together when they put aside their differences and concentrate on a common ground of the message of the Gospel. When they see each other, without a label of “Catholic” or “Evangelical”, but rather as Colombians who, in spite of their differences, have the desire for peace in their land in common.

Moving to the practical matter of how to establish relationships between Catholics and Evangelicals in general, it is advisable for both groups to think about their own situation and how reconciliation and forgiveness can happen among them. It is advisable to start projects together that help them both to build trust and that allow a new relationship between them to be formed; for instance, projects where both groups try to understand each other as people and not as leaders of religious movements. It is in this sense that among evangelicals in Colombia, the Mennonites are chosen as an example, to show that it is possible to work together for the common purpose of building peace.

It needs to be claimed that both of them have something in common, namely the Gospel of peace which plays an important part in the building of peace in the land. Preaching the Gospel is needed. It enables peace between God and mankind. Jesus himself declared that blessed are the peacemakers because they are called children of God, so as peacemakers His children are to project the peace of God to all.

For the purpose of this paper, Mission as Transformation and the method of building peace in divided societies is shown as a practical vehicle to project the peace of God in Colombia.

The concept of Mission as Transformation shows that the Gospel treats people in a balanced way. This means that people have different needs and the Gospel provides an open door to get to know the Author of life. Furthermore, the Gospel and the example of Jesus guide the believer to meet the physical needs of those who are going through difficult times.

The concept of Lederach based on reconciliation finds its practicality in the whole concept of Mission as Transformation. Having received peace from God does not necessarily mean that one has peace with one's neighbour. For instance, there is evidence that people who have been hurt by violence, although they have received the peace of God, do not have peace with their enemies. How is this possible? It seems that in Colombia, Christians know very little about the concept of talking through hurts in counselling sessions because it is believed that counselling belongs to psychologists and those who have mental problems.

Conflict is, in many cases, dealt with in prayer. This paper claims that prayer changes things and is a catalyst for finding further solutions, but it is the changes in a person's life that affirm if he has obtained peace with his fellow man. It is through prayer that the biblical mandate for reconciliation is found. Matthew 5.24 indicates that reconciliation as stated by Lederach could be considered a catalyst through different approaches such as sanctuaries of peace, where counselling sessions enable people to recognize their mistakes and work towards forgiveness and reconciliation with their enemies.

The thesis of this paper concludes that the Church, both the Catholic and Evangelicals, have a role to play through Mission as Transformation in order to build biblical peace which is *shalom*. It is because of this that pastors and leaders involved in normal Mission work, who are preaching only the Gospel without any social projects, should show an interest in Mission as Transformation, not because what they are doing is wrong, but because there is evidence of people and situations being changed through the different projects run by the Mennonite Church in different

regions of Colombia through Justapaz<sup>71</sup>. These projects are based on Mission as Transformation and use the integrated framework for building peace in divided societies as proposed by Lederach. It is also advisable that leaders of the Catholic and Evangelical Churches interchange ideas of what they are doing in the field of reconciliation, the Catholic Church through the “Pastoral Social”<sup>72</sup> and the Evangelicals Churches through CEDECOL<sup>73</sup>. This gives both groups the opportunity to meet each other in a space out of their comfort zones, as well as the chance to learn from each other and discover what can be implemented in their own contexts.

Lederach’s concept is that middle-range leadership, because of their position in society, tend to be more influential towards the upper class than grassroots leadership. It would be advisable that pastors, leaders and priests, who still occupy a place of honour and respect in the Colombian context, use this position to influence people to get involved in society rather than label everything as evil, as in the case of politicians.

It is advisable that Christians should be involved in politics or in circles where decisions for the future of the country are taken. This position is debatable in Colombia, because the word politics is synonymous with corruption, and corruption has nothing to do with Christian values. It is because of this position that many Christians in the past have not taken a stand against or with the government.

This paper claims that the message of Mission as Transformation is able to also change the problem of corruption, not only in the government, but also in the Church and in the whole of society.

It is because politics or governments are unable to bring about biblical *shalom*, that people in churches need to take a stand and be reminded and taught that *shalom* is a gift of God and it is the task Jesus Christ gave to the Church, so that people by receiving *shalom*, may have *shalom* with God and with his fellowman.

It is also advisable that Christians support projects run by the government in order to build peace in the land. For instance, by working together with the government, churches could get to know how government funds could be obtained to help those in poverty or living in misery because of the conflict.

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<sup>71</sup> Justapaz projects:

[http://www.justapaz.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=featured&Itemid=203](http://www.justapaz.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=featured&Itemid=203)

<sup>72</sup> Pastoral social projects <http://www.pastoralsocial.org/>

<sup>73</sup> <http://cedecol.net/pastoral-social-cristiana/>; <http://cedecol.net/programas/>

If Mission as Transformation is to be practised, then it is necessary to go back to the person of Jesus Christ, who is the best example of this mission. This means that those in the government need to hear and understand the position of the believers in the country. By believers, this paper means people who have a relationship with Jesus Christ. If Mission as Transformation is to be lived out then the light and salt which are components of the Gospel need to be in places where believers normally do not go for fear of being criticised by other believers. If Mission as Transformation is to be practised, then the risk needs to be taken, not only by being involved in politics but by rethinking how the Church should be involved in the social field serving others as Jesus did. Christians are not only to be light and salt in the Church building but in whatever function and in any environment they find themselves.

### **6.3 Recommendations for future research**

In doing this research, among all the professional material, the empirical work of Erica Bowler was very helpful in understanding the position of the Mennonite Church in Colombia and the different projects based on Lederach's integrated framework for peace and Mission as Transformation with the goal of helping of building sustainable peace in Colombia.

However, apart from the Roman Catholic Church and the Mennonite Church not much is known about what other churches are doing in order to build peace or how they are doing it. There are some short studies in this field, which in general are helpful, but there is the need to investigate one of the biggest evangelical movements in Colombia, the Pentecostal Church, and identify what they are doing to promote peace in the land and how?

Evangelicals in Colombia are known for peace marches, prayer and fasting in trying to find solutions to problems, one of them being peace. It would be interesting to know how much they have achieved. This paper proposes empirical research in this field to see if these alternatives have reached more than that of Mission as Transformation.

Another important aspect is the theme of reconciliation with others. It would be interesting to find out to what extent the ministry of reconciliation is practised in churches that believe that many things can only be worked out with prayer and then in churches where the concept of counselling is related only to psychologists. In doing

such research, it would be good to evaluate to what extent the aspect of an honour-shame culture affects people who find it difficult to confront problems and hurts which could lead to reconciliation with others.

Colombia is the 83rd least corrupt nation out of 175 countries, according to the 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. Corruption Rank in Colombia averaged 67.14% from 1995 until 2015, reached an all-time high of 94% in 2012 and a record low of 31% in 1995.<sup>74</sup> Not much research has been done on the role of the Colombian Church in fighting Corruption.

This corruption has influenced the Colombian Church as well. This paper proposes an empirical research of how Churches tackle this issue but also how churches could be an example to the government and society in general.

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<sup>74</sup> <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/colombia/corruption-rank> [status 25.05.2016].

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