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„(In-)visible Afro-Colombians"

Ongoing Violence and Social Practices of Afro-Colombian Students in Chocó, Colombia

verfasst von / submitted by

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1 Introduction

De donde vengo yo
La cosa no es fácil pero siempre igual sobrevivimos
Vengo yo
De tanto luchar siempre con la nuestra nos salimos
Vengo yo
Y aquí se habla mal pero todo está mucho mejor
Vengo yo
Tenemos la lluvia el frio el calor
Acá tomamos agua de coco
Lavamos moto

Característica general alegría total
Invisibilidad nacional e internacional
Auto-discriminación sin razón
Racismo inminente mucha corrupción
Monte culebra
Máquina de guerra
Desplazamientos por intereses en la tierra
Su tienda de pescado
Agua por todo lado
Se represa
Que ni el discovery ha explotado
Hay minas llenas de oro y platino
Reyes en la biodiversidad
Bochinche entre todos los vecinos
Y en deporte ni hablar

Where do I come from?
The thing is not easy but we always survive the same.
I come
from so much fighting with ours we always get out.
I come
and here they talk badly but everything is much better.
I come.
We have the rain, the cold, the heat.
Here we drink coconut water
Wash motorbikes

General characteristics joy all national and international Invisibility
Auto-discrimination without reason
Racism imminent much corruption
Mount snake
War machine
Displacements for interests in the land
Your fish shop
Water everywhere
Dams
That not even the discovery has exploded
There are mines full of gold and platinum
Kings in the biodiversity
Bochinche among all the neighbours
And in sports not to mention

Song: De Donde vengo yo
-from ChocQuibTown
(https://www.letras.com/choc-quib-town/1622461/)

Since the beginning of the 21st century, Colombia has been described as a country that is being threatened or moreover being attacked by the Hobbesian trinity of narco-traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary groups. These three groups cumulated a high number of documents in which human rights abuses have been recorded (Nuñez 2001: p.1). The term Hobbesian relates to the ideas and theories of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes's work Leviathan (Hobbes 1651) explained that humans naturally

compete and fight each other for their interests. Nuñez uses Hobbesian trinity to describe criminal groups (Narco-traffickers, guerrilla, and paramilitary groups) and their selfish interests (Nuñez 2001).

Chocó, which is situated on the Pacific and partly on the Caribbean Coast, is 70,000 square kilometres big with almost one million inhabitants. 95 percent of the inhabitants are natives and Afro-Colombians. Public services are not well developed, and child mortality is very high. According to Oscar Fernández (2016), 60 percent of the inhabitants live in poverty. Chocó is also one of the very few parts of the world with a very high concentrated biodiversity. 20 to 40 percent of living species are endemic in Chocó. Chocó is mainly a humid tropical forest where just 20.000 square kilometres have been intervened (Fernández 2016: p.10).

This thesis aims to analyse and explain the relationship between violence and everyday life of Afro-Colombian Students in Chocó, which is significant to understand the effect of violence on a small sample: Afro-Colombian students. It will also show if and/or how violence influences their livelihood. In this chapter, I will present and explain researches about violence and ethnic rights in Chocó. Next, I will introduce my research question including sub-questions. Finally, I will present the theoretical positioning and my methodological approach to this specific topic.

1.1 Current state of research

In 2001, Mieke Wouters, from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, published the article *"Ethnic Rights under Threat: The black peasant movement against armed groups".* She gathered the field material for her article in Chocó in November and December 1998, August to October 1999, and in April 2000. This article has been revised several times and deviates from the original version. She focussed on the problem of land titles referring to the Afro-Colombian population in Chocó. It is not clear how she gathered the materials or what kind of methods she used to get to the presented data. However, she makes a connection between the movements against armed groups and the Black-Power-Movement in the United States. In her eyes, the Black-Power-Movement (BPM) had an impact on the movement of Afro-Colombians in Chocó, which was based on small urban intellectual discussion groups (Wouters 2001: p. 500).

In Contrast to Wouters's (2001) article, Tania Lizarazo (2018), an assistant professor at the University of Maryland, published the article *"Alongside Violence: Everyday survival in Chocó, Colombia"* in 2018. She explains in her article how she gathered her information and data and how she perceived her research. Lizarazo worked together with an organization called *Consejo Comunitario Mayor de la Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato* (COCOMACIA). Lizarazo (2018) explained how she faced problems as a researcher and how she had to adapt the methodological approach during her research. Through her empiric research, she gained a lot of information referring to the structures and hierarchies of "race," class, and gender, which are guided by a new form of colonialism. Outsiders, ethnographers, scientists, and many more, supporting and helping societies (Lizarazo 2018: p. 176), are in turn embodying those. Lizarazo discusses certain everyday acts and practices as performative behaviour of survival. Nevertheless, her focus remained on the collaboration with the Gender Commission. She examined "*the tension of suffering and choosing utopian narratives as a necessary optimism for the Gender Commission's work*" (Lizarazo 2018: p. 198). Daniel Mosquera's work from 2004 called the "*Re-Constituting Chocó: The feast of San Pacho and the Afro-Question in Colombia*" is a more theoretical work in comparison to Lizarazo and Wouters works. Mosquera analysed the yearly celebration in Chocó called "*The Feast of San Pacho*". The title does not mention the term violence, but he connected this certain celebration with the development of cultural heritage and cultural identity as well as the increasing violence rate in this department (Mosquera 2004: p. 172).

All three authors' statements about the law implementation of 1991 and Law 70 are consistent. Afro-Colombians protested against discrimination and racism within Colombia. Ethnic Organisations demanded a renewal of different regulations, which were implemented in 1991. This new constitution defined Colombia as a pluricultural state, which mostly included indigenous communities and groups. In 1993, Law 70 was presented in which the Afro-Colombian population was included (Wouters 2001: p. 500). Wouters (2001) and Mosquera (2004) highlighted the fact that Chocó, has not been colonized in the form other areas in Colombia had to endure. Moreover, the Spanish did not populate Chocó during the conquest as in other parts of Colombia (Mosquera 2004: p. 174). There are also similarities between the articles of Lizarazo (2018) and Wouters (2001), as both worked with organizations that supported farmers, locals, and people affected by violence. Lizarazo's (2018) presumptions and

arguments guide the reader more into the perspective of the organization. Better said, how everyday survival affects the organization, which supports the locals. Wouters for example mentioned the organisation *Asociación Campesina Integral del Atrato* (ACIA) which represents farmers and minorities, and how they changed the situation (slightly) in Chocó. Nonetheless, the crime rate increased, and guerrillas, narco-traffickers, and paramilitary groups attacked civilians (Wouters 2001: p. 516). Wouters explicated thoroughly the geographical, demographical situation and economic interest in Chocó, which is tightly connected to the outburst of violence in the 1990s (Wouters 2001: p. 502). At the beginning of the 1990's the crime rate in Chocó was not very high compared to other regions of Colombia. The crime rate in Chocó increased from December 1996 on, including the municipalities of Carmen del Attar, Bojaya, and Ríosucio. The rate of homicides and displacement of natives increased sharply (Wouters 2001: p. 507). Paramilitary forces and guerrillas were fighting over regions such as Córdoba-Urabá. That happened in 1997. From this point on, paramilitary groups started using old methods of war – violence directed against civilians. From this time on, they operated in Quibdó to take control of this area (Wouters 2001: p. 509). Many NGOs, civil servants, and church people stated that the increasing number of crimes was not only an extension of an armed conflict on a national level. The growing economic interest increased the crime rate in Chocó (Wouters 2001: p. 510). Wouters furthermore states that the process of land entitlement is also a significant factor in the outburst of violence in this area. Paramilitary groups, guerrillas, and narco-traffickers built relationships, amorous and friendly ones, with civilians. Those civilians, mostly young people, entered those groups. How, why, and who has been recruited by paramilitaries and guerrillas? This will be discussed in depth in chapters two and four.

As all articles combine violence with other significant components, it is interesting how different they perceived this phenomenon. Mosquera (2004) for example explained the impact of connectedness, cultural heritage, and identity. In addition, how the community tried to regain and renew its identity despite the ongoing violence. The social cohesion grew tighter. Mosquera also states that the massacres, which happened almost throughout Chocó, were used as elements in the preservation of local memory. This memory included that the survival of local autonomies could not be guaranteed by the state, which is constituted by displacements and violence (Mosquera 2004: pp. 180-181). All three authors explain the different situations of civilians, mostly farmers, and organisations who are supporting those people. Different

historical aspects concerning this department of Colombia were discussed. All these articles pick violence out as a central theme. Nevertheless, what kind of violent acts have never been thematised in-depth? As there are different forms of violence, one should concretely explain what kind of acts the people of Chocó have dealt with and are still dealing with, and how violence is constituted. Mosquera (2004), Lizarazo (2018), and Wouters (2001) focussed on different aspects referring to Chocó. All articles discussed violence performed by paramilitary groups, narco-traffickers, and guerrillas. Furthermore, they highlighted several organisations, which support the civilians and natives. Lizarazo (2018) realized how powerful her position was during her research about the locals (farmers, displaced people, and local NGOs). The investigations of all three took place at different times during the last few decades. They depict the waves of violence and the change of territorial and ethnic rights. This thesis not only discusses violence in Chocó but also presents the perspectives of young Afro-Colombian students about violence. However, how about the young students at university? How do they understand the current situation? How would they define everyday life alongside violence? The people or groups and locations you focus on may show other results. Therefore, I think it is significant to shed new light on the different perspectives of young Afro-Colombian students and present their stories and their lived realities.

It is significant to see and understand the perspective of young students and scholars who may experience violence in everyday life differently than farmers or locals with other occupations. I chose to concentrate on Afro-Colombian Students to build awareness of the black population in Colombia on a specific subgroup. By focussing on Afro-Colombian students one can access more perspectives that can then lead to more research about livelihood, racism, and inclusion/exclusion referring to structures of the society of black students in Chocó and the rest of Colombia. What demands critical scrutiny in this act of understanding the current situation, is the use of science to attempt, define and explain the social boundaries referring to everyday life along with violence in Chocó. This research aims to investigate the relationship between violence and the everyday life of Afro-Colombian students in Chocó. Therefore, I will present the following research question including sub-questions:

How is the everyday life of African-Colombian Students from the University *"Universidad Tecnologica Del Choco Diego Luis Cordoba"* in Chocó affected

by the continuing presence of violence caused by narco-traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary groups?

Sub-Questions are:

- How does violence influence the everyday life of Afro-Colombian Students?

- What kind of violent acts are performed?

- Which role does violence play in the everyday life of Afro-Colombian Students?

1.2 Theoretical frame

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the black population, specifically Afro-Colombian students, and how they perceive everyday life and how they sense violence. I unpack the complex structure of violence and the natural attitude of everyday life. Nevertheless, before digging into these two broad areas I will give a brief overview of Chocó's History. The following is a short introduction of the most important concepts, which will be thoroughly discussed in the following chapters. Kiran Asher (2009) who is the author of *"Black and Green. Afro-Colombians, Development, and Nature in the Pacific Lowlands"* explains in her book the background of the economic, social and political situation in the Pacific Lowlands. She focuses especially on neoliberal development and social movements, which formed this particular area of Colombia. She explains her ethnographic analysis of the black social movements, and the rise of drug traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary forces, which gained more power over the years. Her book and her assumptions are relevant for this thesis because of her knowledge and her ethnographic data. To understand the situation nowadays in Colombia, especially areas where most of the population is black, one needs to discuss how things were and why things got worse.

By discussing the construct of ethnicity, I want to highlight the differentiation and categorization of ethnic groups in Colombia. Moreover, I will discuss why the term ethnicity is more appropriate than the term "race" (see chapter three). The concept of ethnicity regarding Afro-Colombians and natives will be further discussed in chapter two ("Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific"), chapter three ("The question of ethnicity"), and chapter four ("A portrait of violence"). The main focus lies on the different attributes of ethnic groups and communities and what legislations helped Afro-Colombians to be more acknowledged as citizens of Colombia. Therefore, I will present

and evaluate different approaches to the term ethnicity by Fredrik Bart (1998) and Erik Eriksen (2010). Next to these two authors, I will also include some articles about ethnicization in Colombia stating the different assumptions of Eduardo Restrepo (2004, 2018).

Everyday life in this thesis is limited to the social practices of Afro-Colombian students. Meaning that the focus lies on different activities they attend after and during university classes. To set a theoretical framework for such activities I will refer to the theory of Habitus by Pierre Bourdieu and the constitution of social practices by McMillan (2018). As Bourdieu's work about habitus, field, and practices is very complex, I will refer to his main points by citing several books of him (1986, 2011, 2013a and 2013b). The four forms of capital (social, cultural, economic, and symbolic), presented by Bourdieu will help to understand the deeper meaning of practices and the factors which influence such practices. Connecting the theories of Bourdieu to ethnicity, one could analyse the habitus of the researcher and the habitus of the research participants. My interview partners told me, that except for the fact, that I have the same skin colour as they have, they noticed I am not an Afro-Colombian. I moved differently, laughed a lot, and clothes I wore were not typically here (Field note 120220). By setting the habitus, field and practices, and capital into my research of young Afro-Colombian students, I want to shed new light on what and how the livelihood of these students can be constructed and influenced. The collected data will only mirror a fraction of the Afro-Colombian students. Therefore, one should keep in mind that with this thesis a short moment of their life is explained and interpreted. Social practices have different meanings and can be analysed from a different point of view. The analysis of the social practices performed by Afro-Colombian students is therefore limited to activities and social gatherings during and after University-classes. I focussed on during and after University-classes, as the students I interviewed entered the university area around 8 a.m. and told me that they have breakfast and their friends or family bring them to the university. What kind of vehicles they use to go to the university will be discussed in chapter six ("Presentation of Results").

How is violence affecting the livelihood of Afro-Colombian Students? In the most cases, violence consists of not directly visible but latently present violent acts. As many articles and books already tell, violence in this certain area of Colombia is almost everywhere. But how do the violent acts, which are performed by narco-traffickers,

guerrillas, and paramilitary groups, shape the consciousness of the students? These questions are not included in the main research question but will be answered during the evaluation of the collected data and the theoretical relations between violence and everyday life.

Before one can analyse and later on discuss violence in connection to everyday life in Colombia, one has to compare different theories, which were developed the past few decades and century. One of violence theory approaches, which will be discussed in depth in chapter four ("A Portrait of Violence") was written by Schmidt and Schröder (2003). Schmidt and Schröder (2003) provide different approaches to the concept of violence. They define violence as a violent relationship between individuals and/or collectives. Violent acts can be psychological, physical, cultural, institutional and more. This relationship can be analysed on an intragroup and on an intergroup level. Schmidt and Schröder discuss three main approaches, which were established in the 1980's. The operational, cognitive, and experiential approach, which allows to change perspective and to focus on different elements (etics, emics, and the subjectivity of individuals) of violence (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p.1). All together presenting the spectrum of violence, which will help for anthropological analysis. Stewart and Strathern (2002) wrote the book "*Violence theory and Ethnography*" which focuses on the analysis of violence in Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka. In this book, they explore the specific contributions of anthropology and how new approaches can be built from other disciplines, such as sociology, history, criminology, and more. "What part does violence play in human social behaviour in general?", "How should violence be analysed?" How is violence relevant?" According to Stewart and Strathern (2002), these questions can be answered by using two sociological approaches. The first one – functional approach: "*sees violence in terms subversive of order, and therefore itself in need of control by coercive restraints*" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 2). The second one – symbolic approach: "*investigators look for the subjective and cultural meanings associated with violent acts and how these impel or induce the actors to commit acts of violence*" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 2). By adapting, contrasting, and critically analysing the theories of Schmidt and Schröder (2003), and Stewart and Strathern (2002), I want to brighten the understanding of violent acts in Chocó performed by narco-traffickers, Guerrillas and paramilitary groups (see chapter two, three and four).

I will present and connect the concepts of violence, everyday life whereas the focus lies on social practices and Afro-Colombians with the ongoing inevitable decolonization process in Colombia. I will refer to the theories of Fanon (1963, 1967), Spivak (1990, 2008), Meertens, Viveros and Arango (2008), Mignolo (2012), Wade (2013, 2015) Asher (2014). All the authors highlight a different angle of (de-)colonization. Decolonization is by no means accomplished. All the authors mentioned state that colonial structures and condition still endure. The connection between ethnicity, violence, social practices and decolonization will be presented in depth in chapter two, three and four.

1.3   Methods

I conducted six informal interviews during my stay in Chocó. The informal interview gives the interviewee the space to say almost everything he or she wants. This means there is a total lack of control on the part of the researcher (Bernard 2011: p. 156). "*The researcher just tries to remember conversations heard during the course of a day in a field*" (Bernard 2011: p. 156). Furthermore, I prepared myself by using the semi-structured interview, which is based on an interview guide. This type is used mostly when you just have only one chance to interview a certain person. It contains a list of questions and topics, which should be covered during the interview. Control is split here between the researcher and the interviewee (Bernard 2011: p. 158). My research led to personal stories of Afro-Colombian students. I purposely listened to their stories to make social meaning of male and female students. I interviewed four female and two male Afro-Colombian students. From this small sample, I was able to create a picture of their experiences.

I analysed the collected data with Grounded Theory Method (GTM), which is defined by the creation of concepts (meaning codes and constructs) during the data gathering. This means data gathering and evaluation are happening at the same time. During the data gathering, the theoretical frame gets clearer, which then can be stepwise modified and completed (Mayring 2016: p. 104). There are nowadays many different variations of the Grounded Theory Method. For this thesis, I used the constructivist grounded theory established by Charmaz (see e.g. 2011). In short, Grounded Theory sets a frame for qualitative research and makes up guidelines for the realization of the research. Researchers may have different starting points and aims but they all start with inductive logic and analyse the data with theoretical goals (Charmaz 2011: p. 181).

Constructivist grounded theory ordinarily includes a reflection of the fieldwork. Doing reflexive research can help unravel the belief system of the researcher. This belief system may or may not influence the research. Furthermore, established categories are linked to each other. Constructivist grounded theory interprets data through conceptual analysis. The gathered data are therefore interpreted from an objective perspective without prejudices or preconceptions (Charmaz 2011: p. 194). Constructivist grounded theory assumes that knowledge is reproduced by the researchers, by dealing with a subject and trying to solve them empirically. Researchers construct their research processes and products of the research. The study is therefore influenced by the privilege, positions, interactions, and perspectives of the researcher him- or herself. All these factors are generally not mentioned or are completely ignored. By using constructivist grounded theory, the researchers are presenting interpretations, which are dependent on their knowledge about the field. The collected data are constructs and not discoveries (Charmaz 2011: pp.184-186). An in-depth explanation of the methods used will be presented in chapter five ("Research design").

1.4   Chapter progression

In Chapter two ("Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific"), I intend to delineate how it came to the current situation in Chocó. I will present a summary of the last centuries and go deeper into the last decades. This chapter will discuss decolonisation and postcolonialism in Colombia and Latin America. The connection between slavery, post colonialism, and decolonization will be highlighted by referring to Kiran Asher (2009), Frantz Fanon (1963, 1967), Quijano (2005), Coronil (2004), Dhawan (2011), Wade (2013, 2015) and Boatcă (2016). One needs to include the theory of decolonization and post colonialism to understand the historical development of Chocó. Moreover, I will explain the implementation of new legislations, which "should have helped" Afro-descendants ensure their land rights (Wouters 2001; Mosquera 2004). The focus will lie on the implementation of new legislations such as Law70 and the Constitution of 1991 (Asher 2009; Fernández 2016).

Chapter three ("The question of ethnicity") is dedicated to explaining and critically evaluating the meaning of ethnicity in the context of Colombia. For that, I will present different articles written by Colombian scholars (Restrepo 2004; Reales 2011; Restrepo 2018) who shed new light on the term ethnicity and how it evolved in

Colombia. Furthermore, I discuss the turn of multiculturalism and its up and downsides. I will furthermore highlight the connection between multiculturalism and the feeling of belonging. To belong to an ethnic group is not only bound to language, common customs but also consists of the sense of being bound to a group (Hall 2017: p. 105)

Chapter four ("A portrait of violence") depicts different anthropological approaches to violence in society. This chapter will discuss definitions, meanings, and role-playing of violent circumstances. Social practices in a violent environment will be presented and how gender violence is present but not well communicated.

Chapter five ("Research design") focuses on the fieldwork itself. I will explain how I prepared myself for the fieldwork, how I gained access, and what kind of different methods I used to gather data. This chapter will end with the explanation of constructivist grounded theory. Moreover, how I combined such with ethnography.

In chapter six, I will present and describe my established categories and connect them with the theories I presented (chapter two till four). I will conclude with the reflection, discussion, and conclusion of this research. Furthermore, I want to highlight how to perceive violence in such an area and encourage understanding and activism that incorporates cultural and intersectional perspectives.

2   Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific

This chapter gives a brief overview of the past events that shaped the current Chocó and other parts of Colombia. The focus here lies on the ethnic aspect of history and includes legislation and constitution implemented by the state to unite the nation. This chapter will also highlight the process of necessary decolonisation and postcolonialism concerning Afro-Colombians. Postcolonialism does not define a specific chronological succession. It marks the process of one historical power configuration to the next one. Problems of marginalization, dependency, inequality persist, although the colonial era ended hundreds of years ago (Hall 1996; Coronil 2004). The first part is concerned with a discussion over decolonisation followed by important historical events in Colombia.

2.1 Situating decolonisation

Many scholars in Latin America are discussing the decolonization process. The "Decoloniality"-process, defines their approaches. Decolonisation identifies social and political structures, which inhabit colonial thoughts and elements. The approaches are based on the concept of a unity of modernity and coloniality, which derived from European colonialism (Boatcă 2016: p. 119).

Colombia is, after Brazil, the country with the largest black population in Latin America (Rodríguez-Garavito et al. 2008). Colonialism implemented a system, which differentiated persons according to their skin colour and their heritage. The "race" mixture in Latin America was and is still present since slavery was introduced. Children mixed by Europeans, natives, and black people had predetermined the social structure on every possible level (Asher 2009). Kiran Asher researched concerning the life of Afro-Colombians in the Pacific Lowlands. She wrote several books about the work of women in the Pacific Lowlands, Decolonization, and Displacement. In the first chapter "*Afro-Colombian Ethnicity*" of her book, she describes three nationalist ideologies: *mestizaje*, *indianism*, and blackness (Asher 2009: p. 32). "*Peter Wade (1993a) notes that historical mestizaje was a complex process and a contradictory ideology. While it celebrated the diverse element of racial mixture, European or white components were nonetheless coded as more civilized and modern and, hence, more valuable.* " (Asher 2009: p. 33). Through the assumption that light-skinned people are more valuable than darker-skinned people, societies structured the value of people through their skin colour. Does that also mean that black people were seen as uncivilized? Yes, during and after the colonial era, many stories were told and spread about the "lazy and uncivilized" Africans (Barragan 2015). In addition, colonialist structures not only differentiated between mestizaje, indianism, or blackness. The system of *castas* allocated persons specific rights and duties on the ground of their ancestry.

"*The main meaning of this term is sexual mixture, but implied is the spatial mixture of peoples and the interchange of cultural elements, resulting in mixed and new cultural forms. Spaniards, creoles, indigenous people, free blacks and slaves interbred – destitute Spaniards with free black women, indigenous princesses with aristocratic*

Spaniards, runaway slaves with indigenous women, Spanish masters with slave women, free blacks with indigenous people and creoles – and their offspring were recognised as mixed people of various kinds. Racial nomenclature was variable and dozens of labels existed, but mulato was the term often used for someone of supposedly black–white mixture, zambo for black– indigenous mixture and mestizo for indigenous–white mixture." (Wade 2015: p. 27)

In the 18th century, the Spanish maintained categorical distinctions and produced codes between whites, indigenous people, and the rest. *Indio* was an administrative category, which defined indigenous people who lived in an indigenous community and paid tribute by delivering food and goods. (Wade 2015: p. 28). Whereat blacks were described as "slaves" although many blacks were free. Therefore, in New Granada (nowadays Colombia) there had been another census category, which was called libre (free person). This category included *mestizos, zambos,* "freed blacks", and *mulatos* (Wade 2015 ibid.). These different categories were part of the system of socioracial stratification called *sociedad de castas*. This term came from the term *castas,* meaning breeds (Wade 2015: p. 28). Although both, indigenous communities and enslaved Africans suffered great hardship, indigenous people were seen superior as to blacks. Evidence for the different treatment is, for example, the marriage regulations. Indigenous people were allowed to marry white persons, while blacks and mulattoes were not (Wade 2015: p. 29). In my eyes, the term "slave" removes the action of enslavement as nobody was born as a "slave." Many authors (Saco 1938; Tannenbaum 1947; Lombardi 1971; Bowser 1974; Rout 1977, and more) who wrote about colonialism and slavery tried to distance themselves from this time or maybe tried to push away the accountability of this period by describing people who were forced into slavery as "slaves." Asher (2009) and Wade (2015) identified the colonial structures on the ground of skin colour and the heritage of individuals. Those characteristics defined the social status of those people. Nevertheless, the system of *castas* not only set a social and cultural hierarchy. Through time, new ideologies were established, such as the whitening ideology.

The whitening ideology tried to create a common skin colour so no disadvantages would arise because of it. *Mestizaje* and whitening would have neutralized forms of diversity. It never worked out as the black population was also tied to stereotypes and bad reputations (Asher 2009: p. 33). The purpose of the whitening policy was the

elimination of blacks and indigenous. Furthermore, the creation of a homogenous and whiter society (Wade 2015: p. 31). Latin American countries, including Colombia, especially Brazil and Argentina, encouraged and sponsored Europeans to immigrate to South- and Meso-America (Wade 2015: pp. 31-32; Boatcă 2016). In the first decades of the 20th century Latin American countries, such as Brazil, Mexico, and Peru, the image and perception of indigenous groups changed. Not until then, those groups were seen as symbols of national identity. That was the time when the ideology of *indigenismo* emerged. This ideology included that indigenous communities required special care and recognition. At the same time, *indigenismo* rather showed a glorification of pre-Columbian indigenous ancestry, including seeing indigeneity as exotic and romantic symbolism (Wade 2015: p. 32).

Anthropologists state that through this enforcement (whitening ideology), which is based on colonial and postcolonial policy, the perception of non-whites changed. Especially for natives and black people, it changed the way the government saw them. The indigenous population was always seen as a culturally distinct community compared to enslaved Africans, Afro-descendants. In addition, in the 1990s many Latin-American Countries granted their indigenous people rights including Colombia. Law 89 from 1890 gave natives the right of land title and implemented an indigenous council (*cabildos*) to govern matters in certain territories. This law was an extension of the colonial policies concerning indigenous folks. During this period, indigenous people lived in reserves (*resguardos*) as the natives in the United States. *Cabildos* and *resguardos* protected the natives' culture and its *cosmovision*. In the 1950s and 1960s, the indigenous people almost lost their lands because the government planned to dissolve *cabildos* and *resguardos* (Asher 2009 ibid.). Through the Agrarian Reform Law 135 of 1961, indigenous people could maintain autonomous control over their lands. Roughly, 80 years before, Colombia established a constitution in which all inhabitants, no matter the skin colour, are defined as citizens of Colombia.

"The postcolonial constitution of 1886 defines blacks and mestizos, subject citizens with ostensibly the same political and economic rights as all other Colombians, except Indians" (Asher 2009: p. 34). Colombia as a multicultural state, which will be discussed in the upcoming chapter, draws a line between blacks and mestizos as citizens, "other Colombians" and Indians. If all citizens are and should be treated equally and have the same rights, why do they need more categorization? Why implement a constitution,

which sets political boundaries between ethnic groups? Resistance was then the answer. Resisting the discriminating laws and constitution, which put others in favour and others not. *"The anthropologists Nina de Friedemann and Jaime Arocha (1984, 1986, 1995) stress that Afro-Colombians chose to isolate themselves from mainstream society as much as an act of resistance and independence as to escape racial discrimination and persecution"* (Asher 2009: p. 34). As a further matter, why did they isolate themselves, if they were according to the postcolonial constitution the same as mestizos? Asher states that black communities had no special land rights until the inclusion of *Artículo Transitorio* 55 (AT 55) (Asher 2009: p. 34).

Next to the three big metropolises in Colombia – Medellín, Bogotá, and Cali – Afro-Colombians are more present in the Atlantic and Caribbean Coast, the Magdalena river valley, the Cauca river valley, and rural zones of the Pacific littoral (Asher 2009: p. 36). The Pacific area is the largest one with a black presence in Colombia. Besides, it shaped the identity of Afro-Colombians in the last centuries. During the colonial era, the Spanish decreased the number of indigenous groups replacing them with enslaved Africans, who had to work in the gold mines. On the grounds of the collapse of Spanish rule in 1810 and the arrival of the manumission in 1851, blacks and the surviving indigenous formed the region's political economy. From this time on, more freed and escaped blacks, but also Wounana Indians arrived in this area, they fished, hunted, and logged (Asher 2009: p. 36). With the realization of Law 2 in 1959 (preserving Colombia's water supply and wildlife), many regions of Chocó were declared as state forest reserves and *tierras baladías* (uninhabited lands). The Chocoan Indians still had control of their *resguardos*; meanwhile, the black inhabitants were only in the position of squatters. Chocó is the only department of the existing four in the Pacific area, which has a black majority. Since the middle of the 20th century a black elite, based in the capital of Chocó, Quibdó, worked on the change of political and economic issues including the Chocó Regional development Corporation (*Corporación Autonóma Regional para el Desarrollo del Chocó*; CODECHOCO). Next to this corporation another association emerged called the United Peasant Association of the Atrato River (*Asociación Campesina Integral el Río Atrato*; ACIA) (Asher 2009: p. 37).

Although ethnic minorities were recognized by the state, did this new era also implement decolonisation of social and political structures? The implementation of Law 70 is an expansion of AT 55, but the focus was still the land titles of the pacific area.

This Law contains 68 articles and has its focus on three main problems: ethnic and cultural rights, collective land ownership, and socioeconomic development (Asher 2009: p. 50). Through this law, Afro-Colombians are seen and should be accepted as an ethnic group. These communities are legally allowed to have collective ownership of rural lands on the pacific coast. But the law also requires that black communities "*manage these lands using "traditional" practices of production and indicates that subsistence use should precede commercial exploitation of natural resources to maintain the ecological integrity of the region*" (Asher 2009: p. 51). Likewise, this law opens also new gates for the Afro-Colombian as increased access to education, credit, technical assistance, etc. It also depends upon that, councils, corporations, and territorial councils include black representatives. This law also established its division especially for the black communities through the government and ministry (Asher 2009 ibid.).

Decolonization in this sense is a violent phenomenon. As Fanon already states: at whatever level decolonization is discussed, it is always replacing a certain word/species of men with another "species" of men. Speaking of ongoing substitutions wandering through time (Fanon 1963: p. 27).

As violence is and was the main part of colonization of the natives, the decolonization of such areas is still on the go. Colonialism parted countries into several zones – the colonizers, including their supporters and the system of *castas* (see previous pages). As Fanon stated, "*to break up the colonial world does not mean that after the frontiers have been abolished lines of communication will be set up between the two zones*" (Fanon 1963: p. 31). The end of colonialism left a big hole between the two zones or in the case of Colombia several zones. The forced, onto natives and enslaved Africans, norms, structures, and values, did still exist (Fanon 1963 ibid.). Although in Colombia, Afro-descendants and indigenous communities still were not treated the same (e.g. land rights) (Asher 2009; Restrepo 2018). The fear, social stigma, oppression, and discrimination were still part of their everyday life. *"[T]he destruction of the colonial world is no more and no less than the abolition of one zone"* (Fanon 1963: p. 31). Violence, ethnicity, and social practices overlap each other - based on historical grounds: colonialism. The outcome of discrimination, violence against ethnic minorities, and inequality can be traced back to the implemented structures and attributes of past time (colonial era); therefore, I want to integrate the theoretical

approaches of Frantz Fanon. He explained colonization but also decolonization from the perspective of the colonized. Natives were not seen as human beings (Mignolo 2012; Wade 2013), although they had a beating heart as every other human being, including the colonizers themselves. By diminishing natives to animals, they lost their humanity in the eyes of the colonizers (Fanon 1963: p.35). His way of describing two opposites – colonizers and natives, shows how simply colonization took place, but also how complex it was and still is to overcome dichotomies, prejudices, and categorization of the "Other." "*We have said that the colonial context is characterized by the dichotomy which it imposes upon the whole people. Decolonization unifies that people by the radical decision to remove from it its heterogeneity, and by unifying it on a national, sometimes a racial basis*" (Fanon 1963: p. 35). Through colonialism, cultural and ethnic attributes, rituals were strictly forbidden, as they would interfere with the establishment of a homogenous society.

In the context of Latin America, the rituals, which were forbidden, were those, which did not implement Catholicism. The Feast of San Pacho (Mosquera 2004) was forbidden during the colonial era, as the missionaries didn't like the slaves to dance and sing, blazed with excitement. It is said that two Franciscan monks implemented the Feast of *San Pacho*. They tried to evangelize all inhabitants from Cartagena to the surrounding departments in the middle of the 17th century. One assumed that their main goal was to convert especially the indigenous communities. However, through the dark-skinned population (enslaved Africans and freed Africans), this feast changed from a very strict and religious ceremony to a spectacular parody – a carnival-like party (Mosquera 2004: p. 177).

Overcoming division is easier said than done. In this sense, it is not dichotomist but multifaceted. Especially, if the categorization of ethnic groups and minorities, including tagging them with prejudices, has been pursued for years. Besides, how should it work from almost "one day to another" that instead of multiple dichotomies, there is none? The state planned to unify the people by establishing a "national" basis. On what ground? The turn to multiculturalism not only recognized other ethnic minorities within the state but as well created new frictions between ethnic groups. Further discussion about the turn to multiculturalism will follow in-depth in chapter three. Internal colonialism persists. Rivera Cusicanqui (2015), a Bolivian sociologist, discussed decoloniality and colonialism in several articles and books. She implies that there is

still a long road to go, to diminish and unravel colonial structures within the state. Furthermore, she argues that the establishment of ethnicity was a strategy of the state. In other words, the construction of ethnicity happened in the context of neoliberal forms (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015: p. 102). Another problem lies in forgetting what happened and moving fast to the level Europe went during this time. Modernism in Europe was only possible because of colonialism in the Americas, Africa, and other continents. The result of the "radical decision to remove heterogeneity" (Fanon 1963: p. 46) was a bigger gap between "white and black", discrimination, racism, exclusion which are guided by tightened power relations from colonial structures. In the context of Latin American countries, there is not only a gap between white and black but between several *castas* (Wade 2015). The different treatment of indigenous people compared to Afro-Colombians can also be traced back to history, as the *conquistadores* stole the land of the indigenous. The enslaved Africans were brought to Latin America as a working force. *Indigenismo* (as already explained at the beginning of this chapter) and *negrismo*, are not only two opposites, but furthermore, represent different perceptions by the state. For example, indigenous represented national identity, where *negrismo* figured as an ideology, which consisted of poetry, literature, and music. Only in Brazil and in Cuba, *negrismo* gained a foothold as national identity (Wade 2013: p. 213). "*The immobility to which the native is condemned can only be called in question if the native decides to put an end to the history of colonization – the history of pillage – and to bring into existence the history of the nation – the history of decolonization*" (Fanon 1963: p. 46). Fanon referred to the natives. Although indigenous groups and communities are defined as the natives of Colombia, I include Afro-Colombians, blacks as well.

The identities formed in such areas are also affected by political, social, and cultural circumstances. I will not discuss the theory of identities but will refer to a statement by Stuart Hall, which concerns ethnicity and violence. The perspective of erasing, which will be explained shortly, can be applied to the decolonization process in Colombia and the positioning of Afro-Colombians in society. Instead of replacing or almost forgetting, the historical background of such regions, as Chocó: one should adapt and process the obstacles Blacks and indigenous communities faced in the past and must face now. Although colonialism is over (via law), to overcome the dichotomy, one must understand and process the past and not force a label, position, and prejudice onto Blacks or indigenous. Hall states that identity is a concept which operates "under

erasure" between reversal and emergence (Du Gay and Hall 2011: p. 2). In other words, the established concepts and theories of identity of the last decades have been replaced by new ones. But researchers should rather connect old concepts with new perspectives or hypotheses instead of erasing them. With this, I want to say that by evaluating and submerging old and new concepts or theories one can construct a new approach. This can be in concern of violent acts, discrimination, ethnicization, and decolonization processes.

Next to many decolonization approaches, I want to include the colonial power matrix discussed and analysed by Quijano (2005). Through colonization, all communities, which existed before the Spanish arrived, changed dramatically. One should also keep in mind that the establishment of terms "Afro-descendant/ Afro-Colombians/ Afro-Latinos and Afro-Latinas" and "indigenous" are constructs of colonialism. (Concerning this thesis Afro-descendant, Afro-Latinx and Blacks are used as synonyms.) Those terms were then put together to an entity ("other"). This included racial, discriminating, and negative descriptions of those groups and communities (Quijano 2005). To put it another way, colonialism created new identities, which were formed by the colonizers. This information is significant to understand why the "others" are not seen by the state. Or in some cases are made invisible to the rest of the population.

Thinking of colonialism in different countries/areas of the world, people from African communities were brutally forced to work and were stripped of being human beings (Wade 2013; Hall 2017; Ballvé 2020). The connection between being violently forced into labour and violent acts is power. To have power over someone or something determines at the same time hierarchy (cp. Mignolo 2012: p. 181). So, violent acts should be positioned next to decolonization theory, to get a better understanding of how everything is intertwined with each other. Moreover, how postcolonialism or the still ongoing decolonization process is the common denominator. Therefore, I will now present another approach of decolonization and feminist post-colonial critiques. If we have a look at the history of Colombia especially the power relations, which were established during the colonial era, how, if the colonial era is over, people have still to fight for their rights, especially non-white habitants? Chocó, the region with the highest percentage of Afro-Colombians is struggling with violence, bad infrastructure, and prejudices from all other parts of Colombia (Fernández 2016; Gontovnik 2016; Restrepo 2018). When did the decolonization process start? Did it start? It is necessary

to put light on this department and the ongoing situation through the lens of de-/post-colonial theory. Whereas postcolonial should not be used for this topic, as the "post" never happened, and the discriminating racial structures and norms still co-exist. I want to mention here that I will combine the concepts, which will be argued in the next chapters with different points and perspectives of "de"- and "post"-colonization theory, to highlight the existing structures and norms in Chocó. Furthermore, I want to shift the de-colonization theory into post-colonial feminist theory in Latin America. Violence against women and women of colour has been documented since the colonial era. The important point is that the discourse and discussion about any kind of violence against women including women of colour have increased in the last centuries (Asher 2009, 2014).

Fink and Leinius (2014) explain why the perspective of women in postcolonial and decolonization theories matters. They state that post-colonial feminist theory uncovers gender-theoretical gaps and stresses the interdependence of racism and sexism as colonial heritage. Furthermore, hegemonic feminism is confronted with colonized universalism. Another central point is the dualism of gender relation, which neglects the power-relation between women (Fink and Leinius 2014: p. 119). Famous postcolonial theorists like Frantz Fanon (1963, 1967), Stuart Hall (1996), Edward Said (1980) argued about the view of "First World" countries on "Third World" countries and their minorities. Through the visible-making of power-relation in the context of European colonial expansion, they try to explain how colonialism affects social practices of power. Going back to Fink and Leinius' (2014: p.119) statement it proves that feminist theory came into this theoretical framework. Previously mentioned theorists didn't leave out the gender aspect of post-colonial theories but didn't go deep enough into it.

In the chapter "*Texts in Contexts/Reading Afro-Colombian Women's Activism"* from the Book "*Translocalities/translocalidades. Feminist politics of translation in the Latin/a Americas*" from 2014 Asher outlines postcolonial feminist critiques. She argues that black women's activism in Colombia highlights the position of women in black communities. The post-colonial feminist critic focusses also on the representation of "Women-in-development" (WID), and "Gender and Development" (GAD). I want to bring back to mind that "post" "doesn't" explain the period after the colonial era, but it problematizes the theoretical and political positions, which were established and

implemented during colonialism and which are still part of social and institutional structures (Asher 2014: p. 193). Postcolonialism as well drew attention to created binaries by colonial scholarships, as civilized/barbaric, and representations are universal/essential or ideologies ethnocentric/Eurocentric (Asher 2014 ibid.). Afro-Colombian women played and are still playing an important role in the black movements (see chapter one; the foundation of several organizations by Afro-Colombians and for Afro-Colombians) of Colombia and the decolonization process. Networks of *Afro-Colombianas* worked in the context of many-sided, intertwined relations of power – including the gender aspect (especially as women) "race" and culture (Afro-Colombians/blacks), the class, and the location (Pacific rural area). Although new legislation granted the inhabitants of the Chocó more rights about their land, etc., there were more struggles to come. Meeting basic needs in everyday life was still a central concern of black women, as economic models failed to provide adequate livelihoods (Asher 2009: p. 152). "*In the post-Law 70 period, Afro-Colombian women's strategies were shaped through their active engagement with and against the development practices of the Colombian state and black ethnic movements*" (Asher 2009: p. 153). The engagement and the work of Afro-Colombian women are part of the decolonization process, although they are mostly local people who are working for a better living situation for all. In addition to the debate of Afro-Colombian women, those women also shed new light on the existent binary distinction of the colonial era. I understand that such kind of movements and work of women contributes to the post-colonial feminist critic.

The works of "black feminism", "Chicana Feminism", the "feminism of colour" as well the "Third-World-Feminism" build the basis of the methodological orientation of post-colonial feminist critics. All these theoretical orientations include women, especially women of colour. In Latin America, feminist theories uncover the continuity of the colonial era (Fink and Leinius 2014: p. 120). This kind of feminism wants to make women seen in the world. The outcome of colonial history and structures/norms, which are still visible or invisible, are putting women into the shadows. Nevertheless, many fights have been fought by women – by indigenous women, and women of colour. Post-colonial feminist critics uncover categorisation, power-relations but especially patriarchal structures and values that are still produced. Post-colonial feminist critics overlap, but the main focus lies on the historical analysis of normalized heteronormativity and sexuality (Fink and Leinius 2014: p. 121). These analyses

explain the relationship between colonization and forbidden sexual wishes, which served as breeding grounds for sexual deviance. Furthermore, this sexual deviance was seen as a problem in the eyes of the colonialists and was therefore taken as a reason to civilize and regulate people (Fink and Leinius ibid.). As sexualized violence was not thematised during my conversation with my interview partners, I find it still important to bring it into the picture. Zuckerhut and Grubner contrast in the introduction chapter of the book "Gewalt und Geschlecht" (2011) different perspectives and approaches to sexual violence or sexualized violence. The most common definition of sexualized violence was presented by Mischkowski (2006). Explaining the term by stating that sexual violence consists of all attacks and acts, that hurt an individual by targeting him/his intimate sexual areas (Zuckerhut 2011: p. 24). Sexual violence is used as a weapon to express power over the targeted person. The second definition she presents is epistemological violence. Gayatri Spivak (2008) is one of many scientists who tried to unravel the concept of violence by highlighting the construction of power and violence relations. As already discussed in the postcolonial discourse of orientalism and occidentalism (Said and Malmaoud 1980), it is about the implementation of "othering" (Zuckerhut 2011: p. 26). Meaning the constructed reality, based on historical events and societal changes, marks the subject as different. "Othering" consists of the homogenization of experiences which includes negative political outcomes for persons who are not on the top of the hierarchy (Zuckerhut 2011 ibid.).

Knowledge is locally oriented. Meaning in a postcolonial view, knowledge marks as well unmarks positions, which are determined by colonial power structures. By no means are the "others" only ethnic and not merely are women sexual. But men are also sexually constituted, and the effect of being white is complex and impacts racist constitutions (Boatcă 2016: p. 114). Postcolonialism in comparison to post-modernism uncovers the relation between global power relations in the context of European colonial expansion and historical inequality. Furthermore, it reveals historical and actual inequality on a local, national and international level (Boatcă 2016 ibid.). The Latin-American approach to modernity and coloniality explains the establishment of tradition, which is based on and constituted under colonial power with the term "(de)-coloniality". Tradition in this context is understood and constructed as the opposite of development and progress (Boatcă 2016: p. 118). De-coloniality differs from colonialism. Coloniality is a still existent power-relation, which is historically oriented in

the colonial expansion of Europe and represents the base of western modernity (Boatcă 2016: p. 119). The concept of modernity/coloniality shows that the more the world system got modern, colonial it was. This system can nonetheless be detected by defining or categorizing ethnic groups, "race", and class, which were constituted during the colonial era (Boatcă 2016: p. 120).

"*Critical responses to colonialism from different locations take different but complementary forms. While from an Asian perspective it has become necessary to 'provincialize' European thought, from a Latin American perspective it has become indispensable to globalize the periphery: to recognize the worldwide formation of what appear to be self-generated modern metropolitan centres and backward peripheries*" *(Coronil 2004, S. 414).* (quoted after Boatcă 2016: p. 122)

Decoloniality in the perspective of Latin American countries represents a process, which depicts and uncovers the power and ideologies derived from European history. By analysing and discussing the ongoing colonial structures, political and social values can unfold and contribute to the acknowledgment of different worldviews. Racially exclusive structures in Colombia are present for people who belong to ethnic groups, which fulfil specific criteria (the turn to multiculturalism), do not affect those people who are white, or light-skinned.

Some feminist theorists (Spivak 1980; Mohanty 2003; Spivak 2008; Asher 2009, 2014) focus on queer activism others on heterosexuality as a pre-colonial constant. All the different perspectives and approaches try to uncover the power dynamics of knowledge production. The main attribute still lies in the intersectional analysis of forms of oppression and power.

This chapter compromised different outlooks on decolonialism and postcolonialism. This chapter not only dealt with decolonisation and postcolonialism per se. Moreover, the connection between the colonial era, decolonisation, and postcolonialism was highlighted. In addition, how violence, ethnic difference, and history are the result of the current situation.

2.2   History made in Chocó

I would like to begin this subchapter with a short description of a museum and its content I visited in Quibdó, called Muntú-Bantú as it deals with the history of former

enslaved Africans and how they were brought from Africa to Latin America. The museum tour in Quibdó I attended, discussed the moment the first enslaved Africans, were forcefully brought to Latin America. Sergio Antonio Mosquera Mosquera, the founder of the museum, tried to show the visitors how important it is to know where one is from. Mosquera Mosquera explained furthermore, which ethnic groups were forced into the institution of slavery and the importance of cultural heritage. Not only to teach others but also to know that enslaved Africans had a life before they were sold (Field note Muntú-Bantú: 110220).

From 1680-1810 Chocó became an important source of gold for the Spanish Empire. The region was and is still hot and humid which produces tropical vegetation. Chocó has many desired minerals, especially gold. From the 17th until the 19th century, enslaved Africans were forced to obtain minerals, such as gold (Sharp 1975: p. 469). The hot climate of Chocó was not "healthy" for the white men. Therefore, the white slave-owners hired men overseas who could manage their affairs. Few of the slaveholders resided outside of the Chocó, in a less humid climate. Most of the slaveholders stayed in Europe and had employees in Colombia to manage their businesses (Sharp 1975: p. 470). Before enslaved Africans were forced into labour in Chocó, natives (such as members of the Emberá and Wounaan communities in the Chocó; Velasco Jaramillo 2014) worked in the mining production. However, their "inability" to sustain systemic labour replaced them with enslaved Africans (Sharp 1975 ibid.). In 1704, 600 enslaved Africans were counted in the Chocó. In 1782, 7.088 enslaved resided in this area, but by 1804 the number increased to 5.000 enslaved (Sharp 1975: p. 470). This decreased number was due to manumission, flight, and death (caused by different circumstances, sickness, violence, etc.) between 1782 and 1804 (Sharp 1975: p. 471). At the end of the 18th Century, almost all enslaved Africans worked in metal production and gold mining in the provinces of Popayán, Antioquia, Mariquita, and Chocó. "*The problem of obtaining fresh replacements for incapacitated, dying, or escaped bondmen grew in intensity, so that by 1800 much of the precious metal produced in Antioquia was being mined by free Negroids*" (Rout 1977: p. 236). As already explained in chapter 2.1., next to enslaved Africans, free former enslaved Africans lived in Colombia.

Things changed with the wars of independence between *criollos* (American-born persons of Spanish blood, (Rout 1977: p. 127)) and the Spaniards in the northern part

of South America. Bolívar witnessed the Venezuelan War of independence that the free population died, but the enslaved lived and survived. On the ground of that, Bolívar decided to obtain enslaved Africans for military service (Rout 1977: p. 176). Colombia also tried to do the same. In 1819, New Granada (now Colombia) commanded the recruitment of 5.000 enslaved people from the four areas already mentioned. In return, those enslaved got their freedom after serving for two years as soldiers (Rout 1977: p. 236). Many enslaved revolted against the service as soldiers. As they believed that general liberation is coming soon, they did not want to die as forced soldiers. From 1820 to 1822 enslaved Africans and enslaved Africans who "worked" as soldiers organized many rebellions in Chocó, Popayán, and Cauca. The governor of the department of Cauca reported that thousands of enslaved Africans fled or refused to work (Rout 1977: p. 237). Those who were caught were punished to death. Bolívar, a former national, was sure that there couldn't be a stable government if the number of those enslaved is high. In 1836 more than 55 percent of enslaved people were forced to work in gold production. There were at least 38.940 enslaved people in the Republic of Colombia. In the following years, the number of revolts increased which led to the abolishment of slavery in 1850. Slaveholders were compensated for their "loss" (Rout 1977: p. 240).

Afro-Colombians have been described as inferior to all other census categories (see chapter 2.1), despite the abolishment of slavery. These prejudiced opinions nowadays exist too; they have been predestined by the European positivists. As Juvena Mejía Cordoba did, who thought in 1918, that Afro-Colombians and mestizos from the Caribbean coast are victims of their biological heritage (Rout 1977: p. 244)? A student of the Colombian Culture characterized Afro-Colombians of the Provinces Cauca, Caldas, and Chocó as follows:

"*Incapable of agricultural work, he has dedicated himself*

To the calling that gives most leeway to his idleness;

raising and stealing cattle. On the shores of the Pacific,

the Negro continued his boating, hunting, and his fishing.

He is happy, amoral, without esthetic notions, fetishistic,

affectionate, and lying. " (Rout 1977: p. 244)

Even though this opinion has been expressed at the beginning of the 20th century, one can still find and see this body of thought in higher positions. The anthropologist Thomas J Price spent many years analysing the activities of Afro-Colombians and mestizos next to the Caribbean coast. He asserted that:

1.) "The upper strata of society is entirely dominated by white aristocrats

2.) Whites and mestizos arriving on the coast from the national capital and other cities of the interior highlands generally consider the coastal Negroids to be biologically and intellectually inferior.

3.) Afro-Colombians believe that in legal disputes involving whites and blacks, 'the decision invariably favors the white'

4.) Many black and mulatto women prefer to be mistresses of white men rather than marry darkskinned males because of the 'prestige value involved, and the feeling that one's children will be lighter, and enjoy greater economic and social opportunities'

5.) The assimilation of white cultural values is such that children lacking straight hair and possessing pronounced negroid features are deemed maluco ('sickly') and feo ('ugly') by their parents." (Rout 1977: pp. 244-245)

His assertion describes the gap between being white and not being white or not being white enough. As Price's assertion inhabits outdated terminologies and a western way of interpreting a situation, I want to explain certain terms. Not only Thomas J. Price used the term "Negroid" but also Rout (1977) and others. Rout defines "Negroid" as a person possessing any degree of African blood, but furthermore mentions

- "black" (full-blooded African origin)*;*

- *cimarrón* (escaped enslaved African)*;*

- *casta* (a derogatory term for all persons of mixed blood including freed blacks)*;*

- *bozal* (enslaved person who was brought directly to the Americas from Africa)*;*

- *moreno_morena (*a person of African ancestry and more*)* (cp. Rout 1977: p. xv).

It is interesting how many terms were integrated to describe a dark-skinned person, but only a few to describe a white person. Those descriptions depended on where they were born, what language they spoke, and any degree of African blood. I am purposely

not describing dark-skinned people as "Negroids" as it would imply that I reproduce the description of colonial structures. Since his research, the perception of "race", ethnicity, and culture changed. I will continue discussing the difference between these terms in the third chapter "The question of ethnicity".

Why are Colombia and other states afraid of different ethnic groups? Why do "ethnic groups" suffer from disadvantages and discrimination? How is the ethnic background still as relevant as 100 years ago? Why is Chocó so important for the state? Why is it at the same time one of the poorest parts of the country? To understand the present situation in Chocó, one needs to understand the historical background including political, juridical, and socio-economic aspects. The leaders of former Colombia experimented with five republics in the 19th century to find a political formula, which should promote national unity and economic growth. These were: New Granada (1832-1857), the Granadan Confederation (1857-1861), The United States of New Granada (1861-1863), the United States of Colombia (1963-1986), and the Republic of Colombia (from 1886 to the present) (Fernández 2016: p. 38).

"Law 65 of December 14, 1909, divided the nation into departments: Antioquia, Bolivar, Bocayá, Cauca, Cundinamarca, Magdalena, Narino, Panama, Santander and Tolima, and stated that the territories of San Martín, Casanare, Caqueta, Guajira and Chocó would be administrated directly by national government as intendancies (Rausch, 1999: 18)." (Fernández 2016: p. 39)

From this point on the state was under the power of Conservatives and missionaries who started to dominate almost every territory of the country. In 1930, the Liberals came back to power, and politicians from peripheral territories were included in the implementation of new policies. One of the men was Diego Luis Córdoba, an Afro-Colombian from Chocó, who became the first Chocoan to influence the political and national stage. In 1932, he received his law degree and returned to Quibdó, where he worked as a municipal judge of Istmina (a city in Chocó). Although he won the support of the population of Chocó through the demands against discrimination of blacks, he only gained partial acceptance from his white colleagues (Fernández 2016: p. 40). He served for two decades as a senator, professor, and ambassador and continued to work for social justice for Chocó and all Afro-Colombians (Fernández 2016 ibid.). To this day, one can see throughout the capital, several buildings named after him. For example, the university, where I conducted most of the interviews, named "*Universidad*

Tecnologica Del Choco Diego Luis Cordoba." He had a huge impact on the policies against discrimination including "Blackness" in Chocó. Politicians from peripheral regions of Colombia demanded recognition for the necessities of remote areas in the Pacific Lowlands. Cordoba was the first Afro-Colombian who influenced policies on the national level. After he lost the election as a liberal congressional representative, he founded his political party *Acción Democrática* (Fernández 2016: p. 40). He furthermore organized campaigns for social justice of Afro-Chocoans and Afro-Colombians (Fernández 2016: p. 41). Cordoba had a seat in the Chamber of Representatives and exposed the racism against Afro-Colombians, especially in Chocó. He, furthermore, pushed towards national recognition for intendancy. In 1947, thanks to Cordoba's efforts, Chocó became a department (Fernández 2016: pp. 45-47).

In addition to the recognition for the intendancy of Chocó, I will now explain the uprising of guerrillas and paramilitary groups from the end of the 1940s. After the assassination of liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948, radicalized factions of the liberal party took up arms and revolted (Rodriguez 2011: p. 11). Revolutionary guerrillas and paramilitary groups existed since the 1950s (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008: p.12). During this time, there had been different forces, which were counted to be left-armed (guerrillas) or right-armed (paramilitary groups). The most known and oldest group, *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), was expanding its group by trafficking coca, kidnapping, and extortion. Next to FARC, other guerrilla organisations terrorized civilians: *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Army, ELN), *Movimiento 19 de abril* (M-19; April 19 Movement), and *Ejército Popular de Liberación* (EPL, Popular Liberation Army) (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008: pp. 12-13, Rodríguez 2011: p. 9). According to Gutiérrez Sanin's research, guerrillas have more female combatants/members than paramilitary groups (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008: p. 10). The recruitment of both parties differs. Guerrillas, at least at FARC is a long-life commitment. Members or recruits don't have the right to leave. Moreover, if they want to leave (deserters) the group, they are punished severely. In some cases, they die of their wounds (Gutiérrez Sanin 2008: p. 17). The recruitment of paramilitary groups is the total opposite of guerrillas. If one joins them, nobody expects that they stay forever. However, leaving the group is also not made easy. In some areas, paramilitary groups are allies to authorities and are at the same time protected by them (Gutiérrez Sanin: p. 18). Guerrillas and paramilitary groups both recruit with force. Children, boys, girls,

and youngsters are also recruited (Moreno Martín, Carmona Parra, Tobón Hoyos 2010: p. 18). In the early 1980s, guerrilla organizations shifted their goals from disseminating leftist ideologies to military and financial goals. Especially FARC and ELN gained more control over other sources of income, such as drug economies, kidnapping, and "safety taxes" (Rodríguez 2011: p. 14)

"In 1999, the wealthiest 10 percent of the Colombian population received 45 percent of the country's total income (García Villegas and de Sousa dos Santos 2004, 35). Colombian economic elites play crucial roles in the escalation of armed conflict; elites maintain control over the country's natural resources, have the political power to uphold exclusionary policies, and sponsor and support private armies and vigilante-type justice, among other actions." (Rodríguez 2011: pp. 10-11)

In 1991, the promulgation of the 1991 Colombian Constitution meant a change in the political and juridical history of the country. The laws, which were implemented, meant to change recognition referring to human, ethnic, and native rights. Since this year, Colombia has been presented as a multicultural state, by including other ethnic groups as indigenous communities. The discussion of multiculturalism and its impact on Afro-Colombians follows in chapter three ("The Question of Ethnicity"). After hundreds of years of exploiting natives and enslaved people from African communities, the new legislation opened space for national socio-cultural diversity (Fernández 2016: p. 9). As was pointed out in the introduction to this thesis, waves of violence started around 1997 and destroyed many livelihoods in the Chocó (see chapter one). Could there be a link between waves of violence mainly against civilians on the ground of the implementation of new legislation? The discussion will follow in chapters three and four. From the 1980s until now, guerrillas and paramilitary groups terrorized farmers, civilians, social workers, and members of NGOs (Asher 2009; Fernández 2016; Lizarazo 2018).

According to Asher, the hopes of a peaceful era in the Pacific Lowlands were destroyed in the middle of the 1990s as the violent acts increased. The number of displaced black communities on the grounds of violence sharply rose. These acts led the *Proceso Comunidades Negras* (PCN), Chocoan groups, and black politicians to form a coalition and address the problem of displaced Afro-Colombians. Through the expansion of Afro-Colombian movements, the terms "Afro-Latinx" and "Afro-descendent" gained more weight and currency, especially in Latin America (Asher 2009: p. 155). In a cry

for help and recognition and to live out the black identity, the displaced Afro-Colombian became again invisible to the state, especially regarding policies. In the late 1990s, many activists of the PCN tried to get help and support from outside the Pacific Lowlands and the country. "*With Law 70 considered one of the strongest pieces of legislation for Afro-descendant groups in Latin America, Afro-Colombians were invited abroad to share their experiences*" (Asher 2009: pp. 175-176). But they didn't succeed how they wished. They needed to change their strategy or the goal of "identity, territory, and autonomy". It wasn't possible to organize black communities without collective land rights, which were still under debate (Asher 2009: p. 176). The displacement that occurred in Chocó did not only happened because of national and private interest in the area's riches. Displacement and violent acts serve the interest of transnational corporations (in short TCNs) (Sachseder 2020: p. 162). Displacement of people consists of different forms of violence. One of the most performed forms is being sexually violated. Furthermore, the victims are mostly Afro-Colombians/Afro-descendants and members of indigenous communities (Meertens, Viveros, and Arango 2008). Such environments influence the social practices of everybody living in this area – be it, students, farmers, or children. Sachseder (2020) explained why Afro-descendants and indigenous women are victims of sexual violence and displacements, by discussing the theories of postcolonialism and decolonization (Sachseder 2020). As Sachseder, I also want to discuss the concept of violence in Colombia by re-evaluating different perspectives of postcolonial and decolonial theories. The discussion will follow in chapter four "A Portrait of Violence".

In 2007, Asher had a conversation with Carlos Rosero, a Colombian anthropologist and an activist of the PCN. He stated that President Uribe chose to employ certain Afro-Colombians to high offices to show that there is no such thing as discrimination in Colombia. One of these selected persons was Paula Moreno, Minister of Culture, the first black woman to hold the office. In Rosero's eyes, she did not represent "the black people", especially, the displaced ones (Asher 2009: p. 184). Furthermore, he argues that it is not enough for the state to have a public figure but not work on anti-racist politics, change structural inequality, and discrimination. He started working with Afro-Colombian University students, as the number of students increased who were affiliating with the PCN (Asher 2009 ibid.). According to email communications from the PCN, they are still actively attempting to keep drug and armed forces from the communities, denouncing violent acts of armed forces (Asher 2009: p. 188).

In 2016, after 52 years of conflict between the FARC and the government, it came to a peace agreement. However, FARC dissidents, ELN guerrillas, and paramilitary groups still abused civilians on many levels (displacement, physical and mental violence, death threats). In 2017 Colombian government arranged peace talks with the ELN. The peace talk was dismissed after they exploded a car with a bomb in Bogotá. Since the peace talks from 2016 between FARC and the government, FARC dissidents organized new groups and refused to hand over their guns. Those dissidents continue to commit abuses. The number of dissidents is esteemed to be roughly 2.300 (Arboleda 2019). In 2019 fights between ELN and the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC) started. The AGC emerged from paramilitary groups. This group is affiliated to the right-armed forces. The ELN is known for abusing civilians, recruiting children, and displacement of civilians. This war-like situation limited the ability of roughly 2.800 inhabitants of Chocó to leave their communities (Arboleda 2019).

In this chapter, I highlighted the most important implementation and events concerning, slavery, the rise of guerrillas and paramilitary groups, Afro-Colombians in Chocó and Colombia. The adjudication of territorial land titles (AT 55; Law 70) improved the situation of Afro-Colombians – Afro-descendants, but only on paper. Although the Colonial era has passed, and Colombia acknowledged its ethnic minorities (via law) the decolonization process is still ongoing. We will now move on to the next chapter of this thesis. The past events of Afro-Colombian movements (PCN, ACIA) and structural racism lead me to question: what exactly changed through the new ethnic policies in Colombia? In addition, why it is significant to explain the social practices of Afro-Colombian students? Therefore, I will now present the next chapter, which deals with different definitions of ethnicity and debates and discussion over multiculturalism, ethnic belonging, and Colombia as a pluricultural state.

3 The question of ethnicity

Ethnicity is a very well discussed topic in different disciplines but has a broad meaning. In this chapter, I will contrast and compare different theoretical approaches. The constitution of ethnic groups or the term ethnicity is linked to history. The categorization of ethnic groups is linked to prejudices, disadvantages, and advantages. As the thesis subjects are Afro-Colombians, I will argue and combine general definitions of the term ethnicity and situational description and the ascription of "Afro-Latinx", "Afro-

descendants" and "Afro". All these mentioned descriptions incorporate cultural heritage based on different areas of the continent of Africa. As the colonial era is over (on paper), the prejudices against Afro-Colombians are still incorporated in an institutional, political, and socially constructed society. This chapter discusses the boundaries of ethnicity and the impact of multiculturalism in Colombia.

3.1 Ethnic boundaries

Ethnicity is about the contact between two culturally different groups who enter contact with each other regularly, not including groups who have lived in isolation. The problem here lies in the similarity of groups because the remaining distinction becomes less and less. Ethnicity is present if cultural differences are made relevant through social interaction. Two culturally distinct groups do not create ethnicity (Eriksen 2010: p. 277). Eriksen refers as well to Fredrik Barth who is a representative of ethnology. He states that the social process is a part of ethnicity. This can be seen as a relationship between two groups who socially interfere with each other. The cultural distinction is connected to social practices like marriage, religion, language, and many more by shared history. Ethnicity is about similarity and distinction (Eriksen 2010: pp. 277-278). The new constitution of 1991 (discussed in chapters one and two) defined Colombia as a pluricultural nation. Meaning ethnic minorities, such as indigenous and Afro-Colombians, black communities are acknowledged by law. By implementing distinctive laws and policies, the state itself is empowered to continue social classification and stereotypes against and between these groups. The beginning of this lies in seeing differences, in this case by skin colour. However, there is also social classification within an ethnic group. Stereotypes are descriptions of cultural attributes (Eriksen 2010: p. 278). Ethnicity is somehow situational, groups who see themselves as inferior to the other can learn the history of both groups. The dichotomisation expresses the relationship between two different groups who share a language. This relationship is processual and relational (Eriksen 2010: pp. 280-281). The ideology of ethnicity is based on historical and political circumstances (Eriksen 2010: p. 281). Eriksen refers to Handelmann who developed four degrees of ethnic incorporation:

The first one is called the "ethnic category", which defines the identity, which is reproduced over a generation. The second one "ethnic network" contains values, which is based on the system of interaction. The third one "ethnic association" is about the collective organisation whose goals are on behalf of the group. The last one "ethnic

community" depicts the territorial state and includes all of the three other degrees. Ethnicity and class are criteria for social differentiation and rank. Although classes can be found in one ethnic group. From the differentiation of another group, this distinction goes further within the group (Eriksen 2010: p. 285). Ethnicity also contains segmentary identities, which are always in process and change through political and social practices. Just because one is a member of an ethnic group, does not mean that this is his only identity. Through work or university for example people "take" another identity or during a conflict, etc. One can change her_his identity, and some identities are overlapping (Eriksen 2010: p. 286).

This representation can be seen in other eyes as a stereotypization of one on the other hand as a way to categorize oneself. This social construction and maintenance of boundaries are used by ethnic history. The written history of one differentiates from the oral one – the first one invokes political issues and discourses (Eriksen 2010: p. 278). By presenting the theoretical framework of Eriksen, I wanted to give an overview of the construct of ethnicity. His definitions are applicable for any topic involving ethnicity. I will now move on to discuss what shouldn't be seen as ethnicity nor described. For this, I will use the statements of Baumann (2006) who mentioned four false conclusions of ethnicity.

1. Tracing of persons from ancestors is seen as an act of present-day memory

2. Ancestry doesn't determine one's behaviour or preferences.

3. The establishment of a link between "race"/ethnicity and behaviours/preferences. Furthermore, the term "race" is 19th-century fiction, and ethnicity with its biological sense is a photocopy of such but just from the 20th century (Baumann 2006: p. 20).

4. Ethnicity is not an identity given by nature but an identification through social action (Baumann 2006: p. 21).

To highlight the ethnic importance of not merely Afro-Colombians but anybody else, I want to give an example of the overlapping of ethnicity and identity. Furthermore, I want to show an example of an inside vs. outside perspective of ethnicity and self-ascription vs. external ascription. The external ascriptions of people are part of many livelihoods. For example, Barbara has a mother with Austrian heritage, and her father originates from Nigeria. She would not be described as an Austrian, although she was

born and raised in Austria. People would identify her as African. As her skin colour doesn't match the image one has of an Austrian. Another example from my own experience is, being one of five children of a married Congolese couple who immigrated at the end of the 80s to Europe, which also let me question my ethnic identification and identity at a young age. I was born and raised in Austria. I grew up speaking three languages – German, Lingala, and French. I thought I was Austrian, but in middle school, I realized that my school colleagues didn't see me as an Austrian. In Congolese circles or gatherings, I was defined as an Austrian. Not Congolese enough because I inhabited Austrian values and norms. I stood at a crossroads, not knowing who I was. In the Congolese society, I was too Austrian. In the Austrian society, I was a well-integrated African or just a well-spoken "Ausländerin" (foreigner). People told me what I am without even asking, how I felt or how I would define myself. I am both – Congolese and Austrian, although my skin colour doesn't match the "Austrian" image. The problem here lies in the categorization of people based on their skin colour. This example is not merely about ethnicity or ethnic identity but the external ascription and assumption by others. I identify myself as an Austrian and a Congolese person. It is more about how such presumptions and external ascription can influence the feeling of belonging of an individual. It took time to realize how my environment influenced my perception of my cultural, ethnic, and social belief system. As Liladhar (1999) states: "*despite the unreliability of visible markers of* '*race', bi – or multiracial people are often identified by such markers, and, in general, the markers used are those which accord to their 'darker ancestry'* " (Liladhar 1999: 241). External ascriptions, in the sense of the image of Afro-Colombians, for example, how it is depicted in the media, will be discussed in the subchapter "Pluricultural Colombia and its downsides". The inside vs. outside perspective has a lot to do with self-ascription and external ascription. In the context of Colombia, the state determined who could call himself_herself a member of an ethnic group, which I will discuss in-depth in the following pages. Putting appearance and Othering in the context of racism against Afro-Colombians, I argue that, including the historical impact, racial categorization makes them visible in the sense of their skin colour, but at the same time invisible in their own identity. Furthermore, ethnicity and identity are tightly connected but not the same. Being a part of an ethnic group doesn't exclude the possibility to have more identities. Barth implies, as identities are signalled and embraced, new forms of identities will tend to be dichotomized. For example, just as males versus females work

seem to have different values in some societies. Basic ethnic categories will have the same factor for encouraging the proliferation of cultural differences (Barth 1998: p. 18). The association of identities and value standards is dominated by the state's history and its policies and ideologies.

Fredrik Barth (1998) implies that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the group members themselves and have therefore the characteristic of organizing interactions between people. With his work, he furthermore tries to explore different processes that seem to maintain ethnic groups (Barth 1998: p. 10).

The term ethnic group is defined as:

1.) It is largely biologically self-perpetuating

2.) It shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms

3.) It makes up a field of communication and interaction

4.) It has a membership that identifies itself and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order. (Barth 1998: pp. 10-11)

The definitions of both Barth (1998) and Eriksen (2010) are general and could be applied to any debate about ethnicity. However, Barth's statement that ethnic groups are largely biological self-perpetuating refers more to the term "race". As Baumann (2010) stated, "race" is an outdated term rooted in colonialism, which was then replaced with the term ethnicity in the 20th century. Although the definition of ethnicity is much broader and does not only include external features of individuals. Barth (1998) implicitly explains the symbolic and social boundaries of ethnic groups. These definitions should be put in a new context because it also assumes that all ethnic groups are the same, whereas the structure and function of such groups differ from each other. For example, in Colombia, not all Afro-Colombians belong to the same ethnic group. Just because they share the same skin colour does not mean that they belong to the same group. As history shows, many enslaved Africans came from different parts of the African continent. This means they were taken from different groups. Those formerly enslaved formed groups with members, who belonged to other groups before they were taken to Colombia. In this case, they formed new groups in Colombia because of similar goals and similar suffering from their skin colour. Barth

holds the view that others see ethnic groups as forms of social organizations implementing the characteristic of self-ascription and the ascription by others. Such groups are accredited categorically, which includes identity whichever is based on its origin and background (Barth 1998: p. 14).

Relating to this paper's topic, the ethnic group being analysed are the Afro-Colombian students who go to the same university, define themselves as Afro-Colombians, and share the same inequality. It is important to mention this inequality is felt by all the Afro-Colombians in this area of Colombia, not only the students. Both definitions of Barth (1998) and Eriksen (2010) and approaches are relevant for this research aim, given the emphasis it places on the perception of a feeling of belonging and shared culture, ethnicity, and shared social and political exclusion.

What is needed to make an ethnic distinction between groups? Moreover, why do they emerge in a specific area? Countries that were involved in the transatlantic slave trade wanted to categorize their population. This categorization connects how useful certain groups were for them and which ideologies they tried to implement. Many Latin American countries tried to copy the European or western ideologies. That means that the skin colour of an individual marked a social position in society (see chapter two).

When talking about ethnicity, it is necessary to explain the connection between ethnicity, "race", and nation. First, I want to highlight the difference between ethnicity and "race", furthermore, explaining how ethnicity replaced "race" in social sciences. Secondly, I will explain how a nation builds the roof under which ethnicity and "race" are constructed.

"Race" is a construct of colonial structures around the world. Some say "race" is cultural and historical, not biological, or that "race" is a discursive construct (Hall 2017: p. 12). It is more complex than just connecting it to a period or a cultural aspect. As Hall (2017) states the most common definition of "race" is connected to external features, skin colour, and hair texture, and so on. Nevertheless, ethnicity, as already explained above consists of culture, identification, and sameness. Both terms categorise and characterise distinct groups. However, the term "race" is an outdated term for identifying persons on their biological features. Members of ethnic groups are more than just skin colour and hair textures. By using, the term "race" to describe a distinctive group one is reproducing colonial thinking and structures. The awareness

of colonialism and its consequences is interwoven in almost everything (especially using specific words, legal matters, social structures, etc.) that it gets invisible for people who are not part of an ethnic distinct category. Meaning that, for example, a white person, who never dealt with colonialism or its impact, would not notice that some words hurt people who are not classified as whites. There are exceptions, of course. As Wade (2015) and Hall (2017) point out, the term ethnicity is more appropriate than "race", as a "race" only refers to external features, whereas ethnicity is more complex and consists of religion, language, cultural heritage, etc.

Eduardo Restrepo, who is a well-known Colombian anthropologist and did a lot of research about Afro-Colombians and the question of ethnicity in Colombia, published an Article in 2004 called "*Ethnicization of Blackness in Colombia".* In this article, he argues towards de-racializing of the theoretical and political imagination of Afros, Afro-descendants, and Afro-Colombians. He connects how memories, identities were transformed during the process of the ethnicization of blackness. This process introduced the transformation of the memory of local populations from the abolishment of slavery until now. However, this process re-accommodates identities, memories, and silences of the past centuries (Restrepo 2004: pp. 700-702). He, furthermore, states that the "*imagined black community is anchored in the objectification of memory, culture, nature and identity*" (Restrepo 2004: p. 698). He implies to abandon the category of "blackness*" and "replace it with the relocation of* '*blackness' in structures of alterity*" (Restrepo 2004: p. 699). To rephrase it, one should analyse the difference inside of racial or ethnic structures, constituted by the state and its history. Referring to the concept of ethnicity, no matter what kind of group, the historical component is as important as the people themselves are. The ancestral past is incorporated in every kind of community.

"*The recent process of ethnicization in the southern Pacific region of Colombia has involved a type of production and relation with the past, a way of imagining community-based on origins and historically shared experiences, as well as is the location of subjectivities and identities"* (Restrepo 2004: p. 704). Restrepo also determines that "blackness" constitutes a novel historical event and can therefore not be reduced to a new racial definition. Besides, it is not a specific construction of "race" or a process of "culturalization of race" (Restrepo 2004: pp. 710-711). As "race" and ethnicity play a significant role, especially for people who are members of ethnic groups, Restrepo's

perception of the constitution of "blackness" and the political and social disadvantages are important for this research, as all my interview partners saw and define themselves as Afro-Colombians. Therefore, this aspect of ethnicization should also be highlighted in this thesis.

Nation has an ambivalent relationship to ethnicity and "race". The formation of nations or nation-states was the engine for modernity and globalization. *"[T]he allegiances and identifications that in pre-modern times were given to tribe, people, religion, and the region came gradually, in Western societies, to be transferred to the national culture*." (Hall 2017: p. 136). The difference within the state still exists but with the formation of nation-states, those differences were covered underneath. Therefore, one can say that nations build the roofs under which cultural, social, political, and ethnic differences are constructed, and maintained (Arocha 1998; Wade 2015; Hall 2017). This roof also forms a feeling of belonging for most of the citizens underneath. The nation constructs meaning but also constructs collective narratives, collective memory, resistance, and much more. This means furthermore to describe something Colombianness, Britishness. The narratives of the nation, therefore blank out the conflicts, discontinuities, failure to overcome unevenness, or not being able to acknowledge the difference. As Hall states: "*nation projects the actual state of the nation and the people of history into a timeless register of mythic time*" (Hall 2017: pp. 138-139). One cannot discuss and argue about ethnic conflicts, rights and the question of ethnicity of a nation-state without to uncover the role nation plays. "*In fact, what is represented as originary, essential, and shared within national identity has always been constructed across difference and through difference because cultural distinctions of background and upbringing, of social class, of different ethnic and racial histories, of gender and sexuality, are the very stuff of which national identities are made*" (Hall 2017: pp. 139-140). Identities, ethnic belonging, cultural heritage are newly constructed within the nation-state. As identity is a very broad and complex topic, I will go in-depth of the layers and aspects of identity. One could see nation nowadays as the base and the roof. In other words, without nation there would be no citizens. Nevertheless, without citizen there would be no nation. As identity is a very broad and complex topic, I will go in-depth about the layers and aspects of identity. The nowadays known nation-states are the result of different processes in the past, namely colonialism, modernisation, post-modernism, and decolonization (which persist), and globalization (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; Wade 2015; Boatcă 2016; Hall 2018).

Why did the perception of ethnic groups and minorities change? As I already presented in chapter two ("Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific") indigenous and black communities were included in several constitutions and laws (Law 70, AT55) in the 20th century. Why especially in this century? The shift to modernism and globalization altered the perception of natives and Afro-Colombian communities. The ideologies of *negrismo* and *indigenismo* emerged at the beginning of the 20th century (Wade 2015: p. 110). I argue that the acknowledgement of ethnic minorities goes hand in hand with postmodernism or globalization. The image of indigenous and blacks changed from "uncivilized" and "primitive" to "exotic", sexually different, culturally different, and racially different (Paschel 2010; Wade 2015; Hall 2018). Hall argues that global postmodernism is characterized by difference. The difference is in the sense of setting boundaries and drawing a line between "them" and "us". "Them" is the culturally and "racially" different people and "us" would be the white people (Hall 2018: p. 85).

"*[R]upture of primitivism, managed by modernism becomes another postmodern event. That managing is certainly evident in the difference that may not make a difference, which marks the ambiguous appearance of ethnicity at the heart of global postmodernism*" (Hall 2018: p. 85)

In this important statement, Hall (2018) showed that the construct of ethnicity not only stands alone: But was part of the process of modernism and later on post-modernism. He, therefore, implies that the nation and the construct of the nation are built upon its ethnic history. Although the perception of natives and ethnic minorities changed in the last decades of the 20th century, one must not forget the impact of globalization on the nation-state and its ethnic groups. In other words, post-modernism increased the ethnic awareness in Colombia (Law 70, AT55) but increased at the same time ethnic conflicts, which will be discussed in the following sub-chapter.

3.2 Pluricultural Colombia and its downside

Indigenous communities such as Emberá, Wouanan, and the Afro-Colombians live side by side in the department of Chocó. The Emberá is an ethnic group with members in the Chocó and the nearby country Panama (Arocha 1998; Velasco Jaramillo 2014; Wade 2015). I already explained the different ideologies concerning indigenous (*indigenismo*) and blacks (*negrismo*) in the previous pages and previous chapter ("Mapping Blackness in the Colombian Pacific"). Afro-Colombians were invisible after

the abolishment of slavery. Firstly, they were legally not allowed to possess territorial rights at the beginning of the 20th century. Secondly, Official documents implied that Colombia at this time was a non-black country, as Colombia avoided using words such as *negro* or *pardo* (blacks) in their legal documents. However, until the 1980s schoolbooks and high-school texts included stereotypes against black. That included describing blacks as lazy, muscular, and other prejudices that were taught during colonialism (Arocha 1998: p. 71). The shift from a monoethnic to a multi-ethnic state occurred in the 1990s when Afro-Colombian organisations and movements (see chapter one and chapter two) put pressure on the state to include Afro-Colombians in the legal, cultural, and historical matter (Arocha 1998: p. 72). There must have been tension over decades or even centuries between indigenous and black people, especially in the Chocó. How did AT55 and Law 70 change the relationship between Afro-Colombians and indigenous people? As more than 80 per cent of the inhabitants in the Chocó are black (see chapter one and chapter two). Arocha (1998) states that by legitimating Afro-Colombians' ancestral territories, the government tried to ease the tension between Afro-Colombians and indigenous communities. However, this legitimation caused new forms of interethnic friction among Afro-Colombians and indigenous people. This new friction was caused by the pressure created by modernization, asymmetries of constitutional reform processes, and the failure to acknowledge Afro-Colombians' ethnicity and ancestral territorial rights (Arocha 1998: p. 72).

"*However, in the case of the black communities, Transitory Constitutional Article 55 was not only a scaled-down version of the innovations applicable to the indigenous communities but a temporary measure that could only apply permanently after Congress had passed what is now known as Law 70*" (Arocha 1998: p. 81). The inequality or the different treatment of Afro-Colombians compared to indigenous people was still present and implemented with the new legislation. Instead of seeing both ethnic groups as equal, the state still treated Afro-Colombians differently. In 1995, in the northern part of Chocó, called Báudo the tension increased because indigenous land claims affected ancestral Afro-Chocoanxs domains (Arocha 1998: p. 82).

How should an ethnic group be included in cultural, ethnic, political aspects of the state itself makes it harder for them? The attempt to include the excluded failed several times looking to past events. Furthermore, with the implementation of AT 55 and Law 70 in

the 1990s the state failed to manage a proper inclusion of the Afro-Colombians because they again constructed ethnic asymmetries between both groups.

In another article of Restrepo published in 2018, he highlights the turn of multiculturalism (AT 55, Law 70) in Colombia. He also contributed to the investigation of racism against black communities and Afro-descendants. The turn to multiculturalism led to talks and disputes of racism in Colombia. The article of Restrepo called "*Talks and disputes of racism in Colombia after multiculturalism*" was framed within the research project "*When Rights Ring Hollow: Racism and Anti-racist Horizons in the Americas*" (2017).

As I already mentioned in the chapter "Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific", at least 80 percent of the inhabitants in Chocó count to be Afro-Colombians. Restrepo states that Colombia is the country with the third-highest Afro-descendant population in the Americas. Some organisations consider that Afro-Colombians constitute ten to fifteen percent of the whole population (Restrepo 2018: p. 460). Until the early 1990s, black communities were not defined as an ethnic group in comparison to indigenous people. Indigenous communities were discriminated against on different institutional levels. In contrast to black communities, indigenous communities were part of the political and theoretical paradigm of what was defined as an ethnic group. With the constitution of 1991, which has already been discussed in chapter two, indigenous communities were the subjects of territorial, economic, educational, and political-administrative dispositions (Restrepo 2018: p. 462). The exclusion of black communities in this constitution was based on Eurocentric ideology. The elite of Colombia saw indigenous and black people as "previous stages" of the civilizing process: until the 1990s when the turn of Colombia as a multi-ethnic state has been presented and "implemented". Colombia is since then been defined as a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation (Restrepo 2018 ibid.). Restrepo furthermore states, how talks over racism and exclusion of Afro-Colombians have increased. He implies the turn to multiculturalism caused the disputes over racism in Colombia. Notwithstanding, black intellectuals disagreed with the legal definition of the ethnic group concerning black communities (Restrepo 2018: p. 467).

Cultural differences are not enough to define or become an ethnic group. Restrepo refers to linguistic differences like inhabitants of the Caribbean Coast as an example. These inhabitants are not an ethnic group in the eyes of the state. The configuration

of cultural differences as "ancestrality, communality, authenticity, territoriality" (Restrepo 2018: p. 463) define an ethnic group. Even so, one should also keep in mind that multiculturalism does not include all black people. No matter if, black people recognize themselves as such or not. The first to fit into the definition of ethnic groups were the rural black communities in the Colombian Pacific region, which fulfilled all the above-mentioned components of configuration (Restrepo 2018: p. 463). By fomenting hate and discrimination between black communities the state is implementing an ethnic-culturalist and racial multiculturalism (Restrepo 2018: p. 464). Racism and dichotomies, for example, spread by the media, can be interpreted as the racist development of society. Stuart Hall argued, referring to structural dominance, there are two sites – one is economic and the other sociological. The implementation of discriminating structures didn't happen by mistake. The political situation of a state influences many levels of structures. Applying the economic movement by Stuart – the depiction of Afro-Colombians and indigenous communities can be interpreted as an ethnic or "racial"-conflict of politics (Hall 1994: p. 41). Racism still exists, although it is sometimes not obvious. It has a new name and that is multiculturalism (Hall 2017: p. 91). Multiculturalism hides racial prejudices and racism. As already discussed above Restrepo (2018) sees the turn to multiculturalism as positive in the sense of acknowledging all ethnic minorities within the state. Both – Hall and Restrepo question the way multiculturalism is perceived by the state. On the other hand, Hall (2017) clarifies how racism is hidden behind the term multiculturalism and how racism is dichotomic. I find it quite interesting that Restrepo (2018) mentions the disagreement of black intellectuals concerning the legal definition of ethnic groups. Furthermore, why they disagree. The elite (white and non-white) disagree with the legal definition of ethnic minorities because it is racist (Restrepo 2018: p. 467). Racist in the sense, that all other individuals who feel part of a community, are legally seen not. They have to fulfil specific criteria to be counted as a member of an ethnic community or group. (Restrepo 2018: ibid.).

Another important element of multiculturalism is the feeling of belonging and the inclusion of Afro-Colombians, by giving them territorial rights (Asher 2009). In addition, Jaime Arocha (1998), a Colombian anthropologist, questioned the inclusion of Afro-Colombians with the implementation of the new Constitution of 1991. He argues: "*The new Colombian constitution attempts to build the nation neither by integration nor by segregation but by pursuing unity through the preservation of ethnic diversity.*" (Arocha

1998: p. 71). Inclusion has been scientifically discussed in many disciplines. In addition, one can say that Afro-Colombians are more visible (Asher 2009; Wade 2013; Restrepo 2018) than in the decades before. However, this visibility is again hidden behind invisibility. As Arocha also states, there had to be a radical change, how Afro-Colombians were perceived, if not the acknowledgment of Afro-Colombian could have caused new frictions between Afro-Colombians and natives (Arocha 1998 ibid.). As Asher (2009, 2014) already discussed, Afro-Colombians are in some perspectives visible again. Referring to violent outburst, structural and institutional racism. As Asher (2009), Wade (2013) and Restrepo (2018) mentioned, the inclusion of Afro-Colombians is still in process. The inclusion of Afro-Colombians leads us also to question the feeling of belonging of Afro-descendants in Colombia. The state and its policies contribute to Afro-Colombians feeling of belonging. As Eze (2009) explains in her book "*Where Haitians are, where Haitian can come. Belonging and cultural reproduction among Haitian immigrant Pentecostals in Canada*", she argues that policies in the context of immigrants constitute the feeling of belonging in the host country. "*In Canada, multiculturalism policies, Quebec nationalism, racism, and transnational connections have had political and cultural implications that affected immigrants' sense of belonging*" (Eze 2009: p.32). She is explicitly referring to Haitian immigrants in Canada, but I find that her arguments are also applicable for Afro-Colombians (Eze 2009). Why is it useful to adapt the concept of belonging from migration research into this thesis? The Afro-Colombian students did not immigrate the last decades to Colombia. On the ground of the exclusion of Afro-descendants and colonial history, one should question the feeling of belonging of the former excluded. As Lobera (2021) states, low levels of feeling of belonging can be markers for intercultural and social conflicts (Lobera 2021: p. 2). "*First, individuals internalize categorizations and prescriptions through a process of identification with respect to other members of the same cultural group. Second, cultural identity is also dependent on how outsiders perceive these individuals.*" (Lobera 2021: pp. 2-3). As already discussed in the previous pages and chapter two, Afro-Colombians were officially not included in legal matters until the turn to multiculturalism. Therefore one should question, how this exclusion affected Afro-Colombians and Afro-Colombian students. As all my interview partners defined themselves as "Afro-Colombians", I argue that they mark their feeling of belonging by being Afro and not merely Colombians (Field note: 060220, 090220). Returning to the Inclusion of Afro-Colombians and the approval

of territorial land rights in the Chocó (Asher 2009), the feeling of belonging and inclusion might have been tightened. Still, the feeling of belonging does not end with political and social inclusion in Colombia. The feeling of belonging is also defined by ethnicity (Barth 1998; Eriksen 2010). The feeling of belonging in Colombia has been hardened by Law 70 from 1993, as the state defined who could call himself_herself a member of an ethnic group (Asher 2009: p. 50; Restrepo 2018: p. 463). One should also keep in mind that ethnicity, economy, politics, and gender are influencing each other and should not be understood as determinative (Wade 2015: p. 152). As discussed above, the feeling of belonging is tightly connected to ethnicity, economic, social, and political factors. Stuart Hall states, furthermore, that ethnicity, which also contains language and/or common customs, consists of the "*sense of being bound to or belonging to a certain group*" (Hall 2017: p. 105). He proposes that the complex "system" of ethnicity and in-depth, the feeling of belonging can be at the same time problematic. Ethnicity implies at the same time the connectedness with the term's "nation", but ethnicity and nation have on the other side no political belongingness (Hall 2017: p. 158). Nationalism played a big role in anti-colonialism and the struggles of African decolonization, racial exclusion, and oppression (Hall 2017 ibid.). "*In the 1960s struggles of African Americans and other diaspora blacks who set themselves against the dominant, often racist conception of the United States as a white nation, which was itself put into place based on a closed conception of national belonging*" (Hall 2017: p. 159). In the context of Afro-Colombians, feeling of belonging, one should question the common concept of ethnicity and amplify it with current discussions. This can also be to connect the feeling of belonging with the concept of identity.

Contrasting Eriksen (2010) with Hall (2017) one can see how different they approach ethnicity. Hall includes not only physical characteristics, such as skin colour but also the influence of the nation: political, socially, and culturally. Eriksen (2010) gives an overview of ethnicity that is applicable on any topic, including ethnicity. However, his perceptions and definition of ethnicity lack depth and perspective such as the nation, as Hall argued. I conclude that Hall's approach, identifying the obstacles of the "feeling of belonging", which is a significant element of both – identity and ethnicity, is valuable for this thesis. He identifies and is more concerned with the position of a black individual in his_her surroundings and society. Meaning that the nation and its political roof "*unfix a certain conception of homogeneous national cultural identity"* and puts it therefore under erasure (Hall 2017: p. 147).

Another point that should be considered is, as Hall (2017), and Restrepo (2018) mentioned, that the feeling of belonging has many layers. Another important element that can strengthen or weaken, diminishing the feeling of belonging is being or not being recognized. I do not mean recognized of any sort of accomplishment (graduating school for example). I mean being recognized as a human being, a citizen of the state, with the same rights as all-white Colombians. To be recognized by the state can also form or maybe increase the national feeling of belonging. How would one feel if one has to fight for his_her basic rights and territorial land rights? (Asher 2009). Would one identify oneself with the country one lives in? The boundaries are not only set physically but also ethnically. The African American cultural anthropologist Patricia Williams-Lessane, the Nigerian social scientist Violet Showers Johnson and German professor Gundolf Graml, wrote the introduction chapter of "*Deferred Dreams, Defiant Struggles*" (2018). The book discusses diaspora, displacement, different identities, and the civil rights movement of black communities around the world. Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane state that racism proved to be pervasive and pernicious. Furthermore, they state that Brazil, which received the largest number of enslaved Africans, embarked on a denial of blackness (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018: p. 2). Brazil is not the only country. From the 1970s on, there also had been black movements throughout Colombia (PCN; ACIA, etc.) (See chapter two). Many states that had a colonial past deferred black accomplishments. The Afro-descendants started revolting against discrimination, racism, injustice, and oppression with social movements (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018 ibid.). Not only Latin American countries, such as Brazil, Honduras, or Mexico exhibited racial xenophobia. Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane refer as well to the "mother countries" (European countries). The xenophobia towards immigrants from former colonies was immense. Especially, towards immigrants from African states and Caribbean states (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018: p. 3). By analysing deadly encounters in the last decades, it shows that e.g. the United States had a rise of officially sanctioned racism (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018: p. 4). Victims whose stories were made public were George Floyd (2020), Eric Garner (2014), Michael Brown (2014), and many more (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018 ibid.). In Colombia, many deaths were counted, especially in the last two years. A new wave of police brutality and violence against civilians performed by the Hobbesian trinity was made visible to the public (Rodriguez-

Garavito et al. 2008, Urrea-Giraldo 2012, and Alsema 2020). Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane (2018) describe how racism is present on political, institutional, and social levels. They identify how xenophobia is connected with the colonial era and how Afro-descendants are facing violence by police officers. Therefore, I argue that the feeling of belonging is not only a matter of an ethnic question. It is also an institutional one. Setting clear boundaries between ethnic minorities or between whites and non-whites shows that one cannot diminish all racial prejudices by giving the non-whites the same rights (as in the United States) (Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018: pp. 1-6). The reprocessing of history in each state is necessary to overcome such dichotomies and to fully (especially socially) recognize Afro-descendants as a citizen of the country. Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane's article explains how officially sanctioned racism towards Afro-descendants rose. That implies that colonial and racist structures are still present in policies and legislation. In Colombia, it is the same case. One cannot diminish racial prejudices against non-whites by implementing new laws or, in this context define, the state as a multi-ethnic state. Overcoming racial and neo-colonial structure not only means to change policies or to establish new ones. It should reprocess failures made in the past. In other words, to keep on decolonising and not reproducing.

Colombia's turn to multiculturalism should be therefore criticized, as it consists of asymmetries in economic, political, and ethnic matters. What characterizes multiculturalism? Multiculturalism is a form of relationship between at least two different groups, which avoids cultural essentialism. Moreover, it is a discourse about the acknowledgment of varieties of cultures and the diversity of difference (Dhawan 2011: p. 40). Trying to understand history in this sense means that the diversities, which were ignored for a long time (through colonialism) are now discussed and made visible. With diversities, which have already been discussed in chapter 2.1. ("Situating Decolonisation"), it includes:

"*In the Spanish colonies, indigenous people were at least notionally located in a* república de indios, *separate from the* república de españoles. *Outside colonial slavery, black people were more integrated into the growing population of 'free people of colour', an intermediate category encompassing everyone who was not officially an Indio, a slave or a white person.*" (Wade 2013: p. 212)

The categorization of ethnic minorities, based on the grade of their skin colour and their heritage, was passed down during the colonial era (see chapter 2.1 "Situating Decolonisation"). Although enslaved Blacks and indigenous have been defined as uncivilized (Wade 2013), indigenous had still more "freedom" and rights as enslaved Africans (Wade 2013: pp. 212-214). The former "dominated" people now have the opportunity to embrace their suppressed voices. The former dominators are presenting themselves as post-imperialistic and post-racial. Cultural differences are the basis of this discourse. Multiculturalism tries to facilitate communication and acknowledgement between cultures. Communication, in this case, is used to understand the meaning between two and/or more cultures. The collapse of communication leads to misunderstandings that can result in many different ways (political, social, and cultural) (Dhawan 2011: pp. 40-41). As Restrepo (2004, 2018) stated, the discourse exists but still has to be more discussed and made visible by every person affected by it.

At the very beginning of the chapter "Introduction" chapter, I presented a song from the music group ChocQuibTown, which depicted the common problems of the Chocó. The song is about where one comes from and is listing the good and the bad of being an inhabitant of this department. However, the song is mostly discussing the downside of livelihood in Chocó. Discrimination, violence, poverty, and identity are listed. The identity of the inhabitants is formed by several factors: social class, categorization, culture, locality, and the reputation of Chocó and its prejudices. ChocQuibTown processes different obstacles and problems through songs and images. I do not want to analyse their songs but want to highlight the problems they target in their songs. They are not only highlighting the racial discrimination and violence against Chocoanxs (inhabitants of the Chocó), but also the problem of belonging and the formation of identity. The musicians present collective identity in the sense of shared history and shared present. Furthermore, how the state chose who is a member of an ethnic group and who is not (Wade 2013; Restrepo 2018). The identity given to Afro-Chocoanxs is created in the postcolonial context of subordination, which goes hand in hand with minority status, discrimination, and power relations. Monica Gontovnik (2016) states that ChocQuibTown discusses the Afro Colombian Identity through music, art, and lyrics. She argues that they tried to be not only visible for Colombia with their songs. They wanted to let people around the world know about their racist history and the problems they have to face nowadays (Gontovnik 2016: pp. 1-12). I presented the song to show that young musicians from the Chocó try to be visible through their music.

Being visible and at the same time invisible marks symbolic but also cultural boundaries.

According to several constitutions and laws, black communities now have the right to possess land on their own. Why does it give them freedom on paper, but in reality not much has changed? By increasingly connecting the black population of Colombia with crime, poverty, and discrimination, mass media goes a step further and publishes misleading information that contributes to the bad reputation of Afro-Colombians. The role of any kind of mass media be it radios (Pita Pico 2018), social media, or newspapers, is significant. Significant in the sense of spreading information, which is sometimes true and sometimes not. The problem here lies that through publishing false news, the gap between ethnic groups such as Blacks, Afro-Colombians, indigenous, white, and "others" is increasing. Above all, mass media is also increasing discrimination, racism, and prejudices against other ethnic minorities. Leonardo Reales (2011), who teaches at the University of Bogotá, published an analysis of the racial discrimination of Afro-Colombians in 2011. In his article, he states that Colombia consists of a repetitive process where "white and mestizos" are discriminating indigenous and Afro-Colombians, because of racial ideas, which are produced by light-skinned, families, elites, public institutions, and mass media (Reales 2011: p. 157). As we live in a time where almost everybody has access to all different kinds of media – misleading information and reproducing of racist behaviour can be seen and read everywhere. "*In short, the Colombian media have promoted the use of a racist language against Afro-Colombians, and there is no evidence indicating that they will end such use, which represents a permanent violation of both international and domestic human rights laws.*" (Reales 2011: p. 170). Racist information about an ethnic group through mass media is tightly connected to the Eurocentric ideology and the colonial era. Why is racism still reproduced while the colonial era has already been diminished?

Ethnic groups are, as already mentioned, socially constructed categories that are based on external but also internal ascription. Ethnic status (or identity) is not acted out in institutional inter-ethnic behaviour. Moreover, the ethnic status of diverse groups is leading the members of such groups, to take a given role in society. In other words, the ethnic status determines their role and position in society (Barth 1998: p. 39). Ethnic identity as a social stigma in Colombia can be sensed somehow because of the skin

colour of Afro-Colombians, their rituals, cultural carnival, and more. The differentiation to other ethnic groups like the indigenous in Chocó is marked by values and norms. The centre of the social stigma, which is visible in almost every part of Colombia is skin colour connected to stereotypes, discrimination, and social position.

The acknowledgment of Afro-Colombians, as a part of Colombia's history but moreover as a minority and citizens, increased in the last decades (Restrepo 2004; Wade 2013). Nonetheless, the social stigma referring to Afro-Colombians in Chocó still must be overcome. They are classified and put in categories by the state and institutions, which are discredited by characteristics and attributes. As Eriksen (2010) explains, by belonging to a group we show a cultural difference to other groups. Instead of thinking individually, the people who belong to a certain group are thinking ordinarily collectively. Ethnic groups are defined by the outside environment and people but also by the members inside the group. The concept of emic and etic are here relevant as they mark differences. The key term for ethnicity remains difference but also sameness within the group. Nevertheless, the term ethnicity does not work without stereotypes, which can be negative or positive. Although ethnicity is tightly connected to the postcolonial contest of subordination. The discrimination that is present in almost every country against minorities is tightly connected to power relations, which will be discussed in the following chapter. The students I surveyed declared themselves as Afro-Colombians as the term itself explains for them that they belong to a certain group in Colombia and also try to differentiate themselves from the white Colombians and other minorities such as indigenous groups (Field note: 060220, 090220).

Another valuable perspective is presented by Frantz Fanon (1967), who thematised colonialism, blackness, and racism. In his book "*Black Skin, White Masks*" he is not historicizing the colonial experience as in "*The wretched of the Earth*" (Fanon 1963). He furthermore showed with this book, how different the world is perceived or sensed as a black man, how different people look at one because of the skin colour. He also explained how shocked many are when they hear you speak a language, which they thought you could not speak. "*The white man is sealed in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness*" (Fanon 1967: p. 11). In his book, he tried to explain how he felt as a black man living in France in the 20th century. He discusses the psyche and its factors. Dependence and inadequacy are here written in capital letters. This work is as relevant as "*The Wretched of the Earth*" as being black sets boundaries. Boundaries

that are rooted in colonialism. His perception of being black, but still feeling dependent on white people, is not unique. As he has his roots in the Caribbean, St. Martinique, he experienced another "world" besides Europe. The question of blackness is therefore equally relevant for this thesis, as being an Afro-descendent/ Black/ Afro-Latina, -Latino/ Afro-Colombian marks difference.

This chapter presented various approaches and definitions of ethnicity. In addition, the struggles of racial discrimination of Afro-Colombians are performed by policies and the mass media. Furthermore, it contributed to the discussion of the concept of ethnicity, ethnicization, and blackness in Colombia and included the prejudices connected to "blackness". The chapter aimed to offer an overview of the political and social structures, which are based on the colonial history and implementation of the new constitution to improve the situation of ethnic groups in Colombia. Although multiculturalism is producing a vaster gap between different ethnic groups including indigenous communities, the situation for black communities got better since the abolishment of slavery. One should keep in mind that such constitutions are hard to implement, as discrimination and disadvantages against black communities are present on every level – political, social, and institutional. The subsequent part of this paper will focus on the ongoing violent outburst in Chocó. Besides, it is significant to ask, how is quotidian life performed during armed conflicts? What kind of violent acts can one observe? Who is taking part in this system of violence?

4   A portrait of violence

"Definitions and theories of violence are in high demand but surprisingly short supply. In philosophy, history, sociology, political science, and critical theory, one encounters the same dilemma: the rising interest in violent phenomena is accompanied by the complaint that no clear definitions of the concept of violence are agreed upon. Despite attempts by authors as different as Arendt, Bauman, Canetti, Elias, Foucault, Girard, or Popitz, an "undertheorization" of violence persists when compared to its impact in structuring the social reality and shaping the collective memory of most nations and societies during the past century" (Evers 2013: p. 21)

Violence can be a physical or a psychological act, or even a combination of both. As Chocó is one of some areas in Colombia where violence rules everyday life, it is relevant to explain violent acts in detail. Furthermore, why violence is connected to

power relations between two or more individuals. This chapter will examine different theories about violence and its effects on the social behaviour of the victims and the performer. I will refer to two different books (Stewart and Strathern 2002; Schmidt and Schröder 2003) concerning violence and its anthropological perspective. Furthermore, I will try to show the connection to e.g. power relation, social structure, and the relationship between the witness, victim, and performer. Why are people or institutions using the power of violence to get what they want? How is violence part of social behaviour? What kind of different violent acts are performed in the department of Chocó? How is violence more present in one area but not in another?

4.1   Violence in Colombia – from the 1960's till today

Narco-traffickers of Colombia are well known because of Pablo Escobar. Movies, documentaries, and paintings from Fernando Botero depicted Escobar's life as a drug lord. The distribution of drugs from Colombia over Mexico to the U.S. and from there spread over the world is seen in many movies. The transnational businesses between drug lords, politicians, and other important actors who help buy or deliver the goods, can be understood as any other contract, deal business whatsoever. The difference lies in the violence drugs bring with them. Values of illegal criminal businesses, (corruption, violence, fear, and terror) rub off on countries where the drugs are delivered. I do not state that violence has its origin in the country where drugs are produced. I mean, that violent structures, techniques, and values, such as in criminal organizations, are increasing violent outbursts through the traffic of drugs. Trans-nationalization has more impact than we saw in movies such as about Escobar. Daniel Brombacher (2015) correctly identifies the economy and the transnational crime of drug dealers in Colombia. He describes how (corrupt) politicians profit from such kind of organization, in the sense of personal security, money, wealth (Brombacher 2015: pp. 87-89). He, furthermore, argues how *plata, plomo o pata* reduces many risks in such an environment. These three words or strategies mean corruption (1), intimidation by using violence (2), using a place, which is hidden from the state and publicity to operate deals, negotiation, or intimidation (3) (Brombacher 2015: pp. 91-92). This shows that violence is performed to gain power but also to retain it. Selling drugs outside of the production country also means selling the system or structures. As this thesis is not about how criminal organizations in general operate, I will now present the anthropology of violence.

The constitution of the 1990s marks a shift in the acknowledgement of Afro-Colombians. Furthermore, I argue that such new legislation for land title enhanced the crime rate throughout Chocó. I already mentioned in chapter one that violence against civilians caused by the Hobbesian trinity started around 1997. It makes sense that the constitution about land rights "took away" the area where guerrillas and paramilitary groups organized their operations. How should this help to understand why and if Afro-Colombian students are affected by this? Violent acts against civilians did not start the last year nor the past decade. It would make sense to go back in time where things seemed "normal" or "better". I, therefore, argue that the ongoing violent acts, performed by guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and narco-traffickers, can be traced back to the time Afro-Colombians gained the right to possess the land. Alternatively, it would be better to explain when exactly Colombia became one of the most violent countries in the 20th century (Nuñez 2001; Wouters 2001; Ballvé 2020). Postmodernism, Colombia as a multicultural state, and its colonial structures also had an impact on the violent environment in the Chocó, Cauca, and other departments in Colombia.

Globalisation increased and is still increasing inequality and widens the gap between poor and rich. In turn, it creates more conflicts and discontent. One aspect of globalisation is to make profits in every aspect (Lindley 2007). As explained in the introduction of this paper, international and national companies exploited the Chocó because of its natural resources. That did not only happen during modernism but from the mid of 17th century (see chapter one).

Before proceeding to the violence theories of David Riches (1987), Schmidt and Schröder (2003), and Stewart and Strathern (2002), I would like to introduce the development of the anthropology of violence in the context of Colombia. I will therefore present different scholars, such as Jaime Arocha, Pulido Hernando, and the Commission *Comisión de Estudios sobre la Violencia* (Commission of Studies on Violence) presented in Vera Lugo's paper (Vera Lugo 2015). Anthropology of violence helps understand different processes, cultural and political, which influenced violent outbursts (Vera Lugo 2015: p. 246). What are the components of anthropology of violence? The individuals, of course, are part of the complex system of violence. Nevertheless, what else? Vera Lugo (2015) sees the conflict, the sacrifices, political organizations, and rituals as the basis of the anthropology of violence. He furthermore states that many anthropologists such as Girard (1977), Hubert and Mauss (1954), and

Malinwoski (1920) contributed to our nowadays approaches to the theory of violence. The discourse, research, and debate over violence and theory increased during the last 50 years in Colombia (Vera Lugo 2015: p. 246).

Jaime Arocha continued his investigation about violence. He combined theories about different aspects of violence with ethnic perspectives, the territorial rights of ethnic minorities, and conflict. With the book "*Colombia: violencia y democracia*" which was published in 1988, many sociologist (Álvaro Camacho, Álvaro Guzmán and Carlos Eduardo Jaramillo), anthropologists (Darío Fajardo and Jamie Arocha) and political scientists (Eduardo Pizarro), contributed to the establishment of theory of violence in Colombia (Comisión de Estudios sobre la violencia: 1988) Vera Lugo 2015: p. 250). However, they analysed the impact of violent outbursts, including ethnic, racial, and institutional violence against citizens, such as Afro-Colombians and indigenous communities (Vera Lugo 2015 ibid.). "*Dicho informe sostiene que 'la violencia tiene múltiples expresiones que no excluyen, pero sí sobrepasan, la dimensión política' (1988, 17)*" (quoted after: Vera Lugo 2015: p. 250). Translated it says that violence has multiple expressions, which are not excluding but outgo the political dimension. Violence, therefore, is also seen as a political weapon, targeting all institutions, communities, and/or individuals, which block political goals or ambitions (Arocha, Cubides, and Jimeno 1998). Arocha et al., for example, offer an interpretation of how violence affected native communities and Afro-Colombians in history. Furthermore, they state there is a significant link between internal colonization and the dispersion of political violence against intercultural agreements. This link forms authority that permitted resolutions for conflicts in the pacific (Arocha, Cubides and Jimeno 1998).

Schmidt and Schröder (2003: p. 1) refer to Georg Simmel's assumption that violence can be seen as a synchronic event, as a type of social relationship between individuals and collectives on an intergroup as well on an intragroup level. In the 1980s, three main approaches have been established:

1) "*The operational approach, which focuses on the etics of antagonism*

2) *The cognitive approach, which focuses on the emics of the cultural construction of war*

3) The *experiential approach, which is related to the subjectivity of individuals – the structure of people's everyday life*" (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p. 1)

Each of the approaches mentioned above is indicative of a different research perspective. Altogether, they present the spectrum of violence, which helps for anthropological analysis. Violence can be understood as a dance. Two people are competing with each other. Looking at dancing styles, e.g. salsa or even waltz, there is always one person who leads and the other who has to submit. Both dancers use the same resource – dancing style – but with a certain role in it. As Meneau (2020) clearly explains:

"Whenever a female dancer acts as femme fatale, male hegemony must be restored. To achieve, this, the male dancer can use abstracted violence. Sadistically, he shows her who is 'in charge' – a violence accepted by the female dancer, as if justified and legitimate" (Meneau 2020: p. 967)

It is an abstract example to illustrate the relationship between perpetrator and victim. It is not the purpose to suggest that heteronormativity is violent. Alternatively, to imply that only two different genders should dance with each other. Simplifying Meneau's statement, there is always an actor who is in charge or takes the lead. The same can be applied to violent acts. The perpetrators decide to take action, by hurting individuals physically, mentally, and on many more levels. However, the difference between dance and a violent conflict is that dancers can choose to dance with somebody or not. Victims of violence do not have a choice. Schmidt and Schröder explain violence as a competition. My example-using dance would be a non-violent "conflict" – but dance is not seen as a conflict. Many competitions can be solved without violence. This could be a verbal dispute between two individuals, for example. But if they cannot solve it non-violently – violence can be highly efficient to influence the outcome of a competition/ conflict (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p. 3).

By linking violent acts to a basic state of conflict Schmidt and Schröder, make three statements about their social ramifications:

1) "Violence is never completely idiosyncratic. It always expresses some kind of relationship with another party and violent acts do not target anybody at random.

2) Violence is never completely sense- or meaningless to the actor. It may seem senseless, but it is certainly not meaningless to the victim or observer.

3) Violence is never a totally isolated act. It is – however remotely – related to a competitive relationship and thus the product of a historical process that may extend

far back in time and that adds by under this capacity many vicissitudes to the analysis of the conflictive trajectory." (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p.3)

Violence is more than just an instrumental behaviour. It is in some cases legitimized by the performer and by witnesses. Why is violence in certain contexts and situations legitimized but in others deemed? "*Violence is a basic form of social action that occurs under concrete conditions, targets concrete victims, creates concrete settings and produces concrete results"* (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p. 6). The causes are resulting from confrontation caused by different factors, e.g. competition over political, social, or economic resources. Events relating to violence can be acts that take place in public areas and private areas, such as at home (Scherper-Hughes 1993). This also makes it easy to document certain outbursts between two or more individuals or in some cases between groups. Long-term confrontations or conflicts are often seen as events, which are marked as unusual social action. This means violent conflicts in public areas in some cases are not part of the daily routine or everyday practice. Still in some areas, especially in Chocó, violence is part of everyday life. People who live in this certain area feel and see it every day. But the media doesn't report every time something happens. The study of violence tries to answer many different questions like "What role does violence play in human social behaviour in general?", "How should violence be analysed?" How is violence prevalent?". According to Stewart and Strathern, these questions can be answered by using two sociological approaches (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p. 2).

The first one is the functional approach. It "*sees violence in terms versive of order, and therefore itself in need of control by coercive restraints*" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 2).

The second one is the symbolic approach – "*investigators look for the subjective and cultural meanings associated with violent acts and how these impel or induce the actors to commit acts of violence*" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 2).

Stewart and Strathern state that any anthropologist tends to construct a model of systems where order is seen as an objective and ongoing property. These models might follow specific ideologies or even create new ones. But one should question the order from within, including the social actors, and not assuming or stating that this order represents the whole society (Stewart and Strathern 2002: pp. 2-3). Protestors'

demonstrations are good examples of how different actors understand and analyse a current problem. From the viewpoint of the protestors, their protest is justified because they are not happy with the order and therefore fight and protest for change. Moreover, from the viewpoint of the oppressor, the protest is a disorder and a violation of whatever they stand for. For instance, the government can see a protest as a violation of laws. Yet the protesters are in the position to choose if they are going to protest peacefully or use violence to attack the legislative and destroy property (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 3).

The presented approaches from Schmidt and Schröder (2003), Stewart, and Strathern (2002) differ from each other. Stewart and Strathern (2002) are including the role of the researcher relating to research in violent areas. Schmidt and Schröder (2003) only focus on the theoretical perception of violence and suggest different approaches on how to analyse violent phenomena. The statements and approaches from all scientists are relevant for this thesis, but the combination of the mentioned approaches will highlight different perspectives on the violent acts in Chocó. The combination of the symbolic approach from Stewart and Strathern (2002) and the experiential approach from Schmidt and Schröder (2003) would reflect on the role of the investigator and the role of the subject in the field – Afro-Colombian students. Being reflexive in such a sensitive topic is a necessity. Both approaches would make a bigger picture and may highlight certain situations, observations, etc., which would not have been discussed without the counterpart. Furthermore, the established ramification of Stewart and Strathern (2002) can help answer questions, which may arise during the analysis of collected material and field notes.

"*Violence pinpoints the differences between people's perceptions of what is proper and appropriate in different contexts of conflict*" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 3). One will or better should see two sides of each conflict. One side accepts violence and the other side condemns it. Violence can be an act that is caused by an individual or a collective. But in cases like in Chocó, it is a collective act. Groups like guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and narco-traffickers don't act on their own. These groups are acting as a collective and using violence to come closer to their goals, whatever their goals might be. The actors in a violent act are the victim, the witness, or the person or collective who uses violence are tightly connected. The victim or witness may be directly or indirectly involved in the ongoing issues. But this system, where violence is used as

an instrument of power is in most cases extremely complex. One should not forget that many factors are leading or led to an outburst of violence (cp. Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 4).

What kind of roles are assigned during a dispute or violent act? Everybody would say the victim and the performer, right? David Riches' (1986) triangle explains that violent acts consist of the performer, victim, and witness, which is more complex than most of us think. It depends on the conflict or the violent act but in some cases, it happens that there is a direct or non-direct relationship between one of the three parties mentioned above. The witnesses may have different views and can disagree with the victims or with the performer (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 35). In Riches' eyes, the viewpoint of the performer, the victim, and the witness all differ from each other (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 9).

It is significant to know who takes part in a violent outburst and how the events are depicted in mass media. During violent conflicts, people take on different roles. To understand these roles one has to analyse the relationship between these people. The roles refer to if individuals or groups are witnesses, performers, or victims. This categorisation is not easy at all, as performers could define themselves as victims too etc. Therefore, it is hard to describe or present violent outbursts trying to stay veridical. I already introduced in the previous chapter some statements of Leonardo Reales about the prejudices against Afro-Colombians, which the mass media uses. I also found an online article from the online newspaper "*Colombia Report*" which published an article on the 3rd of March 2020 about the media's role in Colombia's armed conflict. "*Several studies have shown how Colombia's mass media consistently misinformed the public over the country's armed conflict*" (Alsema 2020, Colombia Reports).

Different types of newspapers misinformed the public about armed conflicts, by stating that some people, who committed crimes, belonged to FARC, which, according to Alsema, was not true. By not providing information on what witnesses saw and went through during conflicts, the public gets false information and is left in the dark. The massacre with which the article deals happened from February 16 to February 21 of 2020. This massacre was performed by paramilitary groups. They butchered in a total of 60 people and raped two minors (Alsema 2020, Colombia Reports). Newspapers like "*El Espectador*" reported on the 19th of February in Salado (the city, in which the massacre happened) and trivialized the slaughter as a minor inconvenience. This

information has been given from the military to the newspaper (Alsema 2020, Colombia Reports). None of the media platforms or newspapers asked victims nor witnesses for their information about the violent outburst. Only foreign media gave the victims the chance to speak – one of the few was the New York Times. The media did not report about this massacre thoroughly. Because the peace agreement between former President Andres Pastrana and the FARC took place.

This article from the online newspaper "*Colombia Reports"* can be analysed by Riches (1987) triangle to put participants in place. Therefore, the paramilitary groups were the perpetrators, as they performed the physically violent act. People who were hurt or saw the whole massacre were victims or witnesses, depending on their position in this situation. Furthermore, the media, who came afterward to the scene, and probably saw the bodies, would also count as witnesses, although they did not tell the whole truth. However, as the president also knew about the situation, would he also count as a witness? The role of a victim is clear – theoretically –, but analysing the massacre from different perspectives one can find so many possibilities, who could take the role of any kind of actor in Riches's (1987) triangle.

In Chocó, three major groups are terrorizing the population forcing them to leave their houses (Wouters 2001; Mosquera 2004; Asher 2009; Lizarazo 2018; Ballvé 2020). At this point, such situations would be called warfare, or even organized fighting (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 4). Since it is not a physical fight between two individuals but between collectives. The problem with warfare is that both sides can call them and see themselves as victims. The reason can differ e.g. because of injustice, exploitation, etc. (Stewart and Strathern 2002 ibid.). However, the victimized side can also defend their violent action against the performer or performative group on the grounds of revenge. Through this act of revenge, this side can strengthen its role as a victim. One can name it a reciprocal violence act.

David Riches made four propositions with which he tries to explain the phenomenology of violence. He sees firstly, violence as a subject to a contested legitimacy. Secondly, people usually agree with violent acts although they disagree about their legitimacy. Thirdly, People also agree or disagree with violent acts because they are visible, and lastly, violence depends on the use of the body to harm others (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 8). These four observations, according to David Riches, explain how people feel attracted or compelled to use violence. Summarized, one can say that the human

body is the primary tool to use violence, be it physical or psychological (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 8). Stewart and Strathern explain and explore in their book how anthropology can contribute to the topic of violence and show how different approaches of other fields like sociology, psychology, and history, etc. feed into anthropology. Violence is in any kind of conflict effectively. But it is mostly used if the performer sees no other way to get to their goal or even to oppress other social groups. Violence is also accessible to anyone, especially if parties cannot gain their ends through other means (Stewart and Strathern 2002 ibid.).

Trying to destroy the cultural identity of an ethnic group has been witnessed several times in history. By doing so, predominantly the state or organization, political institutions tried to diminish the identity and culture, and at the same time keep the people close (cp. Lemkin 2012). Killing people on the grounds of their ethnic belonging, in other words, ethnocide, happened several times in the world, in Cambodia, Rwanda, Canada, and so on.

"[P]roblem of ethnocide. This term is heavily loaded with contested subjective meanings and emotions. People are either keen to label a situation as ethnocide or to deny the validity of such a label. Ethnocide is violence whose legitimacy is contested by almost all external witnesses to it. It is an extreme label. And yet, the processes that make it up are not unusual, but partake of the same elements that cause violence generally" (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 13)

In areas such as Chocó, violent acts are also an outcome of racial discrimination and ethnic distinction. Although at any age one is susceptible to violent acts, ethnicity and gender violence, specifically against women will be later on discussed in this paper. Physical violence has many layers. As I already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, gender violence takes a huge part in conflicts. Therefore, I want to present an article written by Jennifer Bates in 2020, called "*The violence of Norms: resisting repertoires of gender violence in Post-conflict Colombia*". Bates highlights in her paper the ongoing gender violence taking place in Colombia, performed by the FARC. Although the landmark 2016 peace deal between the FARC and the government has been signed to stop violence against women and LGBTI persons during the conflict, the number of victims is still high (Bates 2020: p. 2). Gender violence has multiple forms, including epistemic (Spivak 1988), structural (Galtung 1969), and symbolic violence (Thapar-Björkert, Samelius, and Sanghera 2016) (Bates 2020: ibid.). Bates

discusses the direct physical violence committed against bodies of women and persons who identify themselves as part of the LGBT community (Bates 2020: p. 2).

This article examines and analyses different repertoires of gender violence that were and most likely still are committed by FARC. These repertoires include the power of norms influencing violent but also non-violent behaviour. Bates analysed data about the FARC with the help of the gender and normative concept of Judith Butler. She argues that the state and groups who hold power constitute the increasing gender violence. This means that there is a widespread acceptance of gender violence within Colombian society. If a person sees himself_herself as part of a minority, if the person does not fulfil the criteria to be acknowledged as a member of this minority – she or he won't be a member of it. The chance is higher to be a victim as a non-white person than for a white person/ light-skinned Colombian. Arboleda (2019), Asher (2009), Wouters (2001), Wade (2015) all implied that violent attacks against black, indigenous, and afro-descendants are more likely to happen than to whites. Therefore, external and internal ascription is closely linked to how those people are treated. I want to include the perspective of experienced gender violence. Experienced violence in Chocó, and throughout, Colombia, has different layers. As Schmidt and Schröder (2003), as well as Stewart and Strathern 2002) state, violent acts can be performed mentally and/or physically. Those forms have, furthermore, more layers and forms. There are, for example, collective experiences of violence and individual experiences (Das et al. 2007). The categorization or the differentiation of collective and individual can lead to misunderstandings. As if multiple persons (collective) were victims of violence the society would perceive this act worse than if only an individual was a victim of violence.

"*One cannot draw a sharp line between collective and individual experiences of social violence. These are so thoroughly interwoven that moral process […] and emotional conditions are inseparable. Violence creates, sustains, and transforms their interaction, and thereby it actualizes the inner worlds of lived values as well as the outer world of contested meaning*" (Das et al. 2007: p. 5.)

Das et al.' (ibid.) argument challenges the categorization of collective and individual experience. They correctly identify how complex violence in practice is, and how individuals perceive violent acts, victim/witness, or somebody who just got the information about a violent act.

Applying David Riches's (1987) triangle to gender violence, one could include another important factor, which would be ethnicity. Going back to one of the mentioned approaches from Schmidt and Schröder at the beginning of this chapter: "*[t]he experiential approach, which is related to the subjectivity of individuals – the structure of people's everyday life*" (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p.1). How is everyday life in Chocó constituted? Moreover, how do the inhabitants deal with violence, especially Afro-Colombian students during the ongoing situation? What counts as part of everyday life and what kind of social practices are performed?

4.2   Social practices and violence

Violence is tightly connected to the state structure, history, and culture. Stewart and Strathern state that practice theory can't work without the concept of culture implemented. In addition, to understand the ongoing violence in Chocó one must understand the ethos and emotions of the habitants (cp. Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 152). By using practice theory, researchers can approach the problems of violence directly focusing on institutions, groups, and even individuals. In other words, through different theoretical approaches, one can concentrate on the individual but also collectives and their ideologies (Stewart and Strathern 2002: p. 154). From the 1960s/1970s on social scientists and philosophers discussed the theory of social practices from different angles. Bourdieu pursued the "praxeology" with his book "*Outline of a Theory of Practice*"(1972), which was influenced by structuralism. Anthony Giddens established a practice theory framework influenced by Wittgenstein. Harold Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (1967), Judith Butler's approach to gender studies (1990), and Bruno Latour's praxeology theories all consist of elements of practice theories (Reckwitz 2002: p. 243). But what exactly are theories of practices? Reckwitz explains the ideal type of theories of practices by confronting it with idealized theoretical alternatives. Those alternatives include the model of the homo economicus and the homo sociologicus. Reckwitz states that there are fundamental forms of explaining the action and social order. The first form is rational choice theory, which focusses on the purpose-oriented theory of action (homo economicus). This form explains "*action by having recourse to individual purposes, interest and intentions*" (Reckwitz 2002: p.245). The second one is the norm-oriented theory of action (homo sociologicus), which has been thoroughly discussed and analysed by Durkheim and Parson. Norm-oriented theory explains actions by evaluating collective norms and

values. The third one, which resulted from the culturalist revolution in the 20th century, is called cultural theories. These cultural theories are rooted in semiotics, structuralism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics (Reckwitz 2002: p. 245). Cultural theory, compared to the model of homo sociologicus and homo economoicus, tries to explain and understand actions by reconstructing symbolic structures. However, he especially confronts the theory of practices with culturalist mentalism, textualism, and intersubjectivism, which are forms of cultural theory (Reckwitz 2002: p. 244).

Culturalist mentalism consists and focusses on mental structures and activities, which build the centre of this socio-theoretical approach. These structures and activities and their interpretation appear as the "outward" human behaviour. These mental structures guarantee the social order. Culturalist textualism is focussing on the activities outside the mind. In other words, it examines signs, symbols, communication, or texts. Intersubjectivism examines the social order within social interactions or ordinary language (Reckwitz 2002: pp. 247-249). "*In their speech acts, the agents refer to a non-subjective realm of semantic propositions and of pragmatic rules concerning the use of signs*" (Reckwitz 2002: p. 249). The interaction between two or more individuals constitutes a social order. Practice theory does not explain the social order by mental qualities, discourse, or interactions. Before explaining practice theory, it is necessary to explain the difference between "practice" and "practices". Practice (the singular) represents human actions as a whole. Practices (the plural) consist of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, and the use of background knowledge (understanding, know-how, and states of emotions). These forms result in a routinized type of behaviour (e.g. working, cooking, etc.) (Cp. Reckwitz 2002: p. 249). Summarized, the theory of practices helps research social life and everyday life. It shifts the focus away from mind, texts, and conversation to routinized daily bodily activities and routines. (Cp. Reckwitz 2002: p. 259; Spaargaren, Weenink, and Lamers 2016)

Practice theory, in this case, can also be seen as the bridge between individuals and groups where the focus lies on social action between them. Social action partakes of individual and collective concerns. These actions include manipulation, emotional factors, values, social pressures, and historical consciousness. Social actions, but also violent ones, usually exhibit a combination of a rational and irrational perspective (Stewart and Strathern 2002 ibid.). Before presenting social practices concerning Afro-Colombian students, I want to highlight Pierre Bourdieu's habitus/practice theories.

Bourdieu tries with the help of a methodological approach to overcome sociological dichotomies. These dichotomies include micro/macro, subjective/objective, material/symbolic, structure/agency, and many more. His other concern is to understand how power relations evolve in everyday life. The theoretical tools Bourdieu uses to overcome these obstacles are habitus, practice, field, and the four different types of capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital) (cp. Power 1999: p. 48).

The model of the habitus of Bourdieu tries to explain how norms of behaviour are connected with gender, class, and social structure, without making social structures deterministic to behaviour. The habitus concept is a tool, with which one can describe social structures and how they influence an individual externally, but also how the individual perceives its environment.

"*The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus.*" (Bourdieu and Nice 2013b: p. 78).

One can construe that social structures shape the individual. Through habitus, Bourdieu tries to overcome the dichotomy of subjective/objective and more. Habitus plays a role in everyday life and practices. Nevertheless, practices are more than just a part of habitus. Practices are actions that force a result of the relationship between habitus, capital, and field. Fields structure spaces that are organized by the four types of capital. Fields cannot exist without capitals or practices (Power 1999: p. 50). Field means the area (geographically) where all practices take place. Furthermore, the area where power relations exist and where structures are determined (Bourdieu and Nice 2013b: p. 184-185). As I already pointed out the four field types are economic, cultural, social, and symbolic. Bourdieu himself points out that the most straightforward capital is the economic one, which is associated with money and wealth (Bourdieu and Nice 2013b: p. 179). The cultural capital contains three forms, which are the embodied state, the objectified state (like pictures, books, and machines), and the institutional state which contains e.g. educational qualification. Social capital focuses on social networks, like relationships, family, etc. The symbolic capital could be e.g. the family father, who

is strongly connected to the social and economic capital (Power 1999: p. 50). Bourdieu, furthermore, introduces symbolic violence as followed:

"*If it be true that symbolic violence is the gentle, hidden form which violence takes when overt violence is impossible, it is understandable why symbolic forms of domination should have progressively withered away as objective mechanisms came to be constituted which, in rendering superfluous the work of euphemization, tended to produce the 'disenchanted' dispositions their development demanded. It is equally clear why the progressive*" (Bourdieu and Nice 2013b: 196)

Bourdieu's theoretical framework combines different perspectives and sheds new light on the everyday life and practices of individuals. But I choose to mention Bourdieu, only to present the thought of practices being surrounded by many other factors. Referring back to the main theme of this chapter, violence can be put into place with social, symbolic, and economic capital. So applying violence as an action that changes the relationship between habitus, capital, and field, the result would be an environment affected and controlled by violence. This is not new to any area, where violence rules everything. As this sub-chapter thematises social practices and violence, I want to present theories and definitions of social practices.

As social practices have many different meanings, I will argue the everyday life practices of Afro-Colombian Students through the theory of McMillan (2018). This includes what kind of actions and events shape, moreover, are components of their livelihood. Social practices are also rooted in culture. Baumann states that culture is rooted in traditions and practices, which validates people's traditions (Baumann 2006: p. 24). Culture, referring to Herder, means a collective heritage of one specific group that is different from ideas and practices from other groups. This shapes the individual but also the thoughts of all members. Culture creates identical copies that are shaped through historical processes (Baumann 2006: p. 25). Baumann says that culture creates a distinction between two groups. These groups have rules and norms that they pass to their children (ibid.). Nevertheless, why is culture important for groups? As I already discussed in previous chapter three, the distinction between ethnic groups lies in the historical colonial aspect. Social practices are constituted by the environment and forced by legislation and policies. To understand how different circumstances, especially violent acts, influences social practices I will now present a definition by McMillan (2018).

McMillan, who wrote the book "*The Constitution of Social Practices*", explains how social practices are constituted in a philosophical and social scientific way. Social phenomena or practices indicate a type of event that takes place on different occasions. This book emphasises practices as a reflection of how to conceptualize, evaluate and explain social phenomena. Practices are the basis of everyday life patterns on which institutions persist and social structures depend (McMillan 2018: p. 21). McMillan states that actions are events and social practices are phenomena. This means that practices cannot simply be reduced to actions. But actions are components of social practices. McMillan refers to G.E.M. Ansconte and Donal Davidson's philosophy of action, which describes the action as an event with multiple descriptions (McMillan 2018: p. 23). For example, if a person uses a knife to cut garlic, bread, and butter – this would be one event but three different descriptions. Therefore, there is just one action. We could also make an example with violent acts. If a group of perpetrators threatens a child, a woman, and a man with a weapon: the outcome would be still an action but three different descriptions. In this case, the subjects differ in gender and age.

Another way of understanding social practices is explained by Sally Haslanger. She states that culture shapes individuals how they respond, react, and interpret each other. Social practices in this sense are not about the interaction between psychologically sophisticated individuals who share knowledge (Haslanger 2018: p. 231).

"Social practices are patterns of learned behavior that enable us (in the primary instances) to coordinate as members of a group in creating, distributing, managing, maintaining, and eliminating a resource (or multiple resources), due to mutual responsiveness to each other's behavior and the resource(s) in question, as interpreted through shared meanings/cultural schemas" (Haslanger 2018: p. 245)

With this in mind, it is clear that social practices are constructed by factors such as Haslanger already mentioned. Moreover, social practices include behaviour, which is also formed by social, cultural, and political factors. For example, social behaviour can be influenced by negative impacts such as discrimination, racism, violence, and injustices. Although Haslanger (2018) may have a good point, I see that the best way to understand social practices in a violent environment is to combine the theories of McMillan (2018) and Bourdieu's (2011, 2013a, 2013b) theory of habitus (field, practice,

and capitals). Not only the activities are formed by surrounding violence, but also the social status, wealth, political situation, and the location where the activities are performed. I, therefore, argue that social practices are the outcome of habitus. Different actions performed by Afro-Colombian Students are, therefore, components of social practices. Moreover, social practices are in these senses' phenomena (McMillan 2018: p. 23). What kind of actions will be presented in chapter six "Presentation of results".

Both theories and introduced concepts, the one of McMillan (2018) and the one of Bourdieu (1986, 2011, 2013a, 2013b) are important for this thesis, as both are positioning the subjects in the centre of practices in everyday life. As everyday life is complex in itself and the purpose of this thesis is to investigate social practices within the lives of Afro-Colombian Students, the statements of McMillan (2018) are, although very general, still applicable. Besides, the fact that McMillan argues that actions are events and social practices are phenomena, means that different actions are being performed during a day. But the implementation of Bourdieu's (2011, 2013a, 2013b) capital forms by interpreting scenarios or analysing different aspects of violent acts is helpful to position actors who are part of a violent act and the historical and ethnic aspect. Those interpretations and analyses can give new insights into the impact of ethnic inequalities and embedded colonial structures.

Social practices are significant elements in the everyday life of individuals. Therefore, I want to present the role of political violence in Colombia. Political violence also takes a major part in the everyday life of not only Afro-Colombians but also all citizens (whites, indigenous, mestizos, etc.). Teo Ballvé argues in his book "*The frontier effect*" (2020), focussing on Urabá, Colombia, that political violence aimed against radical liberals and communists, is now attacking the whole region (Ballvé 2020: p. 27). Furthermore, the physical transformations, meaning building a highway to the sea and the banana industry, led to social struggles and experienced violence, daily, against the population (Ballvé 2020: p. 33). Urabá is a small region in the department of Antioquia, located on the Caribbean Coast, close to Panama. "*Around here we often say that the problem behind the violence is not the armed groups; the real problem, we say, is the absence of the state. The absence feeds the violence*" (Ballvé 2020: p. 81). Not only does Chocó struggle with violent outbursts committed by the Hobbesian trinity (Nuñez 2001), but also other regions and departments in Colombia, where the majority of the population are Afro-descendants and indigenous (Ballvé 2020: pp. 23-

33). "*As a concept, internal colonialism highlights the way in which the uneven development of Urabá as a frontier zone was as much a racial and cultural process as a structural effect of the geographies of capitalism*" (Ballvé 2020: p. 18). The racial aspect of political violence is therefore significant, as, as Ballvé stated, internal colonialism, inhabits structures and hierarchies from the colonial past. In addition to that, it is important to know that also Urabá, has Afro-descendent and indigenous communities that form the majority of the region's population (Ballvé 2020: p. 19). "*The long history of Urabá's experience with racialized colonial violence could be said to begin with the fact that it was the site of Spain's first colonial settlement on the mainland of the Americas*" (Ballvé 2020: p. 20). Given the fact, that political, racial, and post-colonial violence are tightly interwoven, one can conclude that all these kinds of forms have an economic goal – benefiting from the locality, from the resources, and the neglect of such areas by the state (Ballvé 2020: p. 30).

Witnessing, death, slaughter, and other kinds of violence, on a daily basis, must be terrifying. Can we address such violations against civilians as a "war against the population"? Violence between soldiers, military forces are mostly understood as war or warzones. But what about the people who are victims of violence or witness the death of beloved ones in such areas? I am talking of civilians who have no business with the political or/and economic situations, which in most cases led to a violent outburst. Again, there is a line between violence against civilians and violence between soldiers and the military, as Das et al. argue (2007: p. 5). Categorizing violence shows also, what is perceived as not acceptable and what is acceptable. In other words, the war between militaries is justified whereas violent acts against the population are non-justifiable. But why are violent acts against the population not addressed as the war against the population? I will now give further examples and statements about violence in war-like settings. Nordstrom (2004) discussed and analysed different angles of violence in war. She calls the structure in which violence has embedded the shadow, as violence is hidden behind institutionalization (Nordstrom 2004: pp. 143-157). As I already mentioned in most cases victims are civilians, who are attacked because of different reasons.

"*Today, even though 90 percent of war's casualties across the world are civilians and battles rage across people's hometowns, the practice of studying soldiers and the*

immediate carnage of battles continues. And this shapes our understanding of violence" (Nordstrom 2004: p. 58)

This thesis is not about soldiers, but the approach of Nordstrom is still applicable. In Colombia, the carnage of battles is committed by narco-traffickers, paramilitary groups, and guerrillas, which has been discussed in-depth in chapters one and two. The understanding of violence differs in referring to the setting where violence is performed. Of course, by the political and institutional situation inside the nation-state or country. One big difference is, for example, that war's violence, meaning soldiers from two different parties or countries is mostly accepted by society. One has to admit that past historical events changed the image of war dramatically. To prevent wars destroying countries, peace agreements are important. But if civilians are threatened, murdered, or slaughtered is seen as something abnormal.

"*There remains a tendency to see a soldier shooting at another soldier as constituting war's violence, while the shooting of a civilian, or the rape of a woman as a soldier returns to the barracks, is seen as peripheral – an accident, an anomaly.*" (Nordstrom 2004: p. 58)

The violence of everyday life is not valued the same as Nordstrom argues, soldiers shooting other soldiers at war. Nordstrom (2004) correctly identifies how the categorization of violent acts diminishes the experienced violence by subjects, as civilians. Nordstrom (2004) also reveals that there is another reality next to the fight against violence inside a state – the broken and maimed society, which is tortured and traumatized daily (Nordstrom 2004: p. 60).

Kleinmann (2007) furthermore explains four instances of social violence, which he counts as part of the violence of everyday life: The institutional and political; the effect of totalitarian control over people; structural violence in the middle class, and the cultural violence in the media. With that, he tries to broaden the understanding of the different forms and dynamics of social violence (Kleinmann 2007: pp. 226-227). Violence in everyday life can be perceived differently and depends on the social and cultural context, but also the political and economic level (Nordstorm 2004, Ballvé 2020). As Kleinmann argues: "*[A]n appreciation of the violence of everyday life as multiple, as normative (and normal) as the outcome of the interaction of changing cultural representations, social experience, and individual subjectivity*" (Kleinmann

2007: p. 238). The power of violence forms practices and therefore social violence, but also political, economic, and cultural violence are responsible for hierarchy and inequality. The hierarchy and inequality, in turn, normalize violence (Kleinmann 2007: p. 238).

The social practices of Afro-Colombian students are wrapped in the visible and invisible power of violence. As violence exists alongside everyday life, this kind of aspect is sometimes playing in the background. Moreover, behind what kind of process does violence seek support or even feel protected?

This chapter compared different approaches on the construct of violent acts in a certain surrounding and the positioning of a victim, performer, and witnesses. It is necessary to compare and contrast different approaches to see what has been done and how to apply the mentioned approaches to this research topic. Violence in Colombia results from the question of ethnicity, the historical impact, and the ongoing process of decolonisation. All three concepts (ethnicity, violence, post-, and decolonization) are tightly interwoven and affect each other. As there are multiple forms of violent acts, one should not neglect that gender and sexual violence are mostly performed in war-like settings. Therefore, those forms of violence should not be neglected, although my interview partners never mentioned these kinds of forms. In addition, as Bates (2020) already stated in her article, most of the victims in armed conflicts are women. I will now proceed by describing the methods I used during my fieldwork in Colombia.

5 Research design

In this chapter, I will talk about my fieldwork experience and my methodological approach. I will explain the development of the interest in this field. Furthermore, I will explain how I came up with this very topic. As this thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork, I would like to introduce and summarize the most important key points in doing anthropology and ethnographic fieldwork referring to my empirical research. Furthermore, I am going to depict the relevance of observation, interviews, and taking field notes and presenting my research participants. I will close this chapter by explaining the analysis of data using ethnography and constructivist grounded theory.

5.1 Preparing fieldwork and gaining access

Ethnography does not mean the same thing for all social scientists; therefore, I will firstly present different approaches from sociologists and anthropologists. These two sciences persist in being different, but when it comes to ethnography, they use the same "guidelines". This contains the first-hand experience and the exploration of social/cultural settings, which is sometimes guided by observation. Observation, no matter what kind, remains a characteristic of an ethnographic approach (Atkinson et al. 2014: p. 5). Ethnography can be done in different ways using different research methods. Researchers/social scientists can do interviews or other forms of interactions with the subjects of the research. In addition to observation, the ethnographer can use materials such as videos, photographs, film, etc. for analysis (Atkinson et al. 2014: p.5). "*Anthropologists and symbolic interactionist sociologists, for instance, have consistently grounded their work in major pieces of empirical investigation, based on intensive field research*" (Atkinson et al. 2014: p.5). However, as Hammersley and Atkinson describe in their book "*Ethnography. Practice and Principle*" from 1996, Ethnography consists mostly of open-ended observation and description. So, therefore, the research design is shaped by just "doing it". This idea is based on naturalism (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 24.). In other words, one should just go with the flow. The course which ethnography takes is not predetermined. This means that there are several ways to do ethnography and researchers do not have to stick with a methodology or "guideline." Nonetheless, pre-fieldwork and preparation are still important. Before presenting the methods, I used and how I used them, I will explain how I prepared my fieldwork and gained access.

Before I planned to do research on Afro-Colombian students in Chocó, I focussed on Afro-Mexican women. Nevertheless, through dangerous circumstances in Cuajinicuilapa, the place where I wanted to do my research, I could not go there during my stay in Mexico in 2019. I still wanted to do research on Afro-Latinxs. The reason why I focussed on Afro-Latinxs was that I struggled my whole youth with acceptance, ethnic belonging, identity, etc. Therefore, I wanted to know if black people in Latin America also felt the same. The outburst of violent acts against Afro-Latinxs led me to write this thesis about violence and Afro-Latinxs. As I already went to the university lecture "Introduction to Latin-America", I changed countries to conduct fieldwork in

Colombia. Professor Patricia Zuckerhut, who is also my super advisor for this thesis, organized the lecture. In January 2020, an anthropologist named Stefan Khittel gave a lecture as a guest professor at the University of Vienna, Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology. Before he started his lecture, I had a few minutes to talk about my planned thesis and asked him some questions about the department Chocó. I already knew that this was the only department in Colombia with more than 90 percent Afro-Colombian habitants. He led me then to the idea of researching about the Afro-Colombian Students in the Capital of Chocó, Quibdó. The reason why was, because the access to students is much easier than to habitants from the rural area.

Researchers mostly choose a setting before properly developing the research question. Sometimes the settings come first, because of opportunities to visit a place or through social contacts/connections. By selecting, a setting one should also break down the group one is researching about – this can be a homogenous group for example. But researchers should explicitly categorize this group. Meaning that if you research about a specific group one should define the place. May it be a city, occupation, age, etc. Criteria of selecting a setting are mostly linked with contacts who can ease access to participants, travel costs and information about documents/books, etc. (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 38).

Getting access to the field was the first step; the bigger obstacle was retaining access. During my fieldwork, it was not hard finding interviewees as access was easier than, for example with older people in a small village. I gained access to the field by walking around the University campus and randomly asking students if they want to participate in my research. Nevertheless, being physically and mentally in a field does not mean to be accepted or to have easy access to get in touch with research participants. There are some obstacles to this process of research, which are very important for ethnographic research. Not everybody in the setting is willing to talk about the research topic. If they are, they cannot answer everything at once. Negotiations are necessary. The researcher has to set him/herself into the position to get the needed data and needs to negotiate with sponsors, organizations, or even gatekeepers (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p.79).

On the first day of my arrival in Chocó, I witnessed a group of maybe 20 - 25 people all dressed in white walking in the middle of the street. They were singing a sad song, which contained missing a person, who died. These people were walking in two lines.

Between these two lines, six men carried a coffin. I was wondering if they were on their way to the cemetery or going to the church. This kind of "ritual" reminded me of the death ceremonies of Congolese people. I attended a few and memories of my childhood came up. I furthermore asked myself how this person died and by whom, if the death did not happen by accident (Field note 060220).

As a researcher, I noticed, given the fact that I am also dark-skinned, after three days people came up to me because they heard that I was doing research. Before flying to Colombia, I thought that I could maybe "disappear" in the crowd. Meaning nobody will notice me, but I asked some informants and people I met on the street if they would think I originated from there. They answered that "*you walk differently as us*" (Field note 090220) and "*you smile a lot*", But also *"the things you wear are not typical for here*" (Field note 120220). Through these statements I recognized even though I had the same skin colour, people say that people realized, I wasn't from there. Given the position as a researcher, I influenced my surroundings through my presence. I already stated that I didn't witness any kind of violent act, however the fact that people I met in Bogotá, warned me about going to this area, highlighted the awareness of violence in this region. Those people told me that "*this region is dangerous*" (Field note 290120), "*the accent of the Chocoanxs is hard to understand"* (Field note: 310120)", "*you should be careful – because of the dangerous people*" (Field note: 310120, 020220) and so on. However, other than the violence and language barriers they also mentioned the high biodiversity in this region. For example, one can observe humpback whales close to the Pacific Coast with their babies (Field note 310120). Seeing and hearing such opposed statements about Chocó let me think about the prejudices against the inhabitants and the economic position of Chocó in Colombia.

5.2 Interviews, field notes, and observation

For this thesis, I flew to Chocó, without contacting anybody who might have been a potential informant/interview partner. I found my interview partners, by walking around the university campus and started asking students, if they are willing to participate in my research. I will now introduce my interview partners, how I structured my field notes and how I conducted the observation on the field.

What defines an interview? An interview is simply describing a conversation between a person (researcher) who wants to conduct specific information from another

individual (research partner). The other person should be aware, or it should be explained that the conversation is an interview so there are no misunderstandings. Interviews are strongly connected to participant observation, or better said they go hand in hand. But interviews can also be done without observation. This depends on the researcher and the same counts for observation. During an Interview, one notes body language (unconsciously) and how the participant reacts to certain questions or how the participant is telling bits of their lives (Fontein 2014: p. 58-65).

Interviews and observations can be pre-arranged, but don't have to be. The fieldworker has the opportunity to have a direct conversation with a person in the field. Some interviews are pre-arranged minutes before the actual interview or in some cases even days before (Fontein 2014: p. 78). I prepared a list of questions for all interviews, whereas I changed the questions depending on the atmosphere of the conversation. As travelling from Austria to Colombia was a time and money- intensive journey, I prepared myself to have only once contact with my participants. The pandemic, furthermore, made it difficult to travel again to Chocó and interview my research participants again.

All interviews were informal which is similar to pre-arranged interviews being relatively free flowing. I used the informal interview form, only because most of the participants did not feel comfortable being recorded. Another particular reason for this circumstance was that I did not prearrange any of these interviews. I also did not want to raise attention in town, as people quickly knew who I was and what I was doing (Fontein 2014: p.77). Right after the informal interviews, I started noting all the information in mind on a paper.

Next to that the situation itself be it, the social, cultural, or political situation of the informant also plays a huge role. As this context is mostly beyond the control of the fieldworker. One should not forget that the emotional situation or mood of the informant leads the conversation. If he or she is not in the mood to answer specific questions, which are important for the research, one should try other techniques or maybe delay the conversation (Fontein 2014: p. 79).

I mostly walked around the river and talked to locals I met on the street. I also joined an elderly group of men, who were playing card games and smoking cigars on the corner next to the main street. They were complaining about the government and if

they should buy more rum, as well as what they should do the next couple of days. I also had the opportunity to talk to a former professor of the Technological University, Sergio Antonio Mosquera Mosquera. He was the founder of the museum "Muntú Bantú" (Kikongo) which translates "human, people". This museum focuses on the history of Chocó and deals with the terms "blackness, heritage and slaves". During all the conversations, I had in mind to protect their statements and stories so that not all information I received was ascribable. In many cases, private stories or the investigation of private life can put damage on the people being interviewed and can improve the power of institutions, the state, and so on. For this, I changed all the names of my informants, to secure their privacy. I also want to note here that all informants permitted me to write about their given information. *"What is appropriate and inappropriate depends on the context to a large extent, and sometimes actions that are motivated by ethical ideals can cause severe problems, not just for researchers but for the people they are studying as well"* (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 279) All interviews took place on the university's campus except for one student whom I talked to in a restaurant in Quibdó. I will now present a short description of my interview partners, including where and when I met them.

Ana was a 23-year old biology student. She was the first person I asked for an interview with at the university's campus. She held a box full of keys in one arm and did hesitate to participate in an interview. We were sitting in front of the university building on the campus at 10.30 o'clock local time. She asked me if I wanted to sit during the interview, so she fetched two chairs from the building. It was a very comfortable atmosphere. She smiled a lot and did not feel uncomfortable speaking with me. She was the only student I interviewed who worked next to university life. After the interview, we were talking about her future. She said that she wanted to visit Europe sometime, but it is now too expensive for her (Field note 070220).

Bibiana was a 20-year old student, who studied at that moment journalism. I talked to her after having a break from the first interview with Ana. She seemed a little bit stressed as I approached her. But after ten minutes of explaining to her, why I would like to talk to her and that I will anonymize this conversation, she agreed to be interviewed. Before I started asking her questions, I told her about where I've been before travelling to Quibdó, to smoothen the atmosphere. She told me, she wanted to start working the next couple of years to support her family, as "*being a student is a*

privilege" (Field note 100220) and not everybody has access to it. She was born in Quibdó and grew up here. She had an unburdened protected life, as her family could be classified as part of the upper-middle-class in Chocó. They always had enough money for food and clothing. After the interview, she introduced me to some friends of hers, who walked past us, and I had the chance to talk to one of her female friends "Alejandra" (Field note 100220).

Alejandra was a 19-year-old education student, who grew up in Istmina – an hour away from Quibdó. The interview situation was very friendly, and she expressed her emotions about the ongoing situation very clearly. Meaning she also talked louder, when we got to the point of talking about displacement, violence against inhabitants, and so on. It was interesting to observe her facial expression during the part where I asked her what her hobbies in town are. She started articulating heavily with her hands and arms and had a big smile when she told me that she loves to dance and meet friends after university class (Field note 100220).

Juan-Carlos, 23-years-old**,** worked at the Restaurant I always had lunch and dinner. He saw me writing down field notes, thoughts, and impressions almost every day. After thoroughly a week of having my lunch in the restaurant, he asked me where I was from and what I was writing down. He finally told me that he is also a student, but he had to work next to the university, as he needs more money, because he wanted to travel around in Latin America. His family moved from the Pacific Coast to Quibdó when he was a little child. He didn't hesitate to answer my questions about the Hobbesian trinity (see chapter one, p 1) (Field note 110220).

Steve was a 21-year-old history student who was one of the shier interview partners. He talked in a very low voice and was, in the beginning, looking nervously around him. The interview took place at the university campus as all interviews except the interview with Juan-Carlos. He had his lunchbox in his hands as we had our interview and asked in between if I also wanted some food. It took roughly twenty minutes till he opened up a little bit more and had more eye contact. After the interview, we walked together to the bus station to take the bus going to the city centre (Field note 120220).

Almendra was a 20-year-old who was a little bit lighter than my other interview partners – speaking of her skin tone. Her mother was indigenous, and her dad was Afro-Colombian. I also met her on the university campus talking with study colleagues.

She was very open and agreed without hesitation to be part of my research. She mentioned the difference between her and "Blacks". Furthermore, she stated that "there is racism" in Chocó when you are not black. Although she still sees herself as an Afro-Colombian, she sometimes had little fights with colleagues at the university who mocked her because of her skin colour (Field note 070220).

There is a high possibility to reproduce power-relations during research, therefore, one should also argue about what is inappropriate and what is not connected to the topic. Furthermore, rethinking how one reacts in specific situations or asking how one would react to a certain question. During the first two interviews (Field note protocol 100220: Ana, Field note protocol 070220: Almendra), I noted the facial expressions of my interviewees and concluded that I shouldn't ask direct questions about the violence, moreover, tiptoed around the ongoing situation. I changed my guidelines and put in multiple possible questions if I was too "harsh" or the interviewee felt uncomfortable.

The description of my interview partners was only possible because of the field notes I wrote during observation, conversation, and by carefully listening to what people told me. Taking field notes is a process of reproducing and producing text, which can be added to data one has already collected. Especially for Ethnographers, field notes can shed new light on specific events, behaviours, and situations during fieldwork. Nevertheless, these notes also include the experiences and reactions to specific situations of the researcher. Such descriptions reflect proposes and involve processes of interpretation and sense-making (Emerson et al. 2014: p. 353). One negative aspect, which I experienced during my fieldwork, is the difference between what is important and what not. Ethnographers are mostly selective in writing field notes, which is plausible. This means that one has to evaluate which kind of information is necessary for research and which not. During the writing process, one sees what information is of value and what is not. One should keep in mind that field notes are not complete. *"[I]t typically contains bits and pieces of incidents, beginnings and ends of narratives, accounts of chance meetings and rare occurrences, and details of a wide range of unconnected matters"* (Emerson et al. 2014: p. 353). I, for example, noted the first impressions of my arrival in Chocó. As already mentioned, on the first day in Quibdó, I witnessed a funeral. I'm not sure if the people who were walking down the road, dressed completely in white, were on the way to the cemetery or the church. But I somehow felt this was important, so I added this event to my field notes (Field note

060220). Some things I observed may or may not have relevance to the thesis topic. But at this moment, I felt overwhelmed and purposely noted my feelings of the situation just in case it would be important during the writing process.

Sometimes such events are problematic because it can be difficult to distance oneself and write objectively. At this point, I want to mention that there are different approaches on how to write field notes and how the perception of the field and field notes can differ. Some researchers consider field notes as writings about what they learn and observe and one's actions, interpretation, and reflection. Others write elaborate notes, which describe situations and observations in detail. This depends on their style, but also the assumptions on how field notes and observation should be conducted and how they should be valued. I combined both – elaborate notes and my interpretation and reflection (Emerson et al. 2014: p. 353). I mostly wrote my field notes directly after the conversation took place. I did add to my field notes when I went back to the hostel because some other perspectives or ideas came to mind later. I have to admit that by going "home" or sitting in my hotel room, I did get more distance to the subjects and could easily write more objectively. I started questioning every single bit of information although it seemed plausible and understandable for me.

To make field notes available for interpretation and further thoughts, one can analytically transcribe them. One way could be for example to categorize parts of field notes and separate them into theoretical notes and methodological ones. This process can lead to structuring the notes referring to important concepts (Emerson et al. 2014: p. 361). Furthermore, this leads to selections or marking parts, where the researcher wrote about his feelings in this situation and can separate parts of the field notes, which are not necessary or are not helping to fortify a concept or argument. One important point is that the writing process of field notes starts in advance of the actual writing and can therefore bring new light to our perspectives during the writing process.

"[W]hile fieldnotes inevitably provide selective and partial reductions of these lived and observed realities, they fix those realities in examinable forms, that is, in written texts that can be read, considered, selected, and rewritten in order to produce polished ethnographic analyses and monographs" (Emerson et al. 2014: p. 364)

When all the necessary material has been collected and the researcher has enough data, the analysis starts. During my fieldwork, I started structuring my material in

between each day. After I collected all my data and left Chocó, I started roughly structuring my data. This leads us now to the analysis of the data.

5.3 Grounded theory methods

The collected data should be structured and, in some cases, categorized to work with it. So, the next step will be to set analytical categories, which are determined by the ethnographer. This means editing all the field notes, transcriptions of audio-recording, documents, etc. which are valuable for the analysis. Through the development of categories, relevant aspects of the data come to light or even new aspects, which weren't visible during the fieldwork (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 208). There are many ways to analyse the collected data. It always depends on the topic; what kind of forms have been used to collect the data and the ethnographer.

One of the first steps is to re-read all the data, to get an overview of the topic and possibly get back into the field. From there, one can see different or similar patterns between informants and can connect them to previous theory (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 210). As Covid-19 limited my travelling, I couldn't go back to Chocó. I skipped this step and started interpreting and analysing the data without a second visit. Generating concepts can be sometimes built from the participants themselves by mentioning specific terms during the conversations. But concepts can alternatively be "observer-identified". This means that the ethnographer sets categories, which describe different phenomena (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996: p. 211). I set the categories and concepts in the combination of used terms but also my own "observer-identified" terms.

As this thesis combines the constructivist Grounded Theory Method of Kathy Charmaz (2011) and Ethnography, I will explain why and how they complement each other. Grounded Theory methods are flexible strategies to collect and analyse data, furthermore, to help conduct efficient fieldwork. Nowadays, researchers can find different approaches and variations of Grounded Theory. But it all started with Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (1967). Nevertheless, all variations of Grounded Theory include the following strategies.

1. *"Simultaneous data collection and analysis:*
2. *Pursuit of emergent themes through early data collection*
3. *Discovery of basic social processes within the data*

4. *Inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesize these processes*

5. *Integration of categories into a theoretical framework that specifies causes, conditions and consequences of the process(es)."* (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: p. 160)

The difference between Grounded Theory methods and ethnography is that the former works towards theory development and the latter is the development of a full description of the target group referring to details of everyday life (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: ibid.). Constructivist Grounded Theory is marked by knowledge based on social construction referring to the informants in the field but also the researcher. One of the jobs is the quest of assumptions on which participants of the field are constituting actions and meaning (Charmaz 2011: p. 187).

As Charmaz and Mitchell stated, Grounded Theory can refine the analysis of ethnographic research. But ethnography also helps the writers to "*locate themselves in their narratives*" (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: p. 161). Glaser and Strauss define the following characteristics of Grounded Theory. The basis contains the simultaneous involvement of data collection and analysis, developed codes and categories from data (not from preconceived hypothesis), theory development, memo-making, theoretical sampling towards theory construction, and a literature review after developing an independent analysis (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: p. 162). Furthermore, it can help trim access data by answering specific questions referring to the collected data. These questions can be how informants felt about a certain topic, how they act in the setting, how actors are organized, and in which ways they perceive certain activities. The answers to these questions are given throughout the next chapters of this thesis. The most important thing is, when combining ethnography with Grounded Theory that the researcher can see what is said and how people act. In many cases, these two things differ. Because how people explain situations or answer questions may not be the same way they react to certain actions (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: p. 163).

The constructivist Grounded Theory uses not only the inductive, emergent approach but also obtains the abductive logic. Abduction allows conceptualizing data and developing a creative interpretation of the informant's lives. Abduction is done after the inductive research. If something surprising happens during the research, all theoretical ideas will be taken into account. The researcher returns to the field and gathers more

data to verify the theoretical ideas and chooses the most plausible theoretical interpretation. The constructivist Grounded Theory is also based upon pragmatism and a relativistic epistemology. This means nothing more than the researcher acts on the assumption of multiple realities and multiple perspectives. The data, from the observer, but also the participants are constituted during interaction (Charmaz 2011: pp. 191-192). The difference to the objective Grounded Theory of Glaser and Strauss is that the constructivist Grounded Theory method interprets data with conceptual analysis. In other words, the search for variation in data and analysis and trying to seek for relations between categories. The attention lies on meanings inside a group, in this case, Afro-Colombian students and implicit actions as well as explicit statements and behaviour. Objective Grounded Theory is based on positivism, the development of data through a neutral outside world, where the conceptualisations have their source from the data. The gathered materials are interpreted from an objective perspective without prejudices and pre-understanding (Charmaz 2011: p. 194).

To start analysing the data one has to code and afterward transfer codes into categories. Codes and categories are the basis of the theoretical framework of the topic. Through codes, the researcher can compare different people, objects, and situations. These codes are guided by memos, which are mostly written during the fieldwork. Memos can help the researcher see relationships between such codes and address their meanings (Charmaz and Mitchel 2014: p. 165). *"Memos bring analytical focus to data collection and to the researcher's idea. Amorphous ideas and ambiguous questions gain clarity"* (Charmaz and Mitchell 2014: p. 167). Through reoccurring analysis of data and the use of selective coding, I established the following categories: "social practices of Afro-Colombian students", "misleading information of social media", "ethnicity and cultural heritage", and "a portrait of experienced violence". These categories stand in relationship to each other and contain multiple perspectives, meaning data from my position and interpretation, but also given information of the informants themselves. These categories were already thematised in the previous chapters connecting them with existing social theories. From these four categories, I was able to merge them with existing concepts of violence, everyday life, and Afro-Colombian students. Those concepts are the basis of my theoretical approach, which also includes the decolonization theory, as all three concepts intertwine with it.

6 Presentation of results

This chapter will present all findings during the research, including the inductive thematic analysis, the main- and subcategories. As the aim of this research was to examine the connection between the ongoing violence and everyday life of Afro-Colombian students, I will therefore present the established four main categories of the collected data. This chapter will present the categories, which emerged through the use of ethnography and constructivist data analysis. As a greater number of codes has been produced during the phase of analysis, further codes were put together into categories, some of them were also discarded. I will present the four main categories and the summarised subcategories. The interpretation of each category will be discussed in the following chapter seven. All established categories stand to each other, as I already explained in the previous chapter.

At this point of the thesis, I would like to mention that this small sample of collected data doesn't represent the whole population of Afro-Colombians or Afro-Colombian students. The establishment of the following categories was influenced by the social interactions and observation of my research participants. This thesis aims to analyse the relation between violence and social practices of Afro-Colombian students. Moreover, this thesis tries to answer the question of how a violent environment affects Afro-Colombians' everyday life at the technological University in Quibdó, Chocó. I already presented approaches to theories of social practices, violence, and ethnicity in Colombia. I also determined the frame and what terms are relevant to the thesis topics in the previous chapters. The following categories have been established through coding all formal and informal interviews, including field notes and observations. Through the constant comparison of concepts, codes, and categories, which was guided by jumping back and forth between codes and categories, I was able to pin out the relevant categories and codes for this research.

This chapter is based on the established categories and sub-categories evolved by analysing the collected data. These categories will furthermore be connected to the literature already presented and will be discussed in the chapter after the presentation of the results.

6.1 Social practices of Afro-Colombian students

This category summarises all different kinds of practices of the interviewed Afro-Colombian students. As they differentiate between taking place on the university campus and outside of the university campus, I, therefore, established two sub-categories that go deeper into the social practices of the different locations. Next to the description of the following categories, I will also include my observations during the conversation with the informants.

Social practices of Afro-Colombian students include going to the university campus to meet up with study colleagues. Sometimes they just hang out after classes. Being a student is not for free or cheap in comparison to Austria. Three of my informants stated that the university isn't for free and that they are privileged in comparison to other families in the department who don't have enough money to enrol their children. This category consists of two sub-categories, which were developed during the analysis of observation, field notes, and interviews. In the following chapter I will discuss in-depth, the university area, where one could find different faculties, as this is also a part of university life, and will now focus on the most relevant key outcomes of my research. Social practices can take form in different ways. It is natural for everyone to do things during the day – walking the dog, brushing the teeth, putting socks on. All these things are social practices that are constituted by the surrounding culture.

6.1.1 Sub-category: university campus

This category combines all activities performed by Afro-Colombian students on the campus and observational work I conducted myself. Seeing the university campus as any other place where people interact, one can identify different factors which make up this social reality. Field, in the context of social practices of Afro-Colombian students, is the area, where all practices take place, an area where power relations exist, an area where structures are determined (Bourdieu 2013b: pp. 184-185). The nature of "explanans", or in other words, a cultural phenomenon that is trying to explain a certain practice, is necessary to put actions in place. This term can be replaced with rules, norms, principles, dispositions, habits, habitus, etc. Although each term focuses on a specific action, it still belongs to the same pedigree in social sciences. So being a member of such a family referring to the term's rules, norms, etc. indicates to

underlie, infuse and generate actions, which they are quoted to describe and explain (McMillan 2018: p.7).

The practices can be attending university classes, chatting with study colleagues, discussing homework, and waiting for the bus. This can be split into different actions, for example presenting in front of the professor and colleagues, writing essays, etc. All these different layers stand in connection to each other and provoke a reciprocal effect. The social practices of Afro-Colombian students were constructed in relation to their environment referring to family – money to pay the university –, the field – university, social networks.

All of my informants were enrolled in different kinds of studies – from biology to journalism. Only two of my interview partners worked in addition to taking classes at the university. The others didn't need to work as they were financially supported by their families.

To enter the university, one has to pass gates, which are guarded by security officers. These officers were heavily armed. It gave a sense of security but at the same time a feeling of being vulnerable. I observed that most of the Afro-Colombian students arrived by motorbike. Some were brought by an older person – probably some relatives or even their parents. Very few of the observed students came by car. The streets are fairly narrow, so it makes more sense to drive by motorbike than by car. Furthermore, I noticed groups of students, mostly made up of three to five individuals, spread throughout the campus. There were also groups of professors on the campus (Field note 070220).

Much like other university campuses, there are always groups of students chatting and discussing relevant or private issues with friends and/or study colleagues.

The first thing, which an outsider views are the social interactions between individuals. By metaphorically seeing the social interaction as the top of the iceberg, we need to get down to the bottom or the basis of the outcome to the social interaction between different individuals. The location or the field where social interaction takes place in the university campus.

"I mean we are not poor… my parents are paying the university for me. And it is expensive. I want to start working in the coming year, So I can support my parents. It

is still a privilege to study here in Chocó. As I already said, it is not cheap or for free." (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220)

The common denominator of all students at the campus is the money to pay the university fees, be it from the parents or a scholarship. As Bibiana already mentioned, in her eyes, it was a privilege to study. Not everybody can afford an education.

6.1.2 Sub-category: after university-class

Through the conversations with Afro-Colombian students, the social practices after university-classes were discussed. Every interview partner told me that they meet up with friends after university, going to the Atrato-River, or chatting at a close-by restaurant/*tienda* or bakery. The interviews demonstrated that social practices differ after university classes. The events happening after university are not related to being a "student". It consists of spending time with friends, walking around the city and enjoying leisure time.

"*I meet my friends, mostly from the university after classes. Sometimes we are going to drink and dance. Other times we are just chilling in a café or sitting next to the Atrato-River. But I like mostly hanging around with friends and talk about travelling elsewhere.*" (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220)

Bibiana mentioned different types of events or social practices she usually does after university class. Similar to Ana and Alejandra, she also loved to hang out at the Atrato-River, which is a very long river. Next to the river, there are many possibilities to buy food, sit in a café or just sit on banks. Friends are an important part of the social practices of the students, as all interviewees mentioned meeting their friends after university classes and spending time with them. In this sense, meeting friends can be understood as building and strengthening tiny communities, with their hierarchies. Alejandra for example mentioned taking dancing classes and going for some drinks. The Atrato-River is the main spot for students to hang out, according to all my interview partners.

"*Bachata and other combinations of salsa. Meeting my friends after university class. Sometimes we drink, but not often (laughs). I need to study a lot. So, I cannot meet my friends every day. But just hanging out in a tiny shop/café next to the Atrato-River.*" (Field note protocol Alejandra: 100220)

During my walk along the Atrato-River, I noticed four to five small groups of young people. Evidence suggests that these youngsters were students of a university in Quibdó or pupils from high schools. I noticed two small cafés, which looked more like tiny supermarkets, but they had chairs and tables in front. In these tiny shops I observed, young people dancing, singing songs, and drinking some soda cans (Field notes 100220, Field notes 070220). One common thing, which all my informants told me, is to meet friends after university classes, including going to get food with friends and/or university colleagues.

The activities performed after university are mostly situated in the social capital going back to Bourdieu's theories of capitals, habitus, and field (Bourdieu 2011, 2013a; 2013b). However, the other components remain significant for the social activities after university. The cultural capital, in the context of social practices of Afro-Colombian students, is the possibility to study at the university. Which, in my eyes, is at the same time part of the economic capital (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: p. 285). Cultural capital is also the possibility to have a smartphone, to have specific preferences, maybe articulating in a certain way. Moreover, the institutional state, which the university was, in this case. The social capital would be the establishment of social networks at the university. Alternatively, moreover, being a member of a specific group. Meaning, the relationship to other study colleagues, who in all cases were described as friends. (Field note 100220; Field note 120220). But to be a student at a university, one needs money. In this case, the money to pay for the university fees comes from the family. The definition of economic capital by Bourdieu is simplified and unified as one. Although, the reality shows multiple layered concepts of capital (Bourdieu 2013a, 2013b). I argue that one should not see economic capital as only depending on money or capitalism. Moreover, it is, strongly connected with all other forms of capital. Bourdieu defines economic capital as the conversion of material into money (cp. Bourdieu 1986: p. 242). This capital consists, moreover, of land rights, property ownership, etc. A considerable amount of literature has been published on the theories of Bourdieu. Different authors question and discuss the approaches of Bourdieu (Richardson 1986; Tittenbrun 2016; and more). I argue that not only economic capital consists of materials or elements that can lead to profit. Education would be another example that can also lead to earning money. Education is at the same time part of cultural and social capital.

"[C]ultural capital, which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of education qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility." (Bourdieu 1986: p. 16).

It is significant to understand the correlations between those capital forms. One cannot talk about one capital form without seeing the connection between all of these forms. These capitals are forming the habitus of an individual. Habitus forms individuals by society's dispositions. The family, for example, is part of the social and economic capital, which is the connection to the symbolic capital. Symbolic capital, in this sense, can help maintain a friendship, group, or membership with or without material exchanges. The social practices outside of the technological University in Quibdó were the results of all capital forms referring to the theory of Bourdieu (2013a). Meaning that establishing a social network at the university can be understood as part of the social capital. Being a student at the university equals cultural capital, which is tightly connected to economic capital, as one has to pay university fees to enrol. Symbolic capital inhabits all three (cultural, social, and economic capital) and presents the reputation of an individual, in this context, the Afro-Colombian students (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: p. 76).

As my informants mentioned the Atrato-River as the main meeting location after university, I started going there to see if I will see some known faces. I did see some groups of students. They sat next to the River, spread over the boat dock (Field note 110220). Such places like the Atrato-River mark spaces. The river incorporates the field. In other words, the river embodies the place and space where interactions between Afro-Colombian students and their friends took place (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: pp. 184-185). But not only did the river mark a space, where students perform their social practices but also the shops, restaurants, and the clubs they told me they loved going to (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos; Field note protocol 120220: Steve). Bourdieu's habitus (cp. Bourdieu 2011, 2013a, 2013b) in this sense results from the relations between capitals, fields, and ethnicity, whereas ethnicity is part of the social, cultural, and symbolic capital. The feeling of belonging and acceptance of being Afro-Colombian also is a part of everyday life. Habitus describes the perception,

preferences in an individual's life. Afro-Colombian students' habitus is formed by their social, economic, cultural, and symbolic environment. Habitus, moreover, guides and regulates the activities performed by the actors/individuals (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: p. 79).

6.2 Misleading information of social media/news

The given information regarding Chocó and its habitants from the media and the news has been thematised in almost every conversation (Field note protocol: Alejandra, Bibiana, Steve, Juan-Carlos, and Almendra). False information about the ongoing situation in Chocó can cause damage and is damaging the image of this area. This category deals with the bad reputation of Chocó, spread through social media and the news. Four of my interviewees (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos; Field note protocol 120220: Steve) mentioned that there are so many prejudices against this region, which are produced by the mass media.

Saying that they are criminals and that one should be scared for their lives when visiting the area (Field note 020220). The interviewees are happy to live in this department but do not see the support of the state. They mentioned that the state is involved in the ongoing violent acts in Chocó (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos; Field note protocol 120220: Steve). Chocó is depicted as a department with high biodiversity and a high crime rate (see chapter one). The ongoing violence caused by narco-traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary groups is predominantly the only thing presented by the media. At the university campus, one can also find posters that state the opposite. On the posters, one could see different statistics on how content the inhabitants are in the Chocó (Field note 120220). Why does the media only depict violent cases of this department? How are Afro-Colombians from the Chocó presented in the media? *"According to media there are many different groups in this department who act violently against inhabitants. I heard that most of the victims are Afro-Colombians…"* (Field note protocol Alejandra: 100220). This quote describes the performer of violent acts but does not mention them by their names. Why is it important to mention an ethnic minority of this country to explain violent acts? In this case, the victims, as Alejandra stated, are Afro-Colombians. Does this mean that victims are now being differentiated referring to their ethnicity? The most striking result to emerge from the data was the disappointment with the news and the media. The interesting fact that

violence and ethnicity are presented in a negative context, led me to question, how media also has an impact on the current situation. As this thesis is limited, focussing on the media and the representation of specific ethnic minorities would be interesting for a new project, research, or paper.

6.2.1 Sub-Category: the reputation of Chocó

"Maybe it is because of the reputation of Chocó. I can imagine that some people are scared to come here because the media only tells about the high crime rate and the attacks of guerrillas and so on" (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220). Bibiana stated that the reputation of Chocó, which in this sense has a negative connotation implies the anxiety for people from the outside visiting this region. Furthermore, the media scares the rest of Colombia's population of Chocó, because of the high crime rate and the different kinds of violent attacks by guerrillas and other groups.

"*And they always pinout, that Chocó is the only department with the highest percentage of Afro-Colombians. I mean, why do they have to highlight it?*" (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220). Referring to the reputation of Chocó, Bibiana mentioned Afro-Colombians in Chocó. As I already pointed out in the first two chapters – Chocó is the only region of Colombia with almost 90 percent Afro-Colombian inhabitants. Highlighting this fact and connecting it to the ongoing violence can change the image of Chocó. I believe that it is well justified to say, that there is a connection between ethnic minorities living in a certain area and violence being part of their everyday life. With this, I want to imply that violence in this region has its root in colonial history as in still present discriminating and racial structures (Wade 2015; Restrepo 2018; Ballvé 2020). *"I think the news and also social media change information how they want to. And I also think… that the state knows exactly the situation here, but doesn't want to change it, as they also profit from it"* (Field note protocol Alejandra: 100220). Alejandra stated, by manipulating given information about the department, the media wanted to put intentionally Chocó in a bad light. She furthermore stated that this false information is also known by the state and accepted. Misleading information of violent conflicts has been also thematised by an online newspaper called "*Colombia Reports*". An article about a massacre, which happened from 16th February to 21st February 2020 has been highly criticised by the New York Times, victims, and witnesses. Adriaan Alsema published the article on the 3rd March 2020. "*Several studies have shown how Colombia's mass media consistently misinformed the public over the country's armed*

*conflict. El Salado's 2000 massacre is one of the most shameful chapters" (*Alsema 2020). The most important aspect of this article is that none of the victims nor witnesses have been asked what exactly happened. Only media from abroad, as the New York Times, gave the victims and witnesses room to talk about the massacre. Mass media like *"El Elspectador"* reported only violent incidents but did not mention that 60 people were butchered, and two minors were raped. All of this was only to "rescue" the peace talks between former President Andres Pastrana and the FARC (Alsema 2020). As the interview partner already stated, one can never be sure if social media and the news tell the truth about an ongoing situation – no matter where in Colombia. Ana stated furthermore: *"… I never read the news... Because they never tell the truth. So many people think badly about our department, but I am happy. I do not know... Racism for example doesn't exist here"* (Field note protocol Ana: 070220). All formal interview partners mentioned the negative storytelling about Chocó in the news. One consequence, referring to the statement made by Ana, is not to read the news anymore. She, furthermore, mentioned her contentment within the department (Chocó) concerning the non-existing racism. Her statement can be brought in connection to the self-and external ascription. The bad reputation of Chocó is produced by the media, which would be counted to the external description. The stated non-existent racism would count to the internal ascription, but one should keep in mind that this statement is not a fact, just the opinion of Ana. *"Yes, it does. Because it will open more possibilities for me if I am finished. And I will or better want to... make things better here in Chocó. I mean, this is weird but, I would like to better the reputation of Chocó"* (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220). Bibiana answered my question if the university takes a big role in her life. Her response was to help society/ the department. She mentions the reputation of Chocó, which is visible to her. She also talks about finishing her degree, as this will open more doorways. She did not mention what kind of doorways she meant. This statement is not an action per se but is an action in her mind. By going in a certain direction or by doing things social practices adapt, may it be through political, societal, or personal reasons.

6.2.2 Sub-Category: prejudice against Afro-Chocoanxs

"I mean, I feel safe here. But maybe because I was born and raised here. But I hate it when the media is just telling bad stuff about Chocó" (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220). During the conversation with my informants, there were several moments

where I felt that they were angry referring to the statements of social media/news, etc. Steve was the only one who raised his voice during the talk about social media. His anger was directed at the false news but also how they depict Afro-Colombians. He stated

"It is not only the Afro-Colombians in general but especially the Afro-Chocoanxs. Us! They talk about us as all were criminals and are into drug businesses. Why do they hate us so much? People are dying and they are not helping by talking bad about us." (Field note protocol Steve: 120220).

In his eyes, the media tried to foment fear, and disguise racist behaviour against Afro-Colombians and Afro-Chocoanxs who are suffering. Highlighting this population on the grounds of their skin colour is discriminating. Ethnic categorization including enhancing prejudices is posed by false information and marking differences. These kinds of statements but also how media and news reproduce colonial structures and ideologies referring to the dichotomic thinking of white and black, good and bad can be explained by the Eurocentric ideology which has been implemented in almost all Latin-American countries. The elite of Colombia saw indigenous and black people as in a previous stage of "civilization". These two ethnic minorities were not counted as part of civilization or the civilization process. Colombia defined itself by law as a multi-ethnic state – it is always easier to establish new policies and legislation than implementing them (Restrepo 2018: p. 462). Not only are the Afro-Colombians in Chocó victims of racial profiling but all the Blacks in Colombia. Leonardo Reales published an analysis of the implementation on the different institutional levels of racism and discrimination. Especially mass media, which is mostly guided and directed by white privileged families, elites, etc., and is responsible for enhancing hate/prejudices against other ethnic minorities (Reales 2011: p. 70).

Restrepo also states that ethnicization in Colombia is assumed to be racially constituted on the ground of historical events (colonialism). Prejudices against Afro-Colombians are deeply rooted in history (Restrepo 2004: p. 711). One way to analyse problems nowadays regarding the exclusion of ethnic minorities is through post-colonial lenses and theories of decolonization. As postcolonialism uncovers relations and structures in the context of European colonial expansion it highlights aspects and perspectives, which were neglected in the last decades. Furthermore, it helps analyse actions that are purposely performed against ethnic minorities. This process includes

uncovering historical context, inequality, national and international influences, sexuality, and ethnicity (Boatcă 2016: p. 114).

6.3 Ethnicity and cultural heritage

This category discusses the feeling of belonging and being part of an ethnic minority. As all of my interview partners were Afro-Colombians, this category is necessary to highlight the ethnic aspect of Afro-Colombian students. Furthermore, it summarizes all mentioned experiences of ethnic belonging, negative but also positive ones.

While observing different student groups on the campus, I realized that I did not see many white students. I spotted very few, maybe three or four, female students with a lighter skin tone than other Afro-Colombians. One female student who happened to be my interview partner shortly after our small talk was slightly lighter than the others, as her mother was *indígena* and her father "Afro-Colombian" (Field note 070220, Field note protocol Almendra 070220). I want to mention here that all participants defined themselves as Afro-Colombians, as there is a possibility that institutions in Colombia have different criteria – who belongs to which group according to their external features. This category, furthermore, contains the racist experience outside of Chocó, as institutional racism is tightly connected to ethnic groups. This section is divided into two sub-categories – "experienced racism outside of Chocó" and "feeling of belonging".

The feeling of belonging is presented at the campus as being proud to be Afro-Colombian. There is no racism against Afro-Colombians according to students. However, some lighter-skinned Afro-Colombians do feel racism, because of their skin colour. Most of the interviewees know where their roots are, meaning from which part of the continent Africa their ancestors were taken (Field note: 070220; 120220; 100220; 110220).

6.3.1 Sub-category: the feeling of belonging

The Feeling of belonging is tightly connected to one's identity and ethnicity in a broader context. This section deals with the feeling of belonging of Afro-Colombian students. Before I present the data, I want to bring back the statements of Stuart Hall (1994, 2017). He argues that the concept of ethnicity, including the feeling of belonging, can be problematic. One should not only see the ethnic as an alone standing concept but should rather see the connection of ethnicity with the nation, identity, politics, and society (Hall 2017: p. 158). He furthermore refers to the struggles of African Americans

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in the 1960s. They set themselves against the dominant and racist conception of the United States as a white nation. This, for example, also shows that the feeling of belonging includes also the national feeling (Hall 2017: p. 159). One can address this approach to the Afro-Colombian students. By implying that the feeling of belonging consists of the internal ascription, cultural feeling of belonging, national feeling of belonging, and the ethnic feeling of belonging. *"We have been here for hundreds of years. And I have the feeling, that we are still fighting for being seen from our own fellow countrymen."* (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220) Bibiana talked about the non-existing acknowledgment of the fellow countrymen in Colombia. Ethnicity in Colombia is still a big topic. *"I live here… I enjoy living here like almost every adult here in Quibdó. As we are all Afro-Colombians, blacks. (laughs)"* (Field note protocol Ana: 070220). Ana stated her contentment with her life in Quibdó. Furthermore, she mentioned ethnic membership. This statement draws an invisible line between lighter-skinned Colombians and Afro-Colombians. She referred directly to skin colour by mentioning at the end of the sentence "blacks" as Fredrik Barth (1998) mentioned in his book ethnic boundaries. She drew a clear line between being different – in this case being black. The attribute of these groups lies in the external but also internal ascription. The ascription is based upon the classification of a person because of their heritage and ethnic history. People, Afro-Colombian students, use certain descriptions to categorize themselves or others, be it subconsciously or not (Barth 1998: p. 13). Being a member of an ethnic group goes hand in hand with categorizations of differences but also identifying with individuals who share the same culture, skin colour, and/or history. This subcategory highlights my informants' feeling of belonging. As the quote above describes, they are happy in their body and skin. Being black and being part of an ethnic group is connected to alleged biological self-perpetuation, sharing fundamental cultural values, constructs a field of communication and interaction, and includes membership which identifies itself and by others (Barth 1998: pp. 10-11). The feeling of belonging is not only restricted to categorization as Barth implies above. Furthermore, it also consists of the national feeling of Afro-Colombian students and the recognition by the state (Hall 2017; Graml, Showers Johnson, and Williams-Lessane 2018; Restrepo 2018).

6.3.2 Sub-category: racism outside of Chocó

Restrepo (2018) suggests that the talks over racism in Colombia are tightly connected to the process of ethnicization of black communities. The turn to multiculturalism in Colombia opened a discussion, in which black intellectuals refused to acknowledge black communities as an ethnic group (Law 70) (Restrepo 2018: p. 467). Restrepo furthermore states that through the turn to multiculturalism the visibility of racism increases. Especially the talks and disputes in media and social networks are showing that the Invisibles are visible again (Restrepo 2018: p. 470). Nonetheless, Restrepo's point is valuable in the sense, that there is progress in facing racism against ethnic minorities (Wade 2009, 2013). Hall (2017) describes racism as part of a world of Manichean opposites. In other words, differentiating between white and black, them and us, primitive and civilized. Racism is complexly structured. But as Hall also pointed out – we already moved from a biogenetical conception to a historical conception of "race" (Hall 2017: p. 71). This shows that we are slowly moving towards the understanding of the complexity of the structure of racism.

"But if I leave Chocó, for example, to visit relatives in Bogotá I can feel that I am different. People look at me differently. I feel almost under observation. But maybe it is just me. I don't know… sometimes I get anxiety, because I feel uncomfortable." (Field note protocol Bibiana: 100220)

All participants mentioned that they only witnessed or were victims of racism outside of Chocó (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra. campus; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus; Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant; Field note protocol 120220: Steve. Campus). As racism is a part of the everyday life of Afro-Colombian, if it happened while travelling in Colombia, evidence suggested including it as a separate category. Racism sets boundaries between human beings with different external and internal attributes. As the skin colour of Afro-Colombians is darker than the light-skinned Colombians, this main feature is to draw a line between "us" and "them". The statement of Bibiana explains the feeling of not belonging to a certain group of people and how she feels observed, visiting her relatives in Bogotá. She also mentioned the anxiety she gets, while being outside of Chocó. As ethnicity defines essential circumstances be it social, economic, and milieu conditioned, such encounters affect self-ascription (cp. Müller 2003: p. 100). Restrepo sees ethnical

categories as Afro, Afro-descendant, and Afro-Colombians as established through politics, which is by no sense a newly discovered fact. Racist encounters emerge from historical facts and discrimination against a minority, which in most cases has a negative connotation (Restrepo 2018: p. 455). Discriminating another person or minority constructs power relations. Zooming out of this specific situation again, Pierre Bourdieu's (Bourdieu 2013b; Bourdieu 2011) theory construction on how to uncover power relations can be applied. The power of racism lies within differences between groups and individuals. This also includes historical events such as colonialism, which led to categorise individuals on the grounds of their heritage etc. These differences can be physical, territorial, social, and cultural. Going back to the four capital forms of Bourdieu, we can fill each form related to racism and ethnicity in Colombia. The two that refer to racism outside of Chocó are social and cultural capital (cp. Bourdieu 2011, 2013a, 2013b). The social capital includes the perception of Afro-Colombians from white Colombians. How Afro-Colombians feel out of place and the prejudices against Afro-Colombians (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: p. 184). The cultural capital consists of the possibility of how economically Afro-Colombians are disadvantaged. Institutional, political, and social racism would be part of this capital. In addition, not to be able to connect with "outsiders" as prejudices against Afro-Colombians change the view of Afro-Colombians (cp. Bourdieu 2013b: p. 89). Not everything, which is part of the habitus and social capital of individuals, is positive. Racism shapes the social capital, therefore, it is also significant to mention impacts if they are negative. Although economic and symbolic capitals should not be dismissed, they will be discussed thoroughly in the following discussion chapter. In this regard, the social capital, which is formed by social networks, society constructs certain belief systems, which can be disadvantages to some groups (ethnic).

Being black or mixed is an important factor for Afro-Colombians as their skin colour marks boundaries – symbolic, social, and economic. By asking my informants how they would describe themselves, all answered with "*Afro-Colombian*" (Field note protocol 070220: Ana. Campus; Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra. Campus; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus; Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant; Field note protocol 120220: Steve. Campus).

As there are many descriptions for dark-skinned persons in Latin America, one should not neglect the self-ascription of Afro-Colombians. Although Colombia has specific criteria to fulfil to be counted as an Afro-Colombian. The configuration of cultural differences such as "ancestrality, communality, authenticity, and territoriality" define an ethnic group (Restrepo 2018: p. 463).

6.4   A portrait of experienced violence

This category engaged with the ongoing violence in Colombia of the interviewed Afro-Colombians, where none of the informants called the perpetrators by name. None of them referred directly to guerrillas, narco-traffickers, or paramilitary groups. Three of the interviewees mentioned a situation where friends or family got in contact with perpetrators. As I already pointed out in the chapter "A portrait of violence", there are several forms of violent acts – be it physical or psychological, institutional, sexual, racial, or cultural (Nordstrom 2004; Das et al. 2007; Bourdieu 2013b; McGee 2017). Two of my informants (Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant) told me that their relatives had to leave their home city because of the ongoing violence. All interview partners mentioned that they already had seen dead bodies on the street (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra. campus; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus; Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant; Field note protocol 120220: Steve. Campus). The museum, Claustro de San Agustín in Bogotá, had a photo exhibition about violence in the rural areas of Colombia. The museum showed pictures of people carrying dead bodies, inhabitants of a village lined up in a row: in front of them were heavily armed men, women mourning over relatives and friends who died, men who are digging graves, and people who hold pictures of people who are missing (Field note 020220). These pictures showed violent acts performed by the Hobbesian trinity (cp. Ballvé 2020: p. 4). I found it quite interesting to see such photos in a museum in Bogotá, and how the museum tried to make the victims and witnesses visible to the public. Every person depicted in the pictures lives in a complex social world. Like we all do. However, visitors in the museum, including myself, see one moment – a moment of fear, terror, and violence. The only thing they have control of is their body, except this can also be stripped from them. Institutionalized violence, structural, social, and cultural violence emerge from the hunger for power, from people, institutions, and organisations, which

were already in power. As Scheper-Hughes states about everyday violence on the Alto do Cruzeiro (Brazil): *"confirming people's worst fears and anxieties: that of losing themselves, their ownership of their bodies, to the random forces and institutionalized violence of the modern, even democratizing, state"* (Scheper-Hughes 1993: p. 20). Violence exists alongside the everyday life of Afro-Colombian students. It does not mean that they see it every day, but what goes on within the department is known by everyone. Violence is a part of their livelihood although it sometimes exists in the background of their student life. *"Suffering, in this anthropological perspective, is the effect of the social violence that social orders – local, national, global – bring to bear on people"* (Kleinmann 2007: p. 226). Kleinmann implies that violence is not a problem in certain areas, but it is visible everywhere, although not in the dimension, as in some areas. Meaning that social violence can be discriminating individuals in their rights. *".. I mean. Violence is part of my life. You hear and sometimes see people dying or lying dead on the ground. So... It also defines me"* (Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos). Juan-Carlos stated directly that violence is part of his life and that he was also a witness or had seen a dead person lying on the ground. This statement is connected to the category of social practices of Afro-Colombian students, as different actions and events constitute the habits of these young people. Therefore, I am going to underline this statement with David Riches (1987) triangle, as Juan-Carlos was a witness in a specific moment. David Riches' triangle consists of performer, victim, and witness, which is more complex than most of us think. It depends on the conflict or the violent act but in some cases, it happens that there is a direct or non-direct relationship between one of the three parties mentioned above. The witnesses may have different views and can disagree with the victims or with the performer (Stewart und Strathern 2002: p. 35). As Juan-Carlos did not mention what kind of violent act he witnessed and did not give further details about the dead body he had seen – it is still clear that the situation he was in, was affecting him. How it could have affected him will be discussed in the following chapter "Reflexion and discussion".

6.4.1 Sub-category: Seeing and not seeing

The different statements of violent acts in Chocó displayed that students were indirectly involved in a violent confrontation or heard and read about it on the news. These subcategories summarize two different perspectives of the interviewed students. *"One can be a victim of violence anywhere else on this planet"* (Field note protocol Steve:

120220). *"Referring to violence. Yes, it exists here. But where else does it not. I never experienced it myself but heard different stories"* (Field note protocol Juan Carlos: 110220). Juan-Carlos was slightly offended and I had the feeling that he tried to generalize violence (Field note 110220). He, furthermore, stated that he had already heard different stories relating to violence, but never experienced it. He did not mention what kind of violent acts she heard. As already discussed in chapter four – violence is a very broad and complex word. As Juan-Carlos did not tell more about the "experienced" violence one can only imagine what kind of violent acts were performed. Any form of violence exists in every country, as Juan-Carlos stated. Brittain (2005) discussed the development of violence in rural regions in Colombia. He argues that the rise of violence in rural areas was the outcome of economic interest within rural areas, including Chocó. Neoliberalism increased the current violence, targeting the society in general and rural areas in particular (Brittain 2005: p. 347). He assumes that the costs of neoliberalism made Colombia one of the "most dangerous countries in the world" (Brittain 2005: p. 347). He also explains that Colombian multinationals established "security forces" to defend economic interest. Those forces are also known as paramilitary groups (Brittain 2005 ibid.), which was previously discussed in chapter two "Mapping blackness in the Colombian pacific" and chapter four "A portrait of violence". But as Steve (Field note protocol 120220: Steve) and Juan-Carlos (Field note protocol 110220: Juan Carlos) pointed out – violence exists everywhere. Prejudices against Afro-Chocoanxs coexist with the prejudices of the rural area itself. My interview partners do not want to be classified with the violence happening in this area. Maybe one should question the debate of violence in Colombia. In the sense of questioning, why is Colombia such a violent country and why do people who live in areas where civilians are attacked still say that violence exists everywhere? Maybe they don't want their home to be called dangerous? Maybe they don't want to be defined as part of this terror? As Nordstrom states as soon as the war zones are deleted, the people who were victims and witnesses also disappear (Nordstrom 2004: p. 33). Saying that they do not want to be connected to the violent acts committed by paramilitary groups or such.

"How can one person know that this or that group is involved in violent acts? I don't know I feel like… I can't trust the media nor the police here. I mean, I don't see many things happening here, but I know that things are happening." (Field note protocol Juan Carlos 110220)

Juan-Carlos expressed with his statement, disbelief in the media and the police, which should protect civilians. Like other informants, he also states that he was not a witness to the violent actions happening, but he was still aware of the current situation and that "things" were happening. His descriptions of things instead of violent acts showed that he kept a distance from the term itself. The presence of soldiers in Quibdó, almost in front of every building, especially in front of the university, let me think about why they were so heavily armed. It wasn't clear if they were soldiers from the military or other groups. But their presence for me meant that they needed to protect something or somebody. What is legal and what is illegal is defined by judicial codes, which institutionalize rules. These rules also have ethical implications making racial crimes legitimate (Nordstrom 2004: p. 85). Institutional violence expresses power in multiple ways. This also includes social relations that concern the daily life of a large population (Nordstrom 2004: p. 73). Nordstrom states, as an example, that most South Africans were unaware of the criminal activities of security forces. My impression is that Afro-Colombians might also not know the extent of the severity of criminal activities carried out by security forces (paramilitary groups) (Nordstrom 2004: p. 147). As Juan-Carlos stated above, how should one know to which group a soldier belongs? The institutionalization of crime is not only a national phenomenon; it is also constituted by regional and international associations (Nordstrom 2004: p. 150). Drug dealing, smuggling, corruption, and more are transnational businesses as Brombacher stated (Brombacher 2015). It is quite understandable why Juan-Carlos (Field note protocol 110202: Juan-Carlos) would state that he can't trust the media nor the police. Institutional violence is constituted by structures of authority. Military officials can easily move into crime without facing the consequences. Furthermore, they continue holding their position of power (Nordstrom 2004: p. 154).

As Schmidt and Schröder already stated – violence is basic of state during conflict:

1. *"Violence is never completely idiosyncratic. It always expresses some kind of relationship with another party and violent acts do not target anybody at random."* (Schmidt and Schröder 2003: p.3)

2. *"Violence is never completely sense- or meaningless to the actor. It may seem senseless, but it is certainly not meaningless to victim or observer."* (ibid.)

3. *"Violence is never a totally isolated act. It is – however remotely – related to a competitive relationship and thus the product of a historical process that may extend far back in time and that adds by virtue of this capacity many vicissitudes to the analysis of the conflictive trajectory."* (ibid.)

The ongoing and experienced violence in Chocó is tightly connected to past events that led to the current situation. As my interviewees reported different opinions related to violence – it is not meaningless for outsiders or people in contact with witnesses and victims. Referring to Schmidt and Schröder's (2003) ramification of violence all three statements listed above are applicable on this matter. All informants stated that violence existed here, but that they never experienced it themselves. Moreover, everybody had heard of different stories where other individuals were directly violated or witnessed violent acts (Field note protocol 070220: Ana; Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra. campus; Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus; Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus; Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant; Field note protocol 120220: Steve. Campus). Although violence is visible most of the time, it is pervasive and invisible. Symbolic, structural, and institutional violence represents the power over social networks and at the same time sets social boundaries (McGee 2017: p. 171). Similar to Brittain (2005), McGee (2017) states that Colombia is a violent country with invisible violence (McGee2017: p. 174). Symbolic, structural, and institutional violence operate as invisible power, which shape norms, values, beliefs, and behaviour among Afro-Colombians in the Pacific lowlands (McGee 2017: p. 171). Witnessing death on a daily basis can increase the ability to reproduce power structures. As Nordstrom stated:

"A final observation on violence concerns its ability to escalate and to insinuate itself into the fabric of everyday life. The idea that battlefields are self-contained zones of violence and that life proceeds normally outside these circumscribed areas is a powerful myth, but a myth nonetheless. From average people caught in life-threatening situations of war to theoreticians like Michael Taussig, we are cautioned about the ability of violence to reproduce itself. Relatives of torture and murder victims don't necessarily become paralyzed by fear; they often join in the fight against those who have perpetrated these horrors on their loved ones, sometimes reproducing the same violence against the families of those who harmed their relatives. I have witnessed this many time." (Nordstrom 2004: p. 68).

Nordstrom explains how difficult it can be if we don't think outside of the box. Meaning that battlefields are not restricted to battlefields. I argue, therefore, that there is a high potential to use the weapon against others, which was used against oneself. I do not want to state that my interview partners all have the potential to hurt the people or the families of the people who hurt them and their families. I want to highlight the power structures, which go hand in hand with hierarchy (categorization of ethnic belonging) and institutional violence.

6.4.2 Subcategory: displacement of friends/family

This sub-category deals with the statements of displacement of family and friends from my interview partners. As the displacement of Afro-Colombians in Chocó is not a recent development, it is necessary to discuss the historical background and why it resulted in the displacement of Afro-Colombians. This has been previously discussed and presented in chapter two. Asher (2009) explained that the displacement of inhabitants within the Pacific area happened only because of the increased presence of narco-traffickers, paramilitary groups, and guerrillas. Many locals are in the midst of escalating violence, their homes are battlefields, and have to leave their homes involuntarily (Asher 2009: p. 151). I will continue with the statements of my interview partner Almendra: *"My grandparents needed to move into another area of Chocó, because of the violent outburst. They had to leave everything, the house, and their belongings. Also… some pictures of my parents when they were little got lost"* (Field note protocol: Almendra: 070220). Almendra mentioned the historical background of Afro-Colombians and the displacement of her grandparents because of a violent outburst. She describes objects left behind because of the forced displacement. This subcategory combines two main concepts. As Kiran Asher already stated in her book "*Afro-Colombians, Development, and Nature in the Pacific Lowlands*", because of violent acts in the 90's many Afro-Chocoans were forcefully displaced. The Afro-Colombians engaged in different movements, but still, these people were again invisible to the state and neglected. Although this was also the era where many policies and laws were implemented to better the situation for Afro-Colombians (Asher 2009: p. 155; Gruner and Rojas 2019). The displacement of family and friends of my informants interrupted their social reality referring to routines by changed settings. Meaning they had to leave their field, applying Bourdieu's theories (2011, 2013a, 2013b), which was tightly connected to their social network, work, and symbolic and

material attachments. I would propose that the practices, which in this case could have been going to work, university classes, or participating in a ritual all have symbolic meaning to the individuals. Another factor of displacement is the violation of their everyday life. I refer directly to social, cultural, and racial violence as such has been thematised in many articles and books as in Kiran Asher books about the displacement of Afro-Colombians (2009). *"local communities get caught in the crossfire of the escalating violence; their lands become battlefields without warning or recourse; and they face massive and repeated involuntary displacement from their homes"* (Asher 2009: p. 151). She clearly identifies rural violence against the Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in the Pacific Lowlands. As Brittain states, rural violence is committed on the ground of economic interest (Brittain 2015: p. 347). Rural violence does not only happen because of economic interest. It furthermore incorporates colonial, structural, racial, institutional, and sexual violence (Mertens, Viveros, and Arango 2008; Zuckerhut 2011; Wade 2013, 2015; Hall 2017; Sachseder 2020).

Summarizing my study outcomes included the impressions and description of Afro-Colombian students to the ongoing situation in Chocó. The statements of daily activities of my research partners vary from meeting friends at different locations including the university's campus in the capital of Chocó and leisure activities, like taking dancing classes, going for a drink. The misleading information by media/social media has been thematised by all participants. Some also showed a feeling of anger when discussing the reputation of the area and the false information presented by the news (Field note protocol 110220: Steve; Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra). The concepts of violence, ethnicity and social practices were already presented in the previous chapter and were chosen out of the collected data. All categories stand in relation to each other, which now brings us to an additional discussion of the relation to the presented results. Furthermore, these categories will be highlighted critically and reflectively.

The result of this study showed that violent acts performed by paramilitary groups, guerrilla and narco-traffickers, have an impact on the social practices, perception of the state, ethnic belonging, and racism, although the students I interviewed did not speak or name the perpetrators. Many social scientists (Restrepo 2004; Asher 2009; Wade 2013; Vera Lugo 2015; Wade 2015; Restrepo 2018) discussed and researched the Hobbesian trinity (Ballvé 2020). What was surprising for me was that my interview

partners mentioned the reputation of Chocó and misleading information about Afro-Colombians in Chocó by the media and news. This result is likely to be related to institutional racism and discriminating categorization of ethnic minorities. Furthermore, racism and discriminating categorization are rooted in colonial power structures that are still pursued in political and economic institutions. Some important points were not mentioned in the previous chapters (chapters two, three, and four); I will further discuss the presented categories and include reflexive thoughts, which arose in the field and during the writing process.

6.5 Additional reflexion and discussion

The purpose of this research was to gain more insight on the impact of violence in the everyday life of Afro-Colombian students. In this sub-chapter, I will summarize the previously presented findings. Furthermore, I will compare my results with prior studies and will explain differences and similarities.

The conversations with my research partners not only provided insight into their daily activities but also shared their feelings about violence in Chocó. In addition, how they felt as Afro-Colombians. The feeling of belonging stands in relation to their skin colour. Furthermore, Bibiana, Ana, and Alejandra explained how white Colombians perceived them (Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus, Field note protocol 070220: Ana, Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana, Field note protocol 100220: Alejandra). They like to live in Chocó, as there is no racism against Afro-Chocoanxs. All my informants stated that they heard or have family members who were victims of violent acts or were forcefully displaced. But, none of my research participants named the perpetrators. In other words, they did not say who exactly performed the violent acts. From these results, it is clear that social practices are affected by invisible or visible violent acts. The findings on ethnicity, violence, and misleading information at least hint that Afro-Colombian students are aware of discrimination outside their department. Bibiana (Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana) mentioned that she only experienced racism when she travelled outside Chocó. Although they call themselves Afro-Colombians, they still feel more acknowledged and accepted inside their department.

Through the established categories and the discussion of the concepts in the previous chapters – I conclude that violence affects people, be it, victims, witnesses, or other actors directly or indirectly. As Nordstrom (2004) argues, the people who are often

harmed by men in uniforms are civilians. As soon as the realities of war zones are deleted, the witnesses and victims disappear as well. One must also not forget that civilians die because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time (Nordstrom 2004: p. 33). Afro-Chocoanxs are forcefully displaced because their home is the battlefield of guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and narco-traffickers (Asher 2009). Being in the midst of a battlefield means chaos for its civilians – unpredictable and uncontrollable (Nordstrom 2004: p. 33). Referring only to the Afro-Colombian students, violent acts and the ongoing violent outbursts (cp. Asher 2009; Restrepo 2018; Nuñez 2001) in this department, do affect the everyday life of these students. According to the collected data and analysis, it does affect them indirectly. My informants mentioned different types of issues relating to violence. Nevertheless, what, in my eyes, stood out was that they all knew someone who experienced violence and therefore are indirectly affected. Social practices are built upon violent history. Meaning, although violence is not visible for everyone, social practices are affected by its complex system. As my interview partners did not mention violent acts where they were the victims, I want to highlight that violence is still in the background, sometimes hidden. Therefore, the question here lies in seeing and not seeing. What was visible for me and what wasn't visible for me? What was visible for the Afro-Colombian students and what wasn't for them? As all interview partners told stories of relatives and friends who came across violent acts or were even victims, it states that the students are aware of the violent circumstances. But in what sense?

By re-reading the statements of my interview partners, it is obvious that they did not mention the violent acts on their own. Of course – one has to be very sensible asking about a violent experience. I can imagine that they did not elaborate on the full extent of their experience. However, this is a risk, a better said possibility, every researcher has to face. One further interesting thing is that none of my interview partners mentioned, at any time, any specific group who performed violent acts in the past. I spoke of the Hobbesian trinity (narco-traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary groups), which led me to ask why they didn't mention them. There can be several reasons why: they do not want to get in trouble; maybe it is too intimate for them to talk to a stranger about this issue, or they did not find it necessary to mention them, and many more.

My results demonstrated how frustrated my informants were referring to the ethnic aspect outside of Chocó. Furthermore, they explained how Afro-Colombians are

treated by the news and media. I did not expect to include misleading information from the news within this thesis, as my focus lied on violence and the social practices performed during the day. After the second interview, I re-heard my recordings and re-read my field notes, and saw that both, mentioned disappointment of the information, which was published about them. Therefore, these results and the establishment of the category "misleading information of social media/news" cast a new light on the discrimination of Afro-Colombians through the news. One has to bear in mind that the establishment of this category is based on a small sample.

One should also keep in mind that this small number of informants, explained and tried to explain the perception of social reality. This means that every single one constructed their reality differently and experienced it differently. This sample did not represent all Afro-Colombian students in Chocó. Another point to mention is that through reflexive thinking and analysis it was also possible for me to rethink my perception of things and situations during fieldwork. I, as a researcher, also reproduce a power relation with the informants. To overcome such obstacles, it is important to question one's role in doing fieldwork and try to analyse one's behaviour (Hammersley and Atkinson 1996; Bernard 2011; Mey and Mruck 2011; Charmaz and Mitchell 2014; Emerson et al. 2014; Konopinski 2014; Lizarazo 2018). Compared to Lizarazo's research, presented in chapter one ("Introduction"), my study focussed as well on everyday life in the Chocó. However, in line with the ideas and research of Lizarzao (2018), one can say that there are several similarities and differences. The difference between these two kinds of research lies in the participants. I interviewed and observed Afro-Colombian students. Lizarazo (2018) worked with the organization COCOMACIA. She also analysed and explained the structures and hierarchies of "race", class, and gender, which in her eyes are new forms of colonialism. She, furthermore, realized her powerful position as a researcher. This research presented specific social practices of Afro-Colombian students. In addition, how violent acts may or may not affect those practices. One should not neglect that violent acts against civilians have an impact on youngsters and in this case Afro-Colombians. By not interviewing and working with a local organization, instead of talking to students and trying to understand how they feel in such an environment, I wanted to give them a voice. A voice that should be heard and should not be neglected. The collaboration with local organizations, such as COCOMACIA, sheds new light on a macro-level including all of the victims of this area. Nonetheless, one should also keep in mind that a society consists of many individuals, who share or

do not share similar memories and opinions. Asher (2009) demonstrated that Afro-Colombian women worked hard for the rights of their people. Both Asher (2009) and Lizarazo (2018) explained and showed that women are important for any society. And these women are in most cases not acknowledged for their hard work to help and better the situation (political, social, and cultural) for their communities. Overall, these findings are in accordance with findings reported by Mosquera (2004), Sachseder (2020), Lizarazo (2018), and Asher (2009) (see chapter one).

The different impressions I received during fieldwork and processing the collected data showed me how complex from a scientific point of view, social practices could be. I learned that to understand another reality one should go into the field without prejudices. I might question the statements of all people differently than I did at this fieldwork. In future practices, I would also try to reflect more during the process of collecting data. The field notes I took helped me realize my way of understanding and processing conversations.

From the application of different theories, I presented from chapters two to four I learned that by highlighting important aspects of a problem one could get a deeper understanding of the research. I started this research with the goal of understanding and describing the relationship between the social practices of Afro-Colombian students and how violent acts against the population affect their everyday life. Through reflecting and implementing theories of intersectionality, decolonization, and forms of violence, I noticed that one could not talk about violence without including the historical, structural, and cultural aspects. Therefore, the decolonization and postcolonial critiques and theories explain the current problem more broadly. My informants did not thematise sexual violence; nonetheless, it is important to touch on this kind of violence, as it is part of many Afro-Colombians and indigenous people lives in this area. Violence in this context is not only performed by the Hobbesian trinity (Nuñez 2001) but also by legislation and political positioning, institutional, structural and racial violence (Butti and Leyh McGonigle 2019). We possess many pieces of evidence from other scholars (Arocha 1998; Asher 2009; Wade 2013; Restrepo 2018), who have written about the ongoing violence. Individuals perceive situations differently, so for one, a conflict can be outrageous, and for some, it is not bearable.

The debate in this thesis was significant as it exposed the social and cultural structures influenced by history and post-colonial dichotomies. The social practices of Afro-

Colombian students have been influenced by the violent history and environment they live in. Making not only Afro-Colombian students but also all inhabitants of Chocó visible again will make a difference. A difference, in this sense, is that Afro-descendants are not only seen as the "other" but acknowledged as every other citizen of Colombia. Visibility in this case also means to make the truth available for everyone and not the racial and colonial dichotomies, which are still present in legislation etc., and are presented by the media/news. The information presented in chapter two also indicates that there should be more discussion surrounding ethnicity and Colombia's turn to multiculturalism. These results may be somewhat limited by the number of conversations and not being able to travel a second time to Colombia. Nonetheless, it is decisive to bear in mind that this thesis shows a tiny part of the constructed reality of Afro-Colombian students. These results go beyond previous reports, showing that Afro-Colombian students are part of the community and society in Chocó.

7 Conclusion

Intellectuals have an impact on the future of society and the state. Therefore, students in this department will somehow shape the future no matter in which aspect. The social practices performed by Afro-Colombian students are wrapped in the current situation and are rooted in historical events such as the implementation of new laws and policies (chapter 2.2, chapter 4.3). Whereas those laws and policies are still in progress to overcome structural and institutional racism (Asher 2009; Wade 2013, 2015; Restrepo 2018).

Afro-Colombian students are indirectly affected by the ongoing violence; indirectly because it runs in the background of their everyday life. The social practices, which were discussed in chapter 6.1 "Social Practices of Afro-Colombian Students" (meeting friends, going out, or walking around the city), are also indirectly affected. Violence is in this sense invisible but still visible. This thesis presented different approaches referring to the term violence, social practices in everyday life and highlighted different perspectives of the Afro-Colombian history and the question of ethnicity in Colombia (chapter two, chapter three and chapter four). As this thesis just analysed a small number of students, one should always have in mind that there can always be different situations to be analysed and different perspectives. As the pandemic probably led to

some changes in this department, research about the ongoing violence during a pandemic could provide new insights. People, including students, adapt to current situations, not only by performing perceptional social practices. The use of different theories and combinations, and critically evaluating them helped understand the perspective of the interviewed students, as well as the roots, historical background, and the process of decolonization in Colombia. Although it is, however a long road, I am certain, that doing research and trying to understand and describe the social realities of minorities will open up new doors to overcome dichotomies and obsolete structures.

Learning about the historical background of the department of Chocó, including postcolonial theories, deepens the understanding of the social and cultural structures. Those structures determine the ordinary life of Afro-Colombians. Not merely, do students suffer from the ongoing situation – all the inhabitants do. The focus on students shall simply widen the understanding of how livelihood in a violent environment is perceived. Concluding, violent outbursts have many layers (structural, institutional, cultural, social, and political) thus; shape such an environment, as in Chocó (Nordstrom 2004; Das et al 2007; Asher 2009; Asher 2014; Wade 2013). People living in such areas should be therefore more included by constructing new legislation and should be acknowledged socially as citizens of Colombia with the same rights as white Colombians (Restrepo 2018; Gontovnik 2016; Bates 2020). Just because they live in a rural area, does not mean that they are invisible. By writing this thesis, I did not want to argue that everything is bad, but Colombia still needs to include the people who are struggling in their (hopefully) coming new legislations. To propose change and cement it with modern legislation is easier said than done. Therefore, this thesis is meant to help one understand the perspectives of young students who want a better future. This thesis can initiate new discussions in terms of being visible by the law, the state, and society.

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8.2   Other

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8.3   Field notes

Field note 020220: Bogotá

Field note 060220: Quibdó. City Centre

Field note 070220: observation in Quibdó

Field note 090220: Quibdó. River

Field note 100220: observation in Quibdó

Field note 110220: Museum Muntú-Bantú

Field note 110220: observation in Quibdó

Field note 120220: Quibdó University-Campus. Poster/Library

Field note 290120: Bogotá

Field note 310120: Bogotá

Field note protocol 070220: Almendra. Campus

Field note protocol 070220: Interview with Ana. Campus

Field note protocol 100220: Bibiana. Campus

Field note protocol 100220: Interview with Alejandra. Campus

Field note protocol 110220: Juan-Carlos. Restaurant

Field note protocol 120220: Interview with Mosquera Mosquera. Museum

Field note protocol 120220: Steve. Campus

Abstract (English)

This thesis aims to shed new light on the department Chocó, Colombia. The focus lies on Afro-Colombian students, answering the question how violence affects their everyday life. Everyday life is reduced to social practices, which are performed during and after university classes. This thesis investigates how the ongoing violent outburst in Chocó affects the Afro-Colombian students from the technological university in Quibdó. Since the implementation of Law 70, many things have appeared to change. This thesis constructs a new perspective regarding the concepts of violence, social practices, and ethnicity in Colombia. The empiric research took place from the month January until March 2020, whereas all relevant interviews and observations took place in Quibdó, the capital of Chocó. Informal interviews were conducted with six Afro-Colombian students, four female students, and two males. The analysis showed a strong correlation with violent outbursts, which affected the students in cultural, political, and social levels. The results showed that factors such as structural and implemented racism produced by the media were put into the picture and that historical leftover such as colonialist structures still must be processed.

Keywords:

Afro-Colombians, Ethnicity, Decolonization, Violence, social practices, Afro-Colombian students, Racism, Colombia

Abstract (Deutsch)

Diese Arbeit hat den Fokus auf afro-kolumbianische Student*innen der technologischen Universität „Diego Luis Cordoba" in Quibdó und wie Gewalt ihren Lebensalltag beeinflusst. Lebensalltag wird im Kontext von sozialen Praktiken bearbeitet, welche während und nach Lehrveranstaltungen an der Universität stattfanden. Diese Arbeit beleuchtet verschiedene Perspektiven und Ansätze der Konzepte Gewalt, Soziale Praktiken und Ethnizität in Kolumbien. Die Feldforschung fand von Jänner 2020 bis März 2020 in Kolumbien satt. Alle relevanten Interviews und Beobachtungen wurden in Quibdó und Bogotá aufgezeichnet. Es wurden sechs informelle Interviews durchgeführt, wobei vier Interviewte davon dem weiblichen Geschlecht angehörten und zwei dem männlichen. Die Analyse zeigte eine starke Verbindung zu Gewaltausbrüchen in Verbindung zu sozialen, kulturellen und politischen Konflikten. Die Ergebnisse dieser Forschung zeigten auf, dass Komponenten wie strukturell implementierter Rassismus durch soziale Kommunikationsträger reproduziert und verstärkt wurden. Weiters zeigten die Ergebnisse, dass kolonialistische Strukturen noch immer im Prozess der Verarbeitung stehen und dahingehend ein Fortschritt gefordert wird.

Schlüsselwörter:

Afro-Kolumbianer*innen, Ethnizität, Dekolonialität, Gewalt, soziale Praktiken, afro-kolumbianische Student*innen, Rassismus, Kolumbien