# Innovative Claims-Making and Media Diffusion. The Case of Mexico City's Anti-Monuments

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## ABSTRACT

Since 2015, seven large metal structures, termed 'anti-monuments' (*antimonumentos*), have been placed by various civil society actors in Mexico City. Each commemorates a distinct grievance linked to claims of state culpability or inaction. They are atypical of other protest tactics in that they have largely been tolerated by public actors and, seemingly, celebrated by the news media. This study aims to determine the extent to which media coverage has reproduced their claims and contributed to their perceived legitimacy. To answer these questions, the research is theoretically informed by literature from critical policy analysis and social movement studies. While the case study uses a variety of methods, the core empirical analysis relies on qualitative content analysis of 72 articles published by Mexican newspapers since the emergence of the phenomenon (2015-2020). The findings are divided into three principal categories: visibility of claims, resonance, and legitimacy. The results indicate that, in contrast to coverage of other protest actions, the anti-monuments have been profoundly successful in diffusing their claims and gaining favourable media coverage. Although the literature suggests that the media is unlikely to favour the transmission of collective action frames, this tactical innovation was able to unlock a formula for effective media uptake. The text concludes with a discussion of plausible explanatory factors and the broader social and policy implications of these observations. This research is of relevance beyond the case itself and could serve to inform theorization on the relationship between contested claims-making and media diffusion.

**Keywords:** anti-monument, media, legitimacy, social movements, collective action, frames, Mexico City, content analysis

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Overview

In the last several years several 'anti-monuments' have been erected in Mexico City with the aim of giving visibility to past incidents of violence, neglect, or inaction by state actors. The massive steel structures were placed by numerous civil society organizations, in varying degrees of anonymity and without legal authorization, and have been described by the news media as "changing the face of Mexico City" (El Diario 2018).[1] They are part of a broader repertoire of contestation employed by social movement actors to politicize public space, draw attention to diverse causes, and express various demands. As has been observed in the context of other forms of mobilization, in Mexico and more generally, we can expect media representations to discourage the generation or amplification of collective action frames (Rovira Sancho 2013; Klandermans and Goslinga 1996). Interestingly, however, coverage of the emergence and proliferation of the city's anti-monuments contrasts greatly with that which is typical of other protest actions. We can establish that the "media play a crucial (but understudied) role in the diffusion of protest" (Koopmans 2004a, 26), greatly determine the effectiveness of mobilization, and act as the "most obvious shaper of public sensitivity" (della Porta 1995, 180). Therefore, it can be expected that the processes of claims visibilization and the transmission of resonant or legitimizing frames by the media will exert a broader influence within the public sphere.

To further interrogate these observations, this research is guided by a set of core questions:

- How have Mexico City's anti-monuments been portrayed by the news media?
- To what extent have movement claims been reproduced by this coverage? How might the coverage contribute to the increased resonance or legitimacy of these claims?
- What might explain this process, and what social and policy implications might it provoke?

To answer these questions, a broad and holistic analysis must be conducted. This research does not seek to *solve* this puzzle, but rather to "uncover patterns, determine meanings, construct conclusions and build theory" (Patton and Appelbaum 2003, 67). The research design takes the form of a single case study using qualitative content analysis of newspaper articles as the primary method of data analysis (n=72). It finds that media coverage of the issue has, overwhelmingly, reproduced narratives and statements that are likely to contribute to the social resonance and perceived legitimacy of the structures themselves, as well as their demands. Additionally, the coverage tends to expressly report these claims in a way which contributes to their diffusion in the public sphere, with minimal distortion. These findings are relevant not only to developing an understanding of the case itself but could inform broader

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[1] All citations from Spanish-language sources were translated to English by the author.

theorization regarding the transmission of movement claims through the media, and the implications of such.

## 1.2  Case context

Amongst the most prominent structures are those dedicated to the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre, a 2009 day-care fire, a 2006 mine explosion, the 2014 disappearance of 43 students, and to gender-based violence. While the commemorated events carry relevance to the analysis in that they all centralize claims of state culpability, either in relation to the events themselves or subsequent inaction, the details of each are distinct and cannot be listed in full. A brief contextualization is provided here to situate the reader in advance of the theoretical and empirical sections of this dissertation.

The seven anti-monuments illustrate parallels in strategy between different groups. They are aesthetically similar and make strategic use of public space; in the immediate vicinity of state offices or sites of symbolic importance, in highly transited areas, and on major thoroughfares – namely *Paseo de la Reforma*. While placed without authorization, the response by the Mexico City government and the jurisdictions within it has been largely tolerant. This, along with their scale, permanence, and apparent tendency to gain favourable media coverage, sets them apart from other practices of contestation. Such acts of protest are often "criminalized and distorted" in the Mexican media and rarely succeed in transmitting their claims through this platform (Rovira Sancho 2013; Zires 2007; Pastrana 2011). Furthermore, they depart from the typical 'funeralizing function' (Hite and Collins 2009) of traditional monuments and represent, as their name implies, a transgressive view. As articulated in a petition demanding they not be removed, their placement "constitutes an act of collective protest against unpunished social grievances and the demand for truth and justice in each and every one of the events they symbolize" (Colectivo Híjar 2018). Many go further to make discursive demands for state action and accountability or more concrete policy actions. If we understand protest to encompass "sites of contestation in which bodies, symbols, identities, practices, and discourses are used to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized power relations," they are, undoubtedly, an act of protest (della Porta and Diani 2006, 165).[2]

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[2] The anti-monuments should not be seen as movements in themselves, but rather as a tactic used to draw attention to a cause, or set of causes; in the interest of simplicity, the (often unidentified) actors behind them are referred to here as movement actors.

## 1.3 Aim and rationale

Despite having gained widespread media coverage, very little academic research has been done on this topic, and to the knowledge of the author no research has addressed the relationship between this tactic and the media. The gravity of the events memorialized has been suggested as an explanatory factor for the relative tolerance by state actors. While this likely plays a part, contributing to political pressure to allow the anti-monuments to stay put, it is insufficient in explaining their treatment by public actors and the media, given that other protest tactics target the same issues but receive highly distinct responses. To facilitate a better understanding of how this process has taken shape, and its implications, further qualitative research is needed.

The research questions are related to and partially inspired by Burstein's (1999) *issue salience hypothesis*, which asserts that when there is a discrepancy between preferences and policy, the greater the capacity of an organization to increase issue salience in the public sphere, the greater will be their influence on policy action. Testing such a hypothesis, however, would require data on "the activities of interest organizations [...], on the public's preferences, on existing policy, and on legislative action" (15-16). While public perceptions and policy responses are of interest here, measuring or analysing these facets of the issue would be extremely challenging and would suffer crucial validity and reliability issues. Furthermore, studying this issue is challenging because "there are no authorships or direct managers" (Colectivo Híjar 2018), complicating data collection. Given this, the scope of the research is narrowed. Media portrayals form one important piece of this puzzle and their study opens the door to a feasible empirical analysis. A content analysis provides the opportunity to fill an important gap and establish preliminary assertions related to the wider context, as the media interacts with and influences public preferences and potential policy responses. The findings of this research, then, are reflective of a broader shift, given that "the decisive part of interaction between social movements and political authorities is no longer the direct, physical confrontation [...] but the indirect, mediated encounters among contenders in the arena of the mass media public sphere" (Koopmans 2004b, 367). This case is unique and represents a challenge to dominant assertions, and therefore an opportunity to inform broader analysis on tactical innovations and the diffusion of movement claims through the media.

## 1.4 Structure

Having set out a brief contextualization of the case and the rationale of this dissertation, the project will move forward with its theoretical and empirical undertakings. The literature review chapter is divided into three key sections; first, it discusses seminal works on (anti-)monumentalism and memorialization, outlining how this project is informed by key theory and how it differs in a number of regards. Secondly, an overview of theory informed by discursive policy analysis is provided. Thirdly, contributions from social movement studies are discussed, with emphasis on the relationship between movements and the

media, and framing processes. A final section of the literature review is devoted to bridging these fields, drawing links between key concepts and highlighting their compatibility. The analytical framework section draws from the varied literature to construct an explanatory model which will guide the research. In particular, the concepts of visibility, resonance, and legitimacy are utilized (Koopmans 2004b). The framework seeks to centralize this stage of the process without isolating it from the broader context of claims articulation and diffusion. The methodology section highlights the fundamentals of the research design, including both the broader case study and the key empirical focus of this research. The case context and analysis chapter delves deeper into the topic, drawing from a number of research methods and sources to analyse the phenomenon as it exists within this nested context. The findings section discusses the results of the content analysis, focusing on the key concepts of claims visibilization and the diffusion of resonant and legitimizing frames. In brief terms, it finds that this tactic has been unusually successful in transmitting original movement claims and demands. The discussion section first seeks to interpret the findings of this project, drawing links between the empirical results and the broader research which was conducted through other means. It then discusses implications for policy and the general contributions of this research. Finally, the limitations of the study are discussed, giving way to opportunities for further research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the dynamics of contestation is challenging in this case. The lack of literature on the topic necessitates the construction of a framework which draws on a diverse body of work and is compatible with the methodology of qualitative content analysis. To gain an understanding of the issue and construct a valid framework for analysis, literature from a number of fields was reviewed with the intention of drawing links between a number of key theoretical concepts.

### 2.1 (Anti-)monumentalism and memorialization

A review of multi-disciplinary literature on (anti-)monumentality was crucial to uncovering the nature of the phenomenon. The bulk of the research on counter-monuments is focused on Holocaust memorialization in Germany, most notably in the work of James Young (1992). More recently, research has expanded to cases in North America, other parts of Europe, Australasia and post-dictatorship Chile and Argentina. While this research differs greatly from the Mexican case, typically involving state-funded initiatives to commemorate a closed historical period or citizen initiatives of a much smaller scale, it is helpful in informing an understanding of the dynamics at play.

The terms 'anti-monument' and 'counter-monument' have been used to refer to a wide range of actions, without clear consensus on their definition. While there are rhetorical distinctions between the two, they

are used interchangeably here. Essential to understanding the nature of this problem is a conceptualization of the distinctions between monuments, memorials and anti-monuments. Anti-monuments can be defined, principally, as rooted in contestation; they oppose the basis of monumentalism, which seeks to present a singular and glorified version of a historical moment (Torre 2006). Stevens, Franck and Fazakerley (2012, 951) define the emergence of counter-monuments in recent decades as a novel form of commemorative practice and argue that the "most notable and most common feature of anti-monumentality is its opposition to conventional monumental *form* and the employment of alternative, contrasting design techniques, materials and duration" (956, emphasis added). Conversely, for Lacruz and Ramírez (2017, 88) anti-monuments seek to utilize the same concepts present in traditional monuments, but within a practice of deconstruction. Díaz Tovar and Ovalle (2017; 2018; Ovalle and Díaz Tovar 2019) explore the national Mexican context and use 'anti-monument' as a broad conceptual category to describe diverse practices which share the aim of creating "spaces of resistance against discourses of impunity and forgetting" (2018, 2), thereby avoiding of a "monolithic, fetishized and decontextualized memory" (2018, 18).[3]

This research deviates from the varied aforementioned definitions and seeks to preserve a number of analytical attributes as distinct to the anti-monuments studied here. In many regards, they do not fit with the broader scholarship on the topic, which focuses on publicly or institutionally deliberated and funded works by recognized and named artists. Those of this case are a purer act of protest rather than a form of institutional reconciliation. Additionally, they often do not commemorate completed historical moments, but rather seek to create "conscious and intentional process of memorialization throughout the conflict" (Díaz Tovar and Ovalle 2018, 2). This research further narrows its definition, referring only to those that are truly 'monumental' – that is, "large, important and enduring" – in their scale and use of public space (Stevens, Franck and Fazakerley 2012, 951). This should not be seen as neglecting the importance of smaller-scale installations, but to draw a necessary analytical distinction and distinguish anti-monuments from murals or plaques, for instance.

Furthermore, while Young (1992) sees counter-monuments as rejecting the form, prominence and durability of conventional monuments, such attributes do not hold true in this case. In fact, across these criteria the anti-monuments examined in this research maintain or mirror the characteristics of public art, but differ in that "they express a position opposing a particular belief or event rather than affirming it" (Stevens, Franck and Fazakerley 2012, 952). Such a conceptualization is clearly adopted in this case; petitions released parallel to the placement of the anti-monuments have emphasized that they decry "embalmed memory [and] bronze heroes," aiming rather to "make evident the relationship between the

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[3] A more comprehensive overview of contested memory is viewable in the thesis report, a Mundus MAPP requirement which preceded the production of this dissertation (attached as a Special Annex.)

past, the present struggle, and the desired future" (Híjar 2019). They do fit, then, with the key role of anti-monuments as defined by Young (1992, 279), which is to "rise up symbolically against injustice."

## 2.2 Deliberative policy analysis

This research positions itself, broadly, within critical policy studies, drawing heavily from works on deliberative policy analysis (see Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Fischer and Forester 1993; Li and Wagenaar 2019). It assumes the perspective of Fischer and Forester (1993, 1-2), who see policymaking as "a constant discursive struggle over the criteria of social classification, the boundaries of problem categories, the intersubjective interpretation of common experiences, the conceptual framing of problems, and the definitions of ideas that guide the ways people create the shared meanings which motivate them to act." Deliberative policy analysis originated within the argumentative turn in policy studies, which sought to bring back the role of "discursive reflection and argumentation" as fundamentally shaping policy (Fischer and Gottweis 2012, 7). This stream suggests that preferences are shaped through *interaction*, and that the dynamics of deliberation necessitate a new set of analytical techniques, specifically encouraging ethnographic and textual analysis. It represents a pushback against a neopositivist approach and sees policy as 'contextually situated' and defined by complex networks of actors, which blur the traditional boundaries between institutional and noninstitutional political spaces. Hajer (2003, 102) argues that we "cannot confine our research to the direct sphere of policymaking" and, rather, must seek to identify underlooked actors and communities in order to understand their concerns. This research concerns the development and dissemination of a *policy discourse*, as conceptualized by Schön and Rein (1993, 145), which involves "interactions of individuals, interest groups, social movements, and institutions through which problematic situations are converted to policy problems, agendas are set, decisions are made, and actions are taken." These processes exist outside of formal policy spheres and, rather, are shaped by various social agents who aim to influence the dominant discourses which form the basis of policy decisions. Decision-makers work within the bounds of the political settings within which they operate, and thus a shift in social or political context has the capacity to expand or restrict their actions.

## 2.3 Movements, media, and framing

A third field of study which heavily informed this research is centred around social movement studies. Specifically, it draws on literature on the interactions between movements and media, as well as processes of issue framing. This integrates well with the literature on policy, as the media contribute to policy processes both "by selecting issues of importance to highlight to the public and policy makers" and "by problematizing policy in a way that attached meaning to it in a manner that is comprehensible (framing and constructing narratives)" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 472). We can view social movements as engaging in constant processes of diffusion and visibility to achieve success, and the media as the

main platform through which actors seek to present their claims and demands to the public (Rovira Sancho 2012, 1).

The application of a framing perspective, which "views movements as signifying agents engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning" (Snow 2004, 384) is useful for understanding the dynamics of negotiation and contention inherent to the issue. Snow and Benford (1988, 198) define framing as the assignation of meaning "in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists." In this sense, both movement actors and the media can be seen as producers of frames, and the key question here involves the degree to which the media has diffused relatively unaltered movement frames. This research is less concerned with the articulation of frames, which are nonetheless important to understanding their subsequent transmission, but shifts its focus to how the media has *projected* these frames in ways which may increase their legitimacy.

To understand how the media has (or has not) reproduced the frames constructed by movement actors, we can take Entman's (1993, 52) classic definition of framing, as the selection of "some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described." Individual frames can be seen as resultant of broader media narratives, whereby decisions are made about how to portray "characters, plot, causal implications, and policy solutions presented" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 478).

## 2.4 Bridging the fields

While the review of the literature was an eclectic process, bringing together concepts from distinct areas of study, the fields are highly compatible. Goldstone (2003, 11) affirms that "[t]he wall that once separated studies of social movements from the study of institutionalized politics is now crumbling under a barrage of new findings and criticism." Policy studies have increasingly come to value social movements as relevant actors within the policy cycle and as capable of enhancing our understanding of policy (Hajer 2003, 102). Bridging these fields and integrating framing is useful because a frame-critical policy analysis seeks to identify "the taken-for-granted assumptions that underlie people's apparently natural understandings and actions in a problematic policy situation," allowing for a "better grasp [on] the relationships between hidden premises and normative conclusions" (Schön and Rein 1993, 151).
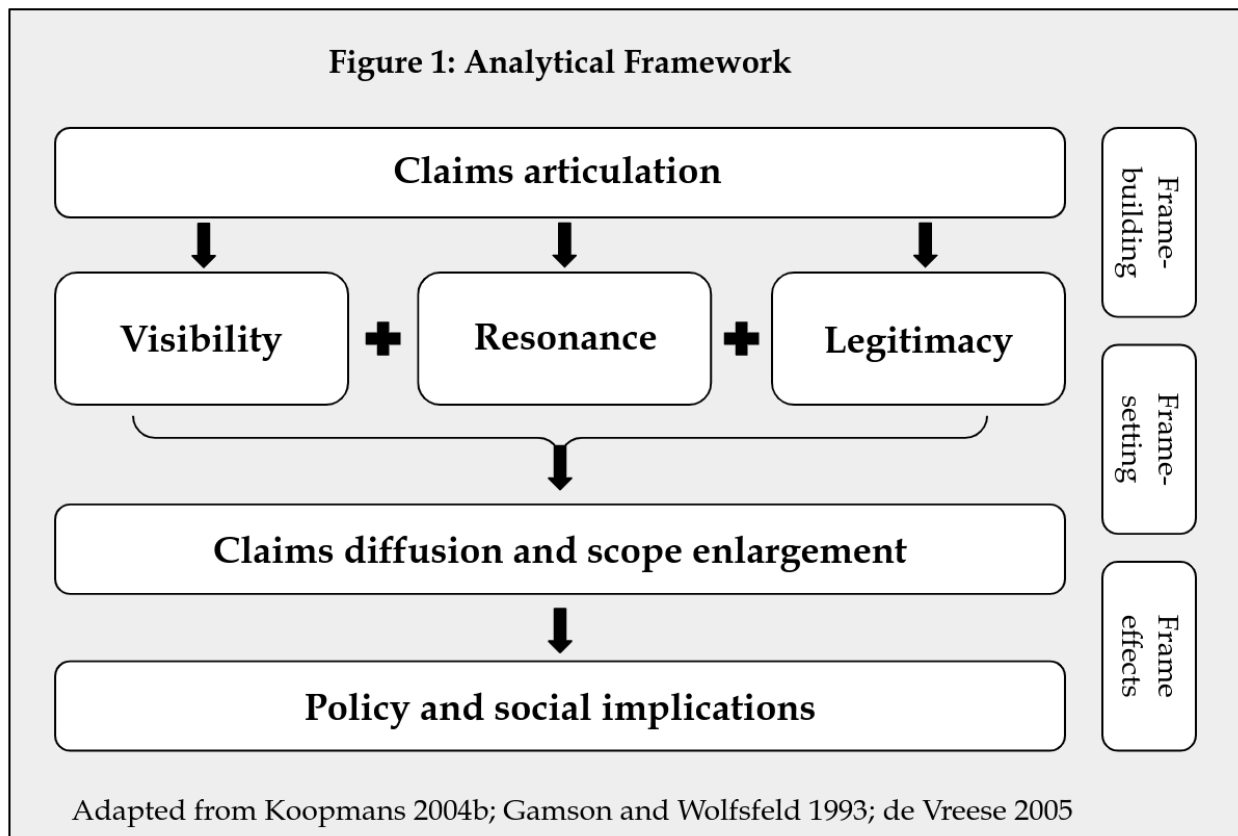
## 3. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Building a framework

The analytical framework, situated broadly within the aforementioned literature, borrows from a number of social movement scholars to construct a path forward and plausible explanations for the processes of claims diffusion. The framework centralizes news media as a principal actor within the public sphere and as the stage upon which contested claims are negotiated and validated

Koopmans (2004b) establishes three selection mechanisms, or 'discursive opportunities,' through which information is mediated. Firstly, *visibility*, or the presence of media coverage is "a necessary condition for a message to influence the public discourse" (373). While Koopmans views visibility as rooted in the existence of coverage, here it is modified to consider the visibility of *claims* within existing coverage. Visibility is likely only possible if the material is likely to provoke a reaction from a given audience; that is, if it exhibits *resonance*. Koopmans divides resonance into two sub-categories – *consonance* and *dissonance* – to reflect that resonance is not necessarily always linked to a positive portrayal. Finally, *legitimacy* can be described as the degree to which reactions in the public realm support or reject the claims presented, or in this case how their portrayal is likely to contribute to public perceptions. Actors seek high resonance and high legitimacy in the representation of their claims, but this is difficult to obtain because "normally high resonance is only achieved at the cost of an increase in controversiality and thereby a net decrease in legitimacy" (Koopmans 2004b, 375). Again, initial reviews of news coverage on the case seemed to conflict with this assertion, adding to the suspicion that the tactic has achieved an unusual portrayal by the media and subsequent transmission of claims.

Further, de Vreese (2005) constructs an *integrated process model of framing*, composed of three core elements: frame-building, frame-setting, and frame effects. Frame-building involves interaction and negotiation between media, elites, and social movement actors (de Vreese 2005, 52), the outcome of which is the frames present in the texts. Frame-setting involves the transmission of these frames in ways which are likely to impact "learning, interpretation, and evaluation of issues and events" (de Vreese 2005, 52). As the core element of this research involves an empirical analysis of how frames are represented in the news, it is thus an issue of both frame-building and setting. The frame effects stage is relevant to understanding the many social and policy implications and broader social shifts that are resultant of these processes, as outlined in the discussion section. This research does not seek to construct a typology or comprehensive analysis of the frames present, but rather to analyse how they contribute to the diffusion of movement claims within a set context. Figure 1 provides a visualization of the analytical framework.

**Figure 1: Analytical Framework**

Claims articulation

Visibility ✚ Resonance ✚ Legitimacy

Claims diffusion and scope enlargement

Policy and social implications

Frame-building

Frame-setting

Frame effects

Adapted from Koopmans 2004b; Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993; de Vreese 2005

While Koopmans envisions the concepts of visibility, resonance and legitimacy as selection mechanisms, or pre-existing requisites for successful uptake, they are also transmitted in the coverage itself. Thus, if reflected in news frames we can understand this to indicate the extension of movement frames. In this sense, these mechanisms represent both the frame-building stage and once transmitted, the frame-setting stage. These processes can be linked to Gamson and Wolfsfeld's (1993) explanation of the mutual mechanisms of dependency between movement actors and the media: mobilization, validation, and scope enlargement. Applying this extra conceptual layer is useful as it allows us to understand the effects of the uptake and transmission of movement claims.

This model should not be viewed as a pure application of the original theoretical assertions, but as a re-interpretation to build a hybrid framework which allows for analysis of the core issue within its broader context. While the empirical portion of this research focuses on the 'frame-setting' phase of this framework, this cannot be isolated from its wider context. This is of great relevance to broader patterns and processes, as "the narratives used by media [...] to describe policies, problems, and opponents can be powerful in the context of shaping public opinion and policy agendas (Crow and Lawlow 2016, 475).

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Overview of research design

This paper adopts a single case study as the basis of its research design, utilizing qualitative content analysis as a primary method. This is nestled within an ample set of research tools, given that "the key feature of the case study approach is not method or data but the emphasis on understanding processes as they occur in their context" (Hartley 1994, 227). The research design was informed through exploratory research conducted in Mexico City in February of 2020 including observatory visits and a review of primary and secondary resources.

A single case study was deemed appropriate given that the research stems from a "desire to understand complex social phenomena" and "retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin 2009, 2). The case can be seen as a *critical instance* or *revelatory case* in that it is distinctive and notable and is not directly comparable with another case (Baškarada 2014, 7). The research design was complicated by the nuance of the problem and the lack of academic consensus or debate on its nature. Indeed, "such narratives may be difficult or impossible to summarize into neat scientific formulae, general propositions, and theories," and a falsifiable analysis may risk stripping the case of its 'rich ambiguity' (Flyvbjerg 2006, 237). Given this, the research does not seek to test empirical hypotheses, although it was informed by a number of initial expectations and observations.

The research takes the form of an embedded case study in that it involves the analysis of a number of sub-units of analysis (Yin 2009, 50); principally, media as represented by newspaper articles and the text within them. Coded units range from sentence fragments to paragraphs, and variables are applied to each article. Visual analysis was also utilized in the initial analytical steps, as has become increasingly common within social movement studies (Doerr 2014, 19) and has been noted as a neglected element for framing research (Matthes 2009, 349).

The frame-building and frame effects stages, as outlined in the theoretical framework, are informed primarily by a literature review and external empirical evidence. The intermediary stage of frame-setting is informed through content analysis and is the central focus of this thesis. Including a broader contextual analysis is favored as "research should specify the conditions under which frames emerge and how they operate in public opinion formation" (de Vreese 2005, 60). Within this structure, the media plays a dual role, and is both a *receiver* and *producer* of frames. Similarly, we can see the resultant frames as either the dependent or independent variable; that is, as results of movement actions or other intervening factors which influenced the coverage, or as now-established patterns of representation which will have subsequent framing effects.

Additionally, this research does not necessarily aim to extrapolate its findings to a broader context, but rather build initial understandings about a unique situation, allowing for the development of new constructs and prepositions (Baškarada 2014, 6). This rationale is based in Flyvbjerg's (2006, 227) assertion that although "knowledge cannot be formally generalized does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society."

## 4.2 Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis was selected as the primary method for several reasons. First, it is inherently compatible with case study research and can "[enhance] rigor, validity, and reliability" (Kohlbacher 2006, 87). Additionally, given the lack of literature on the topic, that which exists must be understood within the broader theoretical context and validated through the data that *is* available, which is largely derived from news articles. Qualitative content analysis is valued for its descriptive role, "[providing] insight into the specific messages within the discourse represented in mass media," but is most useful when it takes on an inferential or predictive function to explore the mechanisms of media uptake (Macnamara 2003, 4). Although several quantitative tools were used to inform the analysis,[4] including initial word frequency queries, and quantified code co-occurrence and distribution models, a primarily qualitative approach was favoured in order to maintain "context [as] central to the interpretation and analysis of the material" (Kohlbacher 2006, 79).

Traditionally, content analysis has been defined in opposition to discourse analysis and other interpretative methods of textual analysis. Although these two methods are still often juxtaposed or seen as in epistemological contention with one another, this research assumes a more relaxed division which allows for "the illumination of [ascribed meanings], patterns and trends that are not immediately observable" (Green Saraisky 2015, 27). It seeks to retain the rigor and replicability of content analysis, while valuing the contributions of discourse analysis.

The methodology is integrated with the theoretical framework, which informs the main coding categories of visibility, resonance, and legitimacy. The establishment of a partial *a priori* design was crucial to the quantitative components of the analysis, in accordance with Neuendorf's (2002) 'scientific method' of content analysis. The qualitative components, however, primarily employ the conventional approach to content analysis, drawing inductively from the data to establish coding rules and identify the frames of which each category is composed (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). Given that the case is under-studied, a high degree of flexibility and reflexivity in coding processes was necessary.

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[4] These functions of MAXQDA were considered analytic tools rather than tools for data presentation. Given the scale of the project, in terms of both number of articles and codes, they do not contribute to reader comprehension of the analysis, although several are included in the appendix to further quantify and support the research findings. Additionally, those visualization or analytical tools which use original text are in Spanish, further complicating visualization.

Entman (1993, 57) cautions against neglecting to measure salience (resonance) in textual elements – the clustering of which is representative of a frame – which may misrepresent media data. This methodology draws from Entman's suggestions but breaks with them in one regard: while Entman asserts that "[t]he major task of determining textual meaning should be to identify and describe frames" (Entman 1993, 57), this analysis does not seek to create a typology or descriptive account of the frames present. Rather, it analyses how movement frames were transmitted through media representation. Media coverage is not considered the most important aspect of this, but the most empirically accessible, reliable, and indicative of the broader phenomenon.

Following Yin (2009, 41), a number of measures were taken to ensure validity within the research design and execution. Construct validity was considered during the process of operationalizing concepts. Namely, the research relies on multiple sources of evidence and aims to ensure a broad sampling frame for data collection. The potential validity issues of an inductive approach (Macnamara 2005, 9) were remedied by completing a final round of review once all codes had been set.

## 4.3  Techniques of data gathering

While this research was informed by exploratory interviews and direct observation conducted during February of 2020, the main method of data analysis is qualitative content analysis of media reports from 6 major Mexican newspapers. This was facilitated using Holsti's (1968, 653) multi-stage selection process, which involved the selection of the sender (media outlet), the selection of documents (sampling frame), and the selection of a subset (sample). The newspapers were selected from the Mexican government's database of registered print media (*Padrón Nacional de Medios Impresos* - PNMI). A number of selection criteria were applied: only publications published both in print and digitally, categorized as 'newspapers,' published daily, and with distribution in a majority of Mexico's 32 states were considered for selection. From there, some publications were excluded based on their limited focus, including *El Financiero* and *El Economista,* which primarily cover issues related to the economy, *Récord* and *Esto,* which cover sports, and those publications falling into the genre of *nota roja*, sensationalized crime reporting, including *La Prensa*, *El Gráfico*, and *Metro*. From the remainder, six publications were selected with the aim of ensuring a broad represented readership base. A further nine articles by smaller media outlets were integrated into the analysis under the category of 'other.' This was important as their coverage of the issue was more detailed and extensive than typical of the other media outlets and was considered an accessible and detailed source of information on the topic.

For each newspaper, either print or digital publications were selected to ensure there was no overlap between articles during a set timeframe for publication. In both cases, searches were done for the words '*antimonumento*,' '*antimonumentos*,' and '*antimonumenta*.' Each article was then reviewed to determine if the central focus was related to the structures themselves. Articles which did not meet the

criteria were manually excluded from analysis, including those which mentioned the structures in passing or as a site of concentration in a purely informational sense. The publication dates were limited to April 26, 2015, the day the first structure was placed, to April 26, 2020. The dates were set to capture the broadest possible sample of articles. The time frame, however, presented a major limitation in that both PressReader and most publication's archives did not give access to articles published during the full five-year span, and thus the sample is skewed towards more recently published articles. For this reason, this research does not seek to provide a longitudinal analysis and should not be seen as reflective of media narratives on the *emergence* of anti-monuments, but rather of their *proliferation*. When available, articles which centralize the structures, as opposed to the movements, are rare before 2017, which suggests that media coverage of the issue has increased progressively since the placement of the first anti-monument in April of 2015. The appendix details the procedures and limitations for each selected publication. In total, 72 articles were selected for analysis; the percentage of each publication is represented in Figure 2. Most articles analysed were classified as news media, as evidenced in Figure 3, although there was representation of several other styles, most notably special reportage pieces which focused on anti-monuments as a collective phenomenon, often employing extensive graphic representation or maps.

**Figure 2: Percentage of texts analysed, by newspaper**

75.0%

1.4%
1.4%

19.4%

2.8%

Blurb
Interview
News
Opinion/editorial
Reportage/special feature
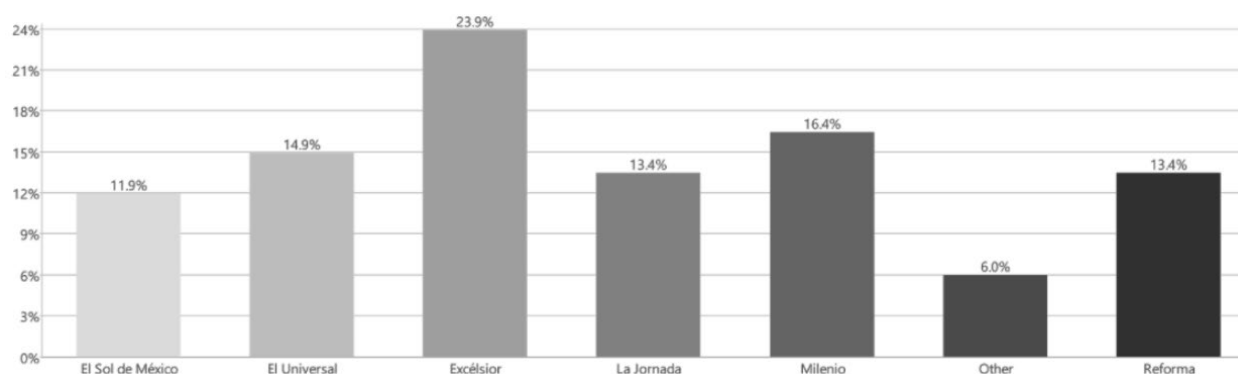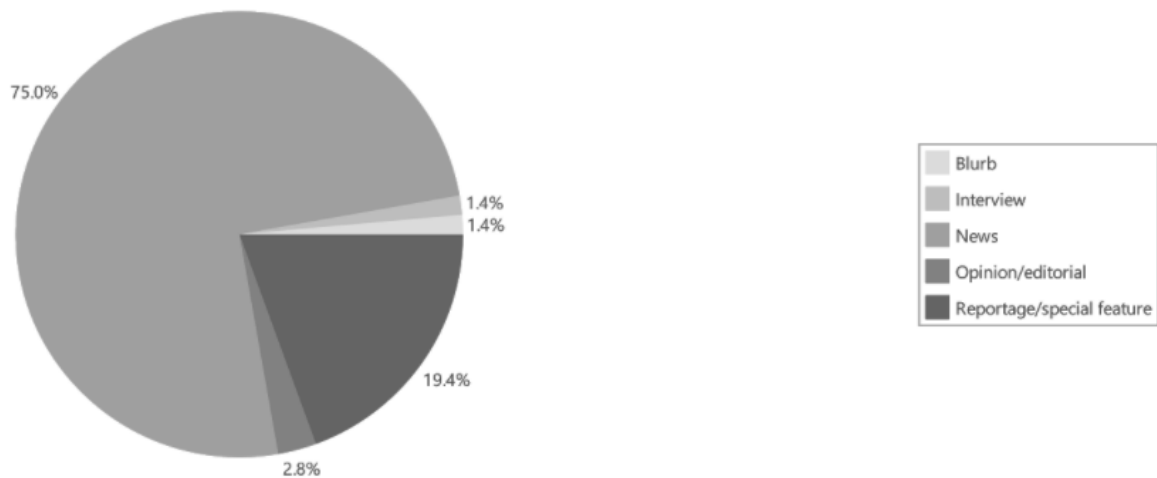
## 4.4 Method of analysis

Analysis was conducted using MAXQDA 2020 (VERBI Software, 2019). Initially, word frequency counts were run to establish common concepts and aid in the development of indicators for the theoretical categories of visibility, resonance, and legitimacy. The initial use of computational aids was deemed appropriate as a small intermediate step given the reliability of computer-assisted text analysis over manual forms of analysis (Krippendorff 2004, 258-281). To retain semantic validity, however, all articles were reviewed and coded manually. In advance of the coding process, operational definitions were set for the key concepts:

- **Resonance** was measured through the presence of resonant frames, or those which would be expected to garner reactions from an audience. Typically, this involved the transmission of information which was not simply factual or informational but added a value statement or emotive portrayal. In line with Koopmans' (2004b) classification, this was divided into consonance and dissonance.

- **Consonance** "takes the form of favourable verbal statements, but includes in principle any public action that signals support, endorsement, or encouragement of the actor, his actions, or his aims, e.g., court rulings in favour of an actor, or executive action meeting the actor's demands" (Koopmans 2004b, 374). This was adapted to include broader statements which would be likely to draw empathetic responses.

- **Dissonance** involves the transmission of statements or information which "condemns, expresses disagreement with, or actively counters an actor, [or their actions or claims]" (Koopmans 2004b, 374).

- **Visibility** is measured by the extent to which claims are transmitted by the media. While Koopmans views visibility as the extent or breadth of media coverage, here it is modified to

indicate visibility of movement *claims* within coverage. This involves assessing whether articles include specific references to claims, accusations, or demands in a way which would be expected to further public knowledge of the issue.

- **Legitimacy** is measured by the presence of legitimizing frames or narratives which would be expected to contribute to "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definition" (Suchman 1995, 574).

An article does not have to actively advocate for or promote a certain narrative in order to be coded with these categories. For instance, an article may cite support from authorities or experts, contributing to the diffusion of information with a legitimizing function, or may cite opposition which communicates dissonance, without necessarily assuming this position. Examples of selected indicators for each key concept are included in Table 1.

**Table 1: Key coded indicators**

| | Visibility | Resonance | | Legitimacy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Consonance | Dissonance | |
| **Key coded indicators** | Claims or demands articulated in article; names state or government actors as target of claims; references issue as an act of protest; references a broader issue or struggle; references movement strategy; expresses a need for action | Reference of importance of issue to society; references to symbolic importance; portrayed as an emotional issue; references to memory or grief; portrays commemorated issue negatively | Expresses opposition; highlights AMs as an illegal practice; cites opposition by authorities or experts; references need for regulation or lack of order; references possible or perceived negative outcomes | Framed as a justice or human rights issue; references state culpability or impunity; cites support from authorities or experts; references possible or perceived positive impacts; frames tactic as a legitimate expression of grievance |

The full coding structure is included in the appendix. In total, 1867 segments were coded throughout the 72 articles, 1019 of which were under the key categories of visibility (234 coded segments), resonance (446 coded segments), and legitimacy (339 coded segments). Codes were also developed to classify actors (claimants), claim addressees (targets) and the nature of institutional involvement. This allowed for a deeper analysis of the relationships between the key categories and other concepts, for instance understanding what sorts of portrayals (family grievance, response to impunity) were linked with legitimizing coverage.

In effect, the empirical analysis seeks to understand the 'visible realm' of the relationship between movement actors and the media, "wherein media provide coverage of policy domains; contribute to the formation of public opinion; and, indirectly, constrain the options available to policy makers" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 475). This is set within a more comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of anti-monumentalism in Mexico City as it relates to the building, setting, and effects of framing.

## 5. CASE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Setting the stage

It must first be acknowledged that this phenomenon, like any form of contention, "is part of a complex web of social relations linking particular contenders to supporters, opponents, competitors, and neutral third parties, and stretching across societal sectors, social groups, and often across national boundaries" (Koopmans 2004a, 40). To understand the broader context of the case and inform a deeper analysis, a variety of research techniques were used, including during fieldwork conducted in February of 2020 and through a review of primary documents including petitions and press releases linked to the anti-monuments.

Seven anti-monuments in Mexico City were identified and selected based on a set of shared characteristics. They are referred to by news media with varying names and are listed here with the most used terms linking them to the cases they commemorate. They are listed in greater detail in a classification sheet in the appendix and include, by order of placement:

1. **Anti-monument +43** - Placed in April of 2015 to commemorate the 2014 disappearance of 43 students in Iguala, Guerrero (Caso Ayotzinapa)

2. **Anti-monument Guardería ABC** - Placed in June of 2017 to commemorate a 2009 day-care fire which killed 49 children in Hermosillo, Sonora

3. **Anti-monument David y Miguel** - Placed in January of 2018 to commemorate the 2012 disappearance of two men in Guerrero

4. **Anti-monument Pasta de Conchos** - Placed in February of 2018 to commemorate a 2006 mine explosion which left 65 miners trapped and their bodies never recovered in Coahuila

5. **Anti-monument Tlatelolco** - Placed in October of 2018 to commemorate the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre which left estimated hundreds of people dead in Mexico City

6. *Antimonumenta* **GBV** - Placed in March of 2019 to draw attention to femicide and broader gender-based violence (GBV); ongoing and national

7. **Anti-monument News Divine** - Placed in June of 2019 to commemorate a failed 2008 police operation which killed 13 people in a Mexico City nightclub (since removed)[5]

The phenomenon of anti-monumentalism in Mexico exhibits several shared characteristics:

○ They are placed with (relative) permanence in mind

○ They exist on a large scale, necessitating planning, coordination, and financial or material resources

○ They are placed without legal authorization

○ They mimic public art and seek to integrate with the urban landscape

○ They address a broad but targeted audience

○ They strategically utilize public space

○ They seek interaction with their surroundings or integrate other protest tactics

The visual characteristics of the pieces typically fit within the urban environment; that is, they do not aim to appear subversive within the spaces they occupy. Specifically, they mirror the style and scale of recently popularized public works involving large and colourful graphic lettering, thereby setting themselves apart from more temporal protest tactics and methods of contestation. Photographs of the six anti-monuments which are still standing are included here for context (taken by the author in February of 2020).

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[5] The one anti-monument which was placed in a different municipal jurisdiction of Mexico City (*Alcaldía Gustavo A. Madero*), and which clearly targeted claims towards elected officials in that jurisdiction, was removed by the municipality shortly after it was placed. The discrepancy between this and the broader institutional toleration could provide an interesting avenue for further research.

**Anti-monument +43 (Caso Ayotzinapa)**



**Anti-monument Guardería ABC**



**Anti-monument David y Miguel**



**Anti-monument Pasta de Conchos**

**Anti-monument Tlatelolco**



*Antimonumenta* **GBV**

The location of the anti-monuments considered in this research has clear strategic roots and symbolic implications. Six of the seven, and all those that remain, are located within the central municipality of Cuauhtémoc, one of Mexico City's 16 boroughs and the commercial and political heart of the city (Delegación de Cuauhtémoc 2017, 70). They are mapped in Figure 4.[6]
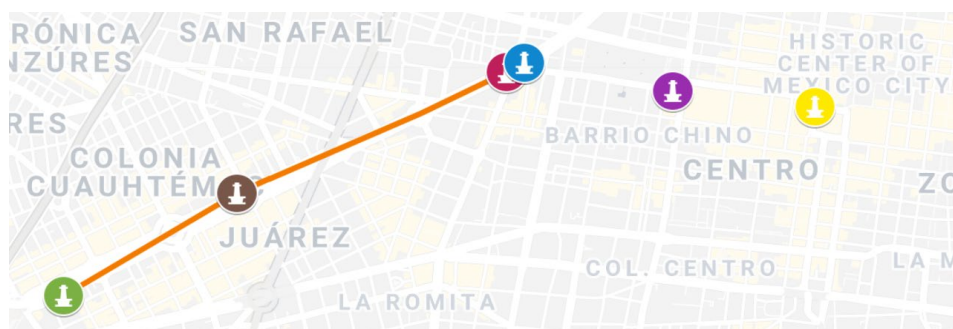


A total of four of the seven anti-monuments which comprise this analysis are situated on Paseo de la Reforma, "the most important symbolic monumental route in the Americas; for its history, quantity and quality of monuments, and the vicissitudes that accompanied it over time in terms of disputes over land of historical-political significance" (Gutiérrez Viñuales 2004, 67). This illustrates a strategic component

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[6] An interactive map of the anti-monuments and proximate sites of relevance can be viewed here (by author).

to their shared struggle for resignification. Furthermore, all of the structure were placed in close proximity to symbolically important sites; the Guardería ABC anti-monument sits at the foot of the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), an institution to which it directs many of its demands; the +43 and David y Miguel structures are located in front of what is known as the 'corner of information' given its proximity to a number of newspaper headquarters; and the Pasta de Conchos anti-monument lays in front of the Mexican Stock Exchange. The anti-monument to the Tlatelolco massacre of 1968 sits parallel to the National Palace at the *Zócalo* (central plaza), "acknowledged as a place in which to perform either Mexican identity or dissent vis-a-vis what is acceptable as such" (Crane 2017, 274). The proximate sites are mapped in Figure 5 to provide further context.

**Figure 5: Map of significant placement sites**
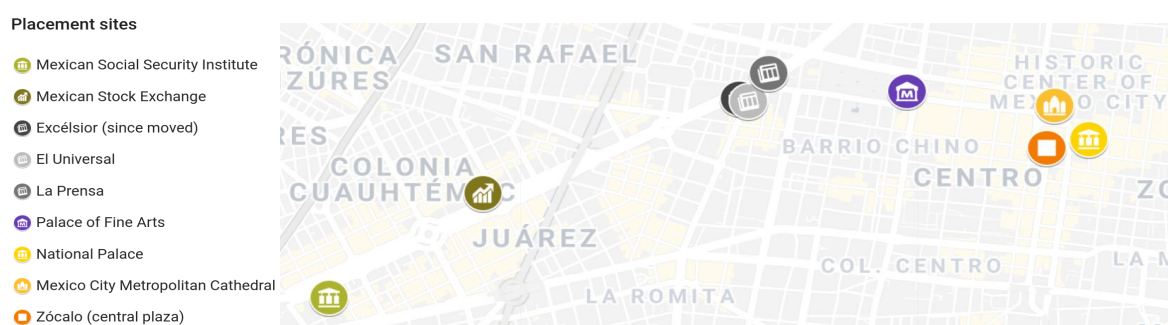


5.2 **The emergence of the anti-monuments**

The first anti-monument to emerge, placed in April of 2015, commemorated the 2014 disappearance of 43 students in the state of Guerrero ('Caso Ayotzinapa'). This case is essential to understanding the phenomenon of anti-monumentalism in Mexico; such an instance of state-involved violence (OHCHR 2018) was unseen since the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre. It provoked a major socio-political crisis marked by mass protests, including other spatial tactics, such as protest camps and murals (Medina 2015, 2). The placement of the anti-monument +43, a large steel structure measuring roughly three metres wide and weighing an estimated 800 kilograms, has been called the "[inauguration] of a new tactic in the repertoire of social protest" (Gutiérrez Galindo 2019). The '+' represents both a discursive demand for the students' return and links their disappearance to that of the many more who have disappeared since Mexico's 'war on drugs' began in 2006 (Díaz Tovar and Ovalle, 2018, 16). Below the numbers is the phrase '*They took them alive, so we want them alive!*' Its placement has been interpreted as a performative act of protest and as marking the emergence of a wave of contestation which has been artistically visualized in public space (Gutiérrez Galindo 2019, 364), and it undoubtedly inspired those that followed.

## 5.3 Claims articulation

While the anti-monuments themselves typically make broad claims for 'justice,' 'truth,' and 'respect' (Híjar 2019), they are also used as a stage for the articulation of more precise demands. This was evident throughout the fieldwork undertaken in February of 2020, where various events were taking place during visits to the sites, including a strategic meeting of parents of children who survived the Guardería ABC fire regarding health care and social security demands, and a series of vigils and protests at the *antimonumenta* to femicide. We can view them as "sites of contestation in which bodies, symbols, identities, practices, and discourses are used to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized power relations" (Taylor and van Dyke 2004, 268).

A short statement from the +43 Commission, headed by parents of the students, proclaimed that the +43 structure is an anti-monument in that "it does not aspire to perpetuate memory [but to act as a] permanent protest of reclamation and justice directed to the state within public space" (BajoPalabra 2015). The communication broadens its claims and decries the "total impunity and responsibility of the Mexican state" and demands respect for the anti-monument from public authorities as a "symbol of resistance for memory and justice, against the normalization of violence and the strategy of oblivion which has fostered impunity." Similarly, the Guardería ABC petition targets "the Mexican state, the different powers that compose it, the three levels of government and all those who with their acts or omissions caused the worst childhood tragedy in the history of [Mexico]" (Fraijo 2017), illustrating how demands were built around the concepts of impunity and justice. They make clear policy demands, specifically denouncing delays in the application of the '5th of June law' on children's services and welfare, named in reference to the Guardería ABC case. They direct their demands not only broadly to the state or acting government, but specifically naming the "two presidents of the Republic, [three] governors of [the state of] Sonora, three presidents of the [Supreme Court of Mexico], four general directors of the [Mexican Social Security Institute], five attorney generals [...], 256 senators and 1500 federal deputies" (Fraijo 2017) as culpable in an "incomplete and late" journey to justice. The *antimonumenta*, which aims to provide "a space of memory and struggle" (Colectivas de mujeres contra el feminicidio y la violencia, 2019) is especially informational; the associated petition provides data on the scale of gender-based violence in Mexico and specifically demands structural changes.

## 5.4 Institutional Responses

There is an institutional organ clearly tasked with the regulation of such issues, the Mexico City Commission on Monuments and Art in Public Spaces (*Comité de Monumentos y Obras Artísticas en Espacios Públicos de la Ciudad de México* - COMAEP), under the direction of the Secretary of Urban Development and Housing. Their mandate clearly indicates the power to "authorize the installation, relocation, or removal of historic or artistic monuments, painted murals, sculptures, or any work of art

within the public domain of the Federal District [Mexico City] that are of common use, such as plazas, streets, avenues, walkways, gardens and public parks" (Gaceta Oficial del Distrito Federal 2013, Article 3, Point II). This cannot be seen, then, as an administrative gap, but as a conscious decision not to enforce existing legislation. Furthermore, it should be noted that the phenomenon spans several distinct administrations at the national, city-wide, and municipal levels of government.

## 6. FINDINGS

### 6.1 Results of qualitative content analysis

This analysis yielded interesting findings related to the ways in which the media represents the phenomenon of anti-monuments. While an "issue-specific approach to the study of news frames allows for a profound level of specificity and details relevant to the event or issue under investigation," the tendency to distinguish separate frames for each study limits the potential for further "generaliz[ation], compar[ison], and use as empirical evidence for theory building" (de Vreese 2005, 55). Therefore, rather than identify issue-specific frames or compile a typology, which could limit the applicability of this research, it favoured the identification of links which contributed to a number of broad, legitimizing or resonant frames or increased claims visibility. We can understand the results from the content analysis to reflect the ways in which coverage used frames to turn "a simple list of facts into a story by selecting and emphasizing attributes that draw attention to the situation and persuade readers to understand an issue in a particular way" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 476). Overall, the findings support the core assumptions of the theoretical framework, but in many ways contradict dominant understandings within the literature. The findings suggest that as a tactic, the use of anti-monuments has been exceptionally successful in frame articulation and amplification.

Although there was some variation between publications, all six of the primary selected publications exhibited these general findings, as illustrated in Table 2. The nine articles categorized as 'Other,' which were largely more independent media outlets, unsurprisingly ranked highest in visibility, consonance, and legitimacy. Interestingly, although articles published by El Universal had the highest rate of statements related to dissonance, mentioning illegality or elite opposition, they also exhibited a high average number of consonant coded segments, typically involving positive and emotive portrayals.

**Table 2: Average number of coded segments under each category per article, by publication**

|  | Visibility | Consonance | Dissonance | Legitimacy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Excélsior | 1.8 | 2.9 | 0.8 | 2.6 |
| Reforma | 2.6 | 2.2 | 1.1 | 3.3 |
| El Universal | 4.2 | 6.7 | 5.1 | 7.2 |
| Milenio | 3.0 | 3.0 | 1.3 | 3.1 |
| La Jornada | 2.7 | 3.3 | 2.3 | 4.8 |
| El Sol de México | 4.3 | 5.3 | 1.3 | 5.4 |
| Other | 5.4 | 8.8 | 1.0 | 8.3 |
| **Overall mean** | **3.4** | **4.6** | **1.8** | **5** |

In general terms, these findings indicate that this tactic enjoyed almost universal success in transmitting claims and gaining resonant and legitimizing portrayals through the media.

The nature of these results will be discussed in further detail, divided into the three key analytical categories of visibility, resonance, and legitimacy. Individual articles are cited with a classification system which uses a two-letter shorthand to refer to the publication, followed by the date, and a 'p' for print publications or 'd' for digital publications (XXDDMMYYp/d). A full list of articles is included in the appendix.

a) *Visibility*

Gaining basic visibility – the mere presence of coverage – is challenging for protest actors; there is high competition for the sparse communicative space available and most groups fail to have their messages diffused in the public sphere (Koopmans 2004b, 372). The findings suggest that, as a tactic, the anti-monuments are profoundly effective in transmitting their claims in a way that sees minimal distortion when compared to other protest actions. The four primary sub-codes of visibility are represented in Figure 6, which demonstrates a clear tendency to directly articulate movement claims, present in 87.5% of articles.

**Figure 6: Percentage of articles with coded indicators of visibility**
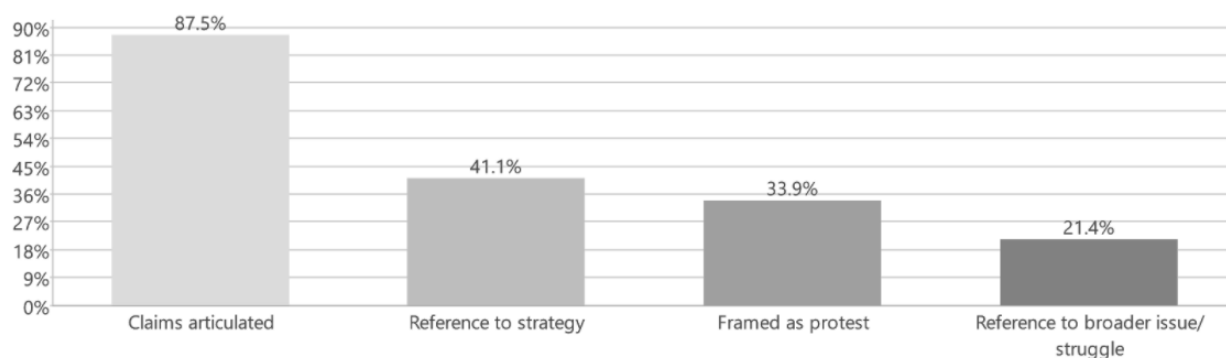


A majority of articles (87.5%) directly articulated movement claims, suggesting that this is an effective tactic for the diffusion of information and potential mobilization of support for demands. In contradiction of what might be expected from the literature on claims representation in the media, the claims were often expressed in a precise and detailed manner. This was evident amongst coverage of all anti-monuments and involved statements to the effect of: "*they claim that [the bodies have not been recovered and] that [mine] workers continue working under risky conditions*" (OTH270419p) or "*they also ask for access to geolocalization and communications data from the 17 cell-phones [which were collected as evidence]*" (MI160517d).

Furthermore, the issue has received a high degree of prominent visual representation, with several front cover or half page spreads, and a strong tendency to couple news stories with photographs, illustrations, or maps of the locations of the anti-monuments.

b) *Resonance*

In general, the articles analysed overwhelmingly invoked resonant frames and narratives, portraying the issue using language which is atypical of coverage of other protest events. Although it is typical for media narratives to involve stories which "include heroes, victims, and villains, all of whom fulfil a basic purpose of engendering an emotive response from the reader" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 478), it is unusual that the anti-monuments and the actors behind them are almost universally protagonized. This is evidenced in Figure 7, which shows that 93.8% of articles communicated consonant frames.

**Figure 7: Percentage of articles exhibiting consonant and dissonant frames**
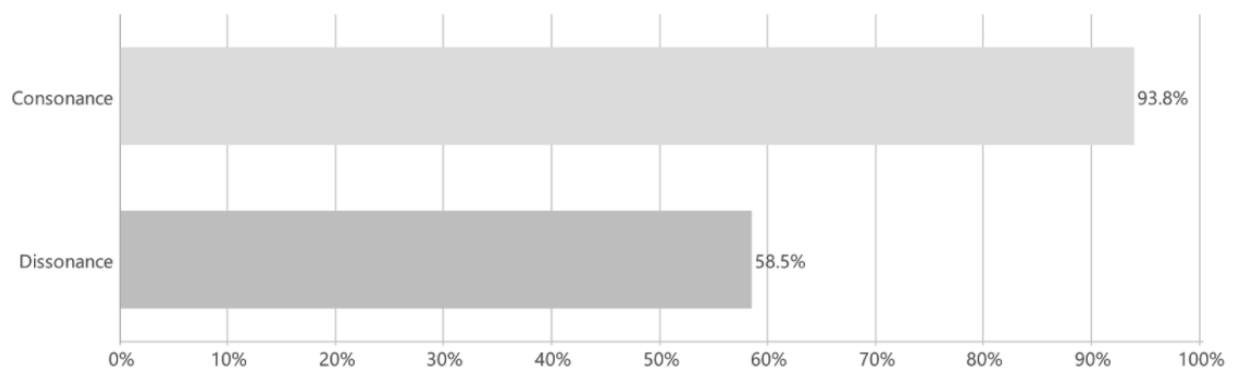


This is significant because it suggests that the media contributes to public knowledge of the issue in a way which is likely to provoke emotional or impassioned responses. For instance, in the case of coverage on the Guardería ABC anti-monument, many direct quotes were included, such as: "*I continue to remember her as a three-year-old girl, running around with messy hair, playing, laughing and singing. Today she would be 13 years, 3 months and 14 days old*" (RE060619p). The inclusion of emotional quotes and testimonials marks much of the coverage on the issues, and they are often linked to broader grievances: "*Sympathizing with the cause is easy, because there is a general discomfort [and they...] represent a social pain*" (UN190818p). Others highlight the plight of those affected: "*despite the pain of the families, nobody supports them*" (EX050617d), while others portray the issue as an exercise of civic responsibility: "*Us citizens have the responsibility to echo these voices, to not forget them*" (OTH051119p).

 Interestingly, however, both consonant and dissonant frames are routinely invoked in many of the same articles, and the inclusion of statements which could provoke dissonance did not seem to damage the legitimacy. For instance, articles which clearly noted that "*not everyone is in favour of their permanence*" (MI270220d), referred to the need to remove infrastructure and dig a large hole to place them, or to the fact that they are placed without legal authorization, still tended to employ consonant frames. In fact, in almost all cases, dissonant segments were counter-weighted by expressions of consonance or legitimizing frames. Explicit references to removal, illegality, or the clandestine nature of the structures, for instance, were present alongside significantly consonant broader representations and often seems to increase legitimacy. This is of great relevance because resonant messages, whether negative or positive, become for the media "more prominent and the actors behind them more prominent, thus increasing the speaker's chances to achieve a high level of visibility for similar messages in the future" (Koopmans 2004b, 375). While a high frequency of participation in protest events is newsworthy, the capacity for personalization is also of value (Koopmans 2004b, 373), and seems to be

where this tactic has excelled in its novelty; the frames are both broadly socially applicable and highly personalized.

c) *Legitimacy*

The articles, regardless of media outlet, overwhelmingly utilize legitimizing frames or statements. This is especially relevant considering the generalized tendency towards de-legitimizing frames for most protest events, making reference to violence, disorder, vandalism or negative impacts, and rarely articulating the claims of movement actors (Rovira Sancho 2013). Articles frequently reference systemic failures, affirming that those killed in the Pasta de Conchos mine disaster, for instance, were "*victims of a system that permitted their death*" (JO240218p). As illustrated in Figure 8, 84% of articles contained statements which framed the problem as an issue of justice or human rights.

**Figure 8: Percentage of articles with coded indicators of legitimacy**
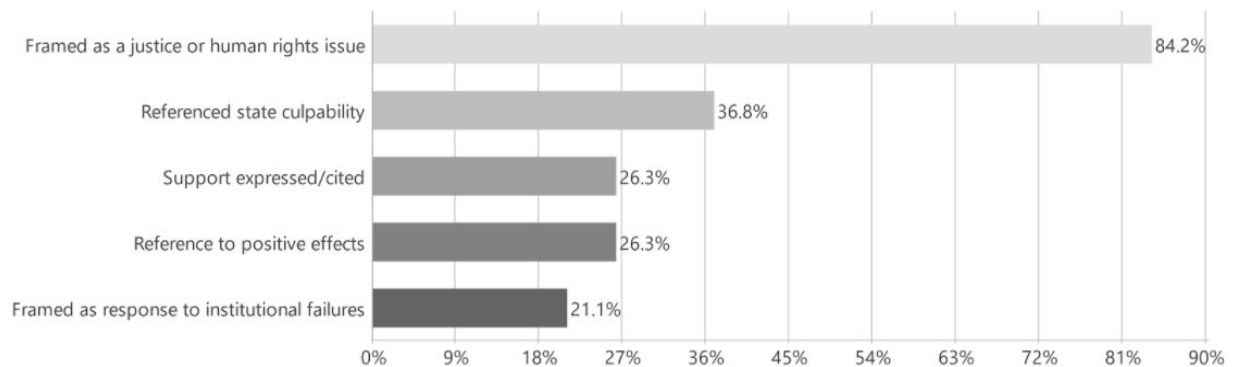


This sometimes involved citations of expressed support from authorities, for instance noting that "*Claudia Sheinbaum, the mayor of Mexico City, mentioned that this sculpture serves to visibilize the aggressions that hundreds of women in the capital experience*" (EX200319d) or that consulted experts "*considered the works an advancement for the country*" (UN190818p). Others directly legitimized the tactic, noting that "*among other things, the street is a space for social protest*" (SO190319p). More commonly, others made reference to the phenomenon as a tool for justice or a human rights issue, noting their intention to "*revindicate the dignity of victims*" (EX260619d) or gain "*truth and justice, [given] lack of institutional spaces*" (OTH210319p). In other instances, they are portrayed as a necessary and acceptable response to social issues: "*...if Mexico had an efficient social system, in an environment where the laws functioned properly and those responsible were sanctioned, [the anti-monuments] wouldn't be necessary*" (UN190818p). The findings of this analysis suggest that a diverse set of actors have succeeded in bringing case-specific claims into the public sphere, and broader ideas "into good currency, [legitimizing their] representatives as participants in a policy conversation" (Schön and Rein 1993, 157).

There is a clear strategy to complicate any effort to demonize the tactic; as noted in a petition urging that they not be removed (Colectivo Híjar 2018), they have constituted "an exemplary collective action without prejudice to anyone or anything: from the choice of sites and structural and material care taken, to their constant upkeep and maintenance." They have had clear success in transmitting such a characterization through the media, but a lack of controversy would normally yield little coverage. This case is rare in that it was able to achieve both high resonance and legitimacy, against the odds.

## 6.2 Implications for claims diffusion

An interesting finding involved the frequency of coverage of the anti-monuments as a collective phenomenon, as was the case in 36.1% of the articles, as shown in Figure 9. This hints at how the emergence of a new and shared tactic may contribute to scope enlargement and the diffusion of lesser-known claims.
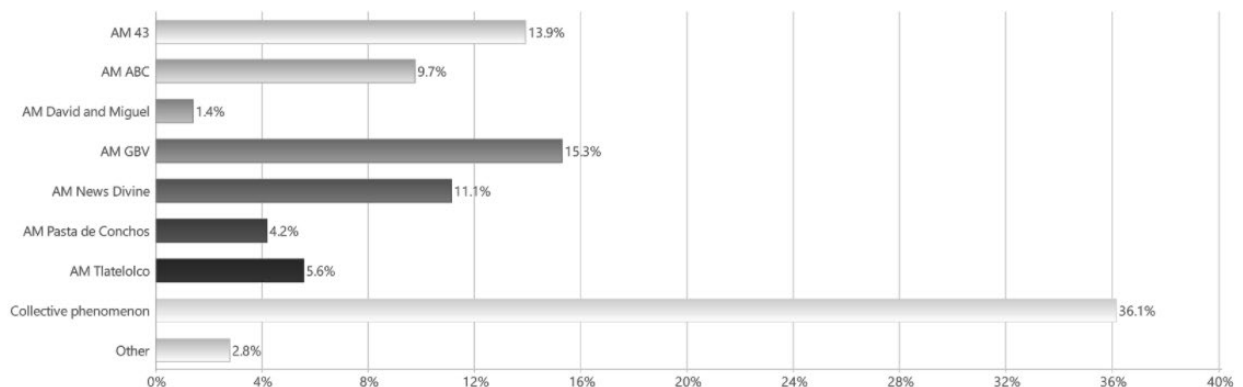
While it is not unexpected that the +43 anti-monument receive the greatest amount of coverage, given the gravity and prominence of the commemorated event, it is also mentioned very frequently in articles about other anti-monuments, drawing together a narrative of collective and inter-linked struggle. Additionally, lesser-known cases, and particularly that of *David y Miguel,* have likely succeeded in greatly boosting coverage through the placement of an anti-monument. The circumstances of the events are frequently mentioned in special reportage pieces covering the issue generally, and specific claims are often articulated, contributing to claims diffusion and scope enlargement.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Interpretations

Overall, the findings of this research confirmed the initial observations that inspired this project. This tactical innovation seems to have successfully unlocked what is a tricky puzzle for social movement actors. The media tends to "demand 'news,' and therefore novelty, [while conforming] to accepted standards of 'good taste'" (della Porta 1995, 180). In effect, the anti-monuments have been able to blend conflict and cooperation in a way which has been of great benefit for the diffusion of their claims (Giugni and Passy 1998). In one sense, it is not surprising that this tactical style gained widespread and positive media coverage, given della Porta's (1995, 180) assertion that the development of "controversies in such a way that they are more newsworthy by using symbols and images that capture attention" is a secret to success. Such coverage, however, is typically short-lived and dependent on controversy. Furthermore, a central struggle is that "the media generally present images of their protest without any elaboration of the substantive issues involved" and "the issues that brought protesters together are presented in terms of one-line slogans, if at all" (della Porta 1995, 180). What is surprising, then, is the degree to which precise claims and demands have been transmitted by the media.

a) *Addressing case-specific explanations*

It is recognized that there are likely several case-specific factors at play, given that "[p]olicy narratives are predicated on a culturally subjective understanding of linguistic usage and (often) culturally specific or emotionally laden tropes" (Crow and Lawlor 2016, 479). In the context of Mexico City, these could involve, for instance, a well-established tradition of use of public space (particularly protest camps) as a tactic, a deeply ingrained disposition towards monumental works of art, and generalized respect for family-driven memorialization. Viewing the anti-monuments as blending acts of protest and as expressions of grievance, or altars, could be of further analytical value. This potential explanation is supported by the results of the qualitative content analysis, which showed that the articles overwhelmingly focused on family as a key actor, with 225 mentions across the 72 articles (compared to only 60 references to civil society or social movement organizations). This could aid in the development of one facet of why this tactic has been so unusually successful, given that tapping into mythic themes or culturally ingrained resonances tends to improve 'narrative fidelity' and chances of successful uptake (Gamson 2004, 254; Snow and Benford 1988). Receptivity to spatial occupation tactics could also be moulded by Mexico City's strong tradition of protest camps and "rituals of place-based activism," which have come to be recognized as acceptable within certain contexts (Crane 2017, 375), although they are rarely seen as 'newsworthy.' The anti-monuments, in a sense, could be seen as a reinvention of a traditional tactic, thus "establishing contemporary activists within a lineage or movement family" (Crane 2017, 375).

b) *Key considerations*

Despite successful claims diffusion, this could have other impacts which are not necessarily positive for all movement actors. It could, for one thing, skew attention to those events which are 'monumental' in their scale of tragedy or succeed in expressing grievance in such a manner. Additionally, it could further exacerbate media and public narratives about acceptable forms of protest, giving value to forms which are relatively unobtrusive. Furthermore, this visibility could also pose a problem in that implicit in the inclusion of certain narratives is the exclusion of others (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993, 119). The material resources and planning capabilities necessary for the successful execution of this tactic may also pose a barrier; as "[w]hen the contest is limited to those with ample resources and established access, marginalized groups are unlikely to prevail" (Gamson 2004, 242).

## 7.2 Policy implications

The case is of increasing relevance as a policy issue; Claudia Sheinbaum, Mexico City's mayor, announced in June of 2019 that the placement of anti-monuments would be regulated by the municipal government, although no clear regulatory mechanisms beyond those already existing have been set. The introduction of regulatory frameworks would signify processes of negotiation between the state and civic actors who wish to articulate their claims within the public domain. It is expected, however, that institutional responses have been greatly constrained by the visibilization of the anti-monuments and their claims, and their increased resonance and legitimacy in the public forum.

While this issue extends beyond the formal realm of policymaking, it has the potential to shape policy in a number of ways, as "[t]he reframing of policy issues grows out of shifts of context and also helps to produce them" (Schön and Rein 1993, 155). Gamson's (2004) conception of the public forum can aid us in understanding the scope of the potential implications of this research. We can view the public forum as composed of an *arena*, where speech acts are executed, and which is the focus of the empirical analysis; a *gallery*, where an active audience observes and absorbs what happens in the arena; and a *production centre,* where speakers strategize to create compelling narratives. The gallery includes not only the general public but other movement actors as well as decision makers. Indeed, "the mass media arena is *the* major site of contests over meaning because all of the players in the policy process *assume* its pervasive influence" (Gamson 2004, 243, original emphasis).

In terms of implications related to their proliferation, there is a dual policy effect. In transmitting relatively undistorted claims and demands related to the issues commemorated by each anti-monument, they bring them into the public sphere as viable issues for consideration, putting pressure on elected officials to acknowledge and act on them. Secondly, in legitimizing the tactic of anti-monumentalism as a reasonable or even commendable response to issues of injustice, they may contribute to the quasi-institutionalization of civil society-based memory initiatives.

## 7.3 Contribution and relevance

The findings of the research should be applied cautiously but seem to suggest that the anti-monuments have had success in both putting pressure on elite or government actors while gaining public sympathy for their causes. While the empirical analysis of this dissertation is confined to media representation, and data is lacking on any effect on broader perspectives, the methodology fills a gap and can inform further hypotheses on the likely effect of innovative claims diffusion on various audiences.

Most typically, tactical innovations such as the use of anti-monuments are borrowed from other protest groups (Koopmans 2004, 25). Given the novelty and recency of this issue few conclusive claims can be laid, but it seems there has been a step towards the establishment of "a new recombination of identities, tactics, and demands that can in turn inspire other movements" (Koopmans 2004, 25). While the apparition of anti-monuments of this scale and nature is unique to Mexico City, there is evidence to indicate its expanding use as a protest tactic elsewhere Latin America. In recent years, several functionally and aesthetically similar anti-monuments have cropped up in other municipalities of Mexico, as well as in Guatemala and Argentina. They are clearly inspired by the aesthetics and function of those in Mexico City. Given the effectiveness of the tactic in diffusing claims and transmitting resonant and legitimizing frames, its further expansion is likely, and thus building an understanding of the dynamics behind it is crucially important.

## 7.4 Limitations and steps forward

In general, the issue cannot be adequately understood without considering the "broader enveloping contexts in which those processes are embedded," or the 'discursive fields' within which mobilizations are situated (Snow 2004, 402). This dissertation did not seek to analyse this broader context, but to integrate analysis of a specific phenomenon into a framework which is receptive to its consideration. The key goals of many organizations, and certainly within this case, are often in contention; they seek to both target elites and win over public opinion (della Porta 1995, 181). More research is needed on the dynamics of frame-building by movement actors which precede the processes of frame-setting which are explored here. Similarly, the potential frame effects of this process are only briefly discussed. Additionally, it should be made clear that this process does not imply a conflict-free association between media and movements in other regards. Indeed, the media should not be seen as neutral given that they "carry the cultural codes being challenged, maintaining and reproducing them" (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993, 119).

Further research could more directly interrogate the influence of favourable coverage and claims diffusion on policy, given that "[m]edia coverage is theorized to both reflect and create public policy and public opinion" (Green Saraisky 2015, 28). It could be of interest to expand on how this phenomenon reflects, and potentially contributes to, a broader wave of contention across the social

system (Koopmans 2004, 21). For this, Benford's (2013, 1) concept of a 'master frame' could be of use in explaining how different actors have hinged onto a broad shared frame which is "sufficiently elastic, flexible, and inclusive" enough to be modified and adopted in multiple converging campaigns. Further research could also seek to evaluate differing coverage of other forms of protest to build a deeper comparative analysis. While there are obvious differences with more conventional forms of protest, particularly marches, there are also a number of spatial and artistic tactics which do not seem to have enjoyed the same level of coverage or tolerant response.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Much research on media coverage of protest events asserts that the "mass media do not transmit information without transforming it" (Klandermans and Goslinga 1996, 320), and we would therefore expect there to be a high degree of claims distortion. This case, however, seems to challenge dominant understandings of this relationship. Curiously, it would seem as though the media engaged in an unusually active role in its coverage of this issue, marking a transition which could "alter the power dynamics among the existing players" (Gamson 2004, 242). The findings indicate that the evolution of a new shared tactic of claims expression was able to provoke a shift in media coverage which is atypical of that which normally accompanies protest actions. In being recognized as legitimate by a target audience (media, public, state actors) and granted 'approval,' their claims are advanced (Giugni 1998). The results illustrate how the seven anti-monuments have received news coverage which diffuses their claims in an unusually precise and accurate manner. Coverage has often utilized emotional and empathetic tones and expressions of approval, thereby impacting the resonance of the anti-monuments and the messages they aim to convey. Finally, it was discovered that the coverage is likely to contribute to perceptions of the structures themselves as legitimate, in congruence with broader perceptions and values. This extends beyond perceptions of the anti-monuments as a tactic, however, as legitimizing statements related to the deeper causes and claims are often expressed.

As Koopmans (2004a, 25) emphasizes, "successful innovations in patterns of contention are [...] very rare" and the invention of new tactics for the dissemination demands is thus incredibly important in terms of social value. As the media forms the main stage for "mutual observation and interaction between protesters and authorities" (Koopmans 2004b, 368) the actions of both are highly informed by the nature of media coverage. We can, therefore, logically expect these findings to indicate greater shifts within the public sphere, with implications for related policy decisions. The favourable coverage is likely to restrict regulation or removal of the structures, contributing to an environment where a wider set of actors enjoy ceded access to public space for claims-making, and can increase pressure on public authorities to engage with specific demands. Indeed, it seems as though the positive coverage has dampened the capacity of public actors to denounce or repress the tactic or the claims that fuel it.

Although this case is unique, representing a highly atypical degree of transmission of claims and reproduction of resonant and legitimizing frames, the findings of this research have relevance beyond this case and the core suppositions can be applied to other contexts.

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**APPENDICES**

## 1. Data collection procedures and limitations

| Newspaper (shorthand code) | n= | Operationalization | Limitations |
|---|---|---|---|
| **El Sol de México (SO)** | 8 | Print articles published between 2018 and 2020 collected through PressReader | Print articles only available from 2018-2020; digital articles available from 2015 onwards but none meet criteria for selection (elsoldemexico.com.mx) |
| **El Universal (UN)** | 10 | Print articles published between 2018 and 2020 collected through PressReader (eluniversal.com.mx) | Print articles only available from 2018-2020; digital articles available from 2016 onwards but none meet criteria for selection (eluniversal.com.mx) |
| **Excélsior (EX)** | 16 | Digitally-published articles collected through search function (Excélsior.com.mx) | Articles only available from 2017-2020; no print access through PressReader |
| **La Jornada (JO)** | 9 | Print articles collected through PressReader | Articles only available from 2018-2020 |
| **Milenio (MI)** | 11 | Digitally-published articles collected through search function (Milenio.com) | Articles available from full 5 year span; unclear if search results are exhaustive of all digitally-published articles |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reforma (RE)** | 9 | Print articles collected through PressReader | Print articles only available from 2018-2020; access to digitally-published articles requires paid subscription and was not sought. |
| **Other (OTH)** | 9 | 9 articles selected due to their prominence in searches and extensive coverage; 4 print articles collected through PressReader (ContraRéplica, Publimetro CDMX, Reporte Indigo Nacional, Más por Más); 5 digital articles identified and retrieved through Google News (#Dices, Publimetro México, La Silla Rota, somoselmedio, Cultura Colectiva). | These articles were chosen as they were determined to be principal sources of information on the topic and their exclusion would have skewed analysis of media diffusion; still, as they are the most prominent sources they cannot be considered representative of all media coverage as can those collected from each of the six selected newspapers. |

## 2. Document variables

| Variable | Categories |
|---|---|
| **Document group** | El Sol de México, El Universal, Excélsior, La Jornada, Milenio, Reforma, Other |
| **Document name** | Publication shorthand + publication date (DDMMYY) + 'd' if published digitally, 'p' if print_Article name (eg. UN090319p_Arman un memorial para exigir justicia) |
| **Anti-monument represented** | AM GBV, AM News Divine, AM 43, AM Pasta de Conchos, AM ABC, AM Tlatelolco, Presented as a collective phenomenon |
| **Type of article** | News, Reportage/special feature, opinion/editorial, interview, other |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Year published** | 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 |
| **Visibility** | Scale of 1-5 - Measured using presence of coded indicators of a visibilizing effect |
| **Resonance** | Scale of 1-5 - Measured using presence of coded indicators of consonance |
| **Legitimacy** | Scale of 1-5 - Measured using presence of coded indicators of legitimacy |

## 3. Coding system

**Visibility**
   Framed as protest
   Claims articulated
      State as target of action
      Reference to petitions
   Reference to broader issue/struggle
      Network
   Reference to strategy
      AMs as a stage for claims-making
      Appropriation of public space

**Resonance**
   <u>Consonance</u>
      Collective grief
      Respect
      Memory
      Society
         Citizenship
            Civic duty
      Emotive portrayal
         Victimhood
      Reference to symbolic importance
      Commemorated event portrayed negatively
      Conditional support expressed
         Toleration

Dissonance

    Opposition by authorities cited

        Regulation

           Removal

           Order

    References to illegality/clandestine

    Threat to existence

    Opposition expressed by author

**Legitimacy**

    Referenced state culpability

    Framed as a justice or human rights issue

        Corruption

        Resistance

        Impunity

    Framed as response to institutional failures

    Support expressed/cited

        Support expressed (by media)

        Cited support from experts

        Cited support from authorities

    Reference to positive effects

**Anti-monuments**

    AM GBV

    Other

    AM News Divine

    Presented as a collective phenomenon

    AM Tlatelolco

    AM Pasta de Conchos

    AM David y Miguel

    AM ABC

    AM 43

**Actors**

    Other political actors

    Public/open participation

    Religious authorities

    Technical support

    Artists

    CSOs/SMOs

Family

**Institutional involvement**

National government actors or president

CDMX (Mayor or central actors)

Comaep

Procuraduría de Justicia

Comisión de DDHH

Municipality

GAM/Chíguil

## 4. Case classification sheet

| Anti-monument name | Location | Municipality | Placement date | Type of commemoration | Date of event memorialized | Institutional Response |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **43+** | Reforma con Bucareli | Cuauhtémoc | 26/04/2015 | State violence; impunity | 25/09/2014 | Tolerated |
| **Guardería ABC** | Reforma 476 (IMSS) | Cuauhtémoc | 05/06/2017 | State neglect; impunity; healthcare | 05/06/2009 | Tolerated (implicit) |
| **David y Miguel** | Reforma (Torre del Caballito) | Cuauhtémoc | 05/01/2018 | Violence; impunity | 05/01/2012 | Tolerated (implicit) |
| **Pasta de Conchos** | Reforma (Bolsa Mexicana de Valores) | Cuauhtémoc | 18/02/2018 | State neglect; impunity | 19/02/2006 | Tolerated (implicit) |
| **News Divine** | Alcaldía Gustavo A. Madera | Gustavo A. Madero | 20/06/2019 | State misaction; impunity | 20/06/2008 | Removed |
| **Antimonumenta (GBV)** | Av. Juárez (Bellas Artes) | Cuauhtémoc | 08/03/2019 | Violence; impunity | Ongoing | Tolerated (vocal) |
| **Tlatelolco** | Zócalo (Palacio Nacional, Catedral) | Cuauhtémoc | 02/10/2018 | State violence; impunity | 2/10/1968 | Tolerated (implicit) |

## 5. Key excerpts from original text

| Visibility | Consonance | Dissonance | Legitimacy |
|---|---|---|---|
| *"...también piden acceso a los estudios de geolocalización y comunicación de 17 celulares" (MI160517d)* | *"La sigo imaginando como una niña de tres años, corriendo con el cabello despeinado, jugando, riendo y cantando. Hoy tendría 13 años con 3 meses y 14 días" (RE060619p)* | *"...aunque no todos estén de acuerdo con su permanencia" (MI270220d)* | *"aseguró la jefa de gobierno, Claudia Sheinbaum, quien mencionó que esta escultura sirve para visibilizar las agresiones de las que son objeto cientos de mujeres en la capital" (EX200319d)* |
| *"...reclamaron que no les habían entregado los restos mortuorios [y que] los trabajadores seguían en condiciones de riesgo" (OTH270419p)* | *"de los cuáles sólo fueron rescatados dos cuerpos, quedando 63 en el socavón a pesar de las innumerables peticiones de las familias" (JO240218p)* | *"... el edil, Francisco Chíguil, reconoció que él instruyó el retiro del objeto, pues aseguró que éste se instaló en contra de la ley" (UN260619p)* | *"Entre otras cosas, la calle es un espacio para la protesta social" (SO190319p)* |
| *"...sitio para realizar manifestaciones" (MI270220d)* | *"Con los ojos llorosos, Yesenia describía a su hija como una buena estudiante" (UN090319p)* | *"Por lo mismo, quienes colocaron ayer lo que llamaron "antimonumento" +43 fallan, tanto en aritmética como en ética" (MI270415d)* | *"...y la digna lucha de los padres por mantener viva la memoria de sus hijos para que nunca vuelva a repetirse un hecho así." (EX180619d)* |
| *"En la página de Change.org hay una docena de peticiones dirigidas al gobierno de CdMx" (MI270220d)* | *"A sus 22 años, Viviana Martínez recorre la avenida en busca de empleo, pero el 49 llama su atención.* | *"...para evitar que sea retirado por autoridades de la Ciudad de México" (RE110319p)* | *"Como parte de las medidas de reparación recomendadas por esta Comisión, se requirió que las autoridades involucradas realizaran acciones tendientes a reivindicar la dignidad de las víctimas, que pueden ser expresiones* |
| *" dijo que la tragedia de esta mina no ha sido la única, pues antes de ésta fallecieron 3 mil trabajadores del carbón y luego murieron otros 130* | *"Sé que es por los bebés que murieron en la guardería que se quemó, he visto otro, el de los 43, es bueno que* | *"para otros pueden resultar incómodos, particularmente para los políticos o para aquellos a quienes se les involucró en* | |

mineros." (JO190218p)

"... se decidió colocar frente al Zócalo y no en Tlatelolco, pues de aquí, dijo, salió la instrucción de masacrar estudiantes" (RE030118p)

"...resaltó que el antimonumento es estratégico, "porque ahí cotizan ellos, [Grupo México], no había mejor lugar" (UN190818p)

"... te mata la Policía."¡Ay de mí llorona!, llorona, cuándo tendrá la noticia, que ante los feminicidios, se empiece a aplicar justicia."Que paren los feminicidios y se empiece a aplicar justicia, que paren los feminicidios, llorona, y se empiece a aplicar justicia", cantaron las mujeres." (MI080320d)

los coloquen porque invita a no callar injusticias, nos motiva a alzar la voz", dijo" (UN190818p)

"...para evitar el olvido de grandes tragedias como parte de un duelo social" (EX260619d)

" Estas son algunas de las heridas que le recuerdan al gobierno que aún hay pendientes en justicia."

 (OTH250220d) "resalta que es de suma importancia no olvidar estas piezas, pues no sólo hablan de un tema al que se le debe poner atención, sino que forman parte de la historia del país" (OTH051119p)

determinado acto negativo" (OTH051119p)

"Dicha estructura causó controversia luego de ser rayada por organizaciones pro vida, por lo que colectivos feministas han realizado guardias para proteger el antimonumento" (OTH270419p)

"Tiene que haber ciertas normas de en dónde se ponen, cómo se ponen, pues no pueden estar en cualquier lugar", dijo Sheinbaum." (RE240619p)

"...sencillamente nos toca ordenar la ciudad" (JO240619p)

como los antimonumentos." (EX260619d)

"Se han convertido en una herramienta para poder llamar la atención política y mediática para que se atiendan las tragedias y se resuelvan en términos de verdad y justicia, a falta de espacios institucionales" (OTH210319p)

"Especialistas consultados por EL UNIVERSAL consideraron esas obras como un avance en el país que refleja la participación ciudadana en términos de gobernanza y muestra solidaridad por demandas de justicia" (UN190818p)

## 6. List of articles analyzed (n=72)

| Newspaper | Document identifier: DDMMYYprint/digital_Article title | Anti-monument | Type of article |
|---|---|---|---|
| La Jornada | JO120319p_Para evitar retiro, colectivos resguardan el antimonumento | AM GBV | News |
| El Universal | UN190818p_Antimonumentos: Memorial de la injusticia | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| El Sol de México | SO130319p_Desaparecen el antimonumento | AM News Divine | News |
| Reforma | RE031018p_Ponen nuevo antimonumento | AM Tlatelolco | News |
| Milenio | MI230619d_CdMx buscará normas para instalar antimonumentos | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Excélsior | EX050118d_Levantan memorial por David y Miguel | AM David and Miguel | News |
| Other | OTH110319d_Algunos al verlo nos dicen por eso las matan así es | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| La Jornada | JO190218p_Duedos de Pasta y Conchos colocan ante la BMV el antimonumento | AM Pasta de Conchos | News |
| El Universal | UN041019p_Consultarán si antimonumento se queda | AM Tlatelolco | News |
| El Sol de México | SO190319p_Retoman las calles para no olvidar | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| Reforma | RE060619p_'Hoy tendría 13 años' | AM ABC | News |
| Milenio | MI270220d_Nos llenamos de "antimonumentos" | Collective phenomenon | Opinion/editorial |
| Excélsior | EX260917d_Realizarán misa y marcha por caso Ayotzinapa | AM 43 | News |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Other | OTH120319d_CDMX de los palacios a los antimonumentos y la memor | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| La Jornada | JO240218p_Los de abajo | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| El Universal | UN190818p_Antimonumentos contra el olvido | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| El Sol de México | SO210319p_Descartan regular los memoriales | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Reforma | RE110319p_Vigilan antimonumento | AM GBV | News |
| Milenio | MI270415d_Antimonumento a lo imposible | AM 43 | Opinion/editorial |
| Excélsior | EX050617d_Instalan antimonumento en memoria de niños | AM ABC | News |
| Other | OTH031018d_CDMX la ciudad de los antimonumentos que exigen just | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| La Jornada | JO030119p_"Una escultura en la calle casi nunca es arte urbano" | Collective phenomenon | News |
| El Universal | UN090319p_Arman un memorial para exigir justicia | AM GBV | News |
| El Sol de México | SO180619p_Roban pares de zapatitos sobre memorial ABC | AM ABC | News |
| Reforma | RE180319p_Un reclamo monumental | AM GBV | News |
| Milenio | MI051016d_Montan guardia en Reforma por normalistas asesinados | AM 43 | News |
| Excélsior | EX080320d_La lucha aquí empieza mujeres en la Antimonumenta | AM GBV | News |
| Other | OTH250220d_Antimonumentos protestas vivas | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| La Jornada | JO140119p_Monumentos de la sociedad contra el olvido se respeta | Collective phenomenon | News |
| El Universal | UN100319p_Antimonumento recuerda a víctimas de feminicidio | AM GBV | News |
| El Sol de México | SO081019p_Corredor de la impunidad | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| Reforma | RE270120p_Llaman a vincular luchas por víctimas | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Milenio | MI160517d_Padres de los 43 levantarán plantón frente a PGR | AM 43 | News |
| Excélsior | EX021018d_Colocan antimonumento al movimiento estudiantil del 6 | AM Tlatelolco | News |
| Other | OTH250319d_CDMX lugar de antimonumentos | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| Other | OTH250220p_En CDMX crecen antimonumentos | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| El Universal | UN170319p_¿Sobrevivirá el antimonumento feminista? | AM GBV | News |
| La Jornada | JO300519p_Autorizan | Collective phenomenon | News |
| El Sol de México | SO200220p_Dibujan y cantan por todas las mujeres | AM GBV | News |
| Reforma | RE250918p_Iniciativa pro búsquedas | AM 43 | News |
| Milenio | MI231217d_Padres de los 43 realizan mitin en el Antimonumento | AM 43 | News |
| Excélsior | EX170619d_IMSS condena robo de 'zapatitos' de Guardería ABC | AM ABC | News |
| Other | OTH210319p_Entrevista (Sergio Beltrán) | Collective | Interview |

| | | phenomenon | |
|---|---|---|---|
| El Universal | UN250319p_Sin justicia ni olvido | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| La Jornada | JO230619p_Familiares de víctimas del News Divine demandarán | AM News Divine | News |
| El Sol de México | SO291019p_Recuerdan a los 43 con antimonumento | Other | News |
| Reforma | RE240619p_Definirán reglas para antimonumentos | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Milenio | MI180218d_Colocan antimonumento por Pasta de Conchos en Reforma | AM Pasta de Conchos | News |
| Excélsior | EX180619d_Abre PGJ investigación por robo de 'zapatitos' | AM ABC | News |
| Other | OTH051119p_Historias que no se olvidan | Collective phenomenon | Reportage/special feature |
| El Sol de México | SO210619p_Memorial del News Divine, en Zócalo | AM News Divine | News |
| El Universal | UN230619p_Polémica por antimonumento del New's Divine | AM News Divine | News |
| La Jornada | JO240619p_Emitirá el gobierno local norma para colocar antimonumento | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Reforma | RE200220p_Exigen no retrasar más la búsqueda | AM Pasta de Conchos | News |
| Milenio | MI260918d_Instalan una tortuga en el antimonumento de los 43 | AM 43 | News |
| Excélsior | EX200619d_Colocan antimonumento en Zócalo para exigir justicia | AM Tlatelolco | News |
| Other | OTH270419p_Para no olvidar | Collective | Reportage/spec |

| | | phenomenon | ial feature |
|---|---|---|---|
| El Universal | UN240619p_Van por reubicación de antimonumentos | Collective phenomenon | News |
| La Jornada | JO291019p_Inauguran antimonumento por los 43 en Acapulco | Other | News |
| Reforma | RE270818p_Otra forma de justicia | AM 43 | Blurb |
| Milenio | MI180519d_Guardería ABC roban zapatos de bronce | AM ABC | News |
| Excélsior | EX180619d_Roban 7 réplicas de 'zapatitos' de bronce | AM ABC | News |
| El Universal | UN260619p_Dice Chíguil que él ordenó retiro de antimonumento | AM News Divine | News |
| Milenio | MI220619d_News Divine acusan a alcalde de GAM de retirar | AM News Divine | News |
| Excélsior | EX200319d_Antimonumento por feminicidios no será retirado | AM GBV | News |
| Milenio | MI080320d_Cantan La Llorona feminista en marcha 8 de marzo | AM GBV | News |
| Excélsior | EX260619d_Urge CDHDF investigar retiro de antimonumento | AM News Divine | News |
| Excélsior | EX230619d_Acusan retiro de antimonumento | AM News Divine | News |
| Excélsior | EX230619d_Hay que regular antimonumentos Sheinbaum   Excélsior | Collective phenomenon | News |
| Excélsior | EX260619d_57 meses del caso Ayotzinapa marchan al Hemiciclo | AM 43 | News |
| Excélsior | EX260819d_Unas 500 personas marchan en Reforma para exigir | AM 43 | News |

# 7. Illustrative examples of analytical tools used

Code System

- Visibility
  - Framed as protest
  - Claims articulated
    - State as target of action
    - Reference to petitions
  - Reference to broader issue/struggle
  - Reference to strategy
- Resonance
  - Consonance
    - Collective grief
    - Respect
    - Memory
    - Society
    - Emotive portrayal
    - Reference to symbolic importance
    - Commemorated event portrayed negatively
    - Conditional support expressed
  - Dissonance
    - Opposition by authorities cited
    - References to illegality/clandestine
    - Threat to existence
    - Opposition expressed by author
- Legitimacy
  - Referenced state culpability
  - Framed as a justice or human rights issue
  - Framed as response to institutional failures
  - Support expressed/cited
  - Reference to positive effects

Columns: H... OTH... OTH... OTH... OTH... OTH... OTH... OTH... EX05... EX26... EX05... EX08... EX02... EX17... EX18... EX20... EX18... EX20... EX26...

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justicia

La
- ocupación de la calle es un derecho y como tal ha dado cabida a manifestaciones que no habrían
- movilización que salió minutos antes de las 17:00 horas del Ángel de la Independencia por el bloque central

Los familiares de los mineros realizaron una marcha del Hemiciclo a Juárez a la BMV, donde los sacerdotes Raúl
"En ausencia de tener los espacios institucionales, esta es una forma de colocar en el espacio público una exigencia
"Si las autoridades hubieran tenido la voluntad de hacer justicia por mi hijo, no estaríamos marchando otra vez, tocando
Por la mañana se manifestaron frente al Palacio Nacional, donde pidieron ser recibidos por el Presidente Andrés Manuel López
"La sigo imaginando como una niña de tres años, corriendo con el cabello despeinado, jugando, riendo y cantando. Hoy
También fueron acompañadas por organizaciones y personas de la población civil durante el acto político realizado durante esa tarde
José Antonio Sánchez Cetina, especialista en administración pública con enfoque en gobernanza metropolitana, comentó que las estructuras metálicas son
Te puede interesar: A 50 años de la represión estudiantil marchan 45 mil Hasta el día de ayer martes eran
Roban pares de zapatitos sobre el memorial ABC El Sol de Mexico 18 Jun 2019  LUIS BARRERA Los
Feminicidio La antimonumenta, nombrada así por ellas, fue instalada por madres y familiares de víctimas de feminicidio el 8
Bicicletas fantasma Cada que un ciclista es arrollado y muerto por algún automovilista, agrupaciones que usan este tipo de
Pero no fue hasta abril de 2015 que los padres de los normalistas instalaron en el cruce de Paseo
De acuerdo con el artículo, "Antimonumentos. Espacio público, memoria y duelo social en México", elaborado por Alfonso Díaz y

a
- la memoria, a la verdad y no repetición del daño. El más reciente fue colocado el 8 de
- falta de espacios institucionales. ¿Qué buscan? — Lo que buscan es que la verdad, justicia, memoria, reparación y

paz!",
- gritaron diez veces los integrantes de la caminata, entre ellos más de 150 miembros de las familias Lebarón
- volvieron a gritar 10 veces frente a la Bolsa de Valores, por el caso de la mina en

que
- realizaron por la "ruta de la ignominia" que trazan los llamados "antimonumentos" instalados en la Ciudad de México.
- paren los feminicidios, llorona, y se empiece a aplicar justicia", cantaron las mujeres. Al terminar la canción, las

pues las investigaciones de sus casos no avanzan. Añadió que también es en respuesta a "los vacíos de este
para que apliquen las leyes como debe ser, y nos hemos esperado 10 años. Creo que ya es el
ser reconocidas como agentes de cambio, sonreírle al mundo y gozar de la vida en las casas, las calles,
reparación del daño y sumar a la memoria histórica Hasta hoy son seis las estructuras que han sido colocadas
señala experta ContraReplica 25 Feb 2020 POR ALONDRA ESPINOZA alondra.espinoza@contrareplica.mx  Samir Flores. El busto del activista asesinado está
memoria, reparación y también la no repetición se atiendan. Empezamos hace tres años con el Monumento a los 43;
y una queja en la Comisión de Derechos Humanos capitalinas contra el alcalde, por el retiro del antimonumento para
No + Impunidad y en particular a Leticia Montes Bravo.  TE PUEDE INTERESAR.   Impiden a Semovi dar

paz
- Reforma 27 Jan 2020 CÉSAR MARTÍNEZ Se unen a marcha representantes de padres de 43 de Ayotzinapa
- , pero ahora por los feminicidios. Al llegar al Zócalo, la caminata pasó por el antimonumento instalado en

que
- el feminicidio y la violencia de género son problemas graves. "Estamos aquí unidas por el dolor, ya
- los desaparecidos sean presentados con vida a cuatro años de reportarse su desaparición en las inmediaciones de

y
- erradicar esa violencia, además de solicitarle una audiencia para que se reúna con las familias para que escuche
- gritando la consigna "Nunca más". Ayotzinapa El +43 se colocó el 26 de abril de 2015 sobre avenida
- es parte de la organización Por nuestras hijas de regreso a casa. "Yo me sumé tres años después",
- Dignidad respondió mostrando su zapato al aire. Un kilómetro después, en la Glorieta de La Palma, se volvieron
- reparación del daño, en algunos de los sitios más importantes, como el Paseo de la Reforma. "Lo que
- el rescate de 63 restos humanos que permanecen atrapados. Como parte de la jornada de protesta, los manifestantes
- se convierten en un motor de resistencia". En tanto, Paseo de la Reforma es una de las avenidas

**The Politics and Policies of Contested Memory in Latin America**

Issues for Critical Consideration

Thesis report submitted by

**Lona Marie Lauridsen Burger**

August 2019

# INTRODUCTION

Many countries with shared historical experiences of political repression or violence have since implemented policies with the aim of memorializing these periods. Broadly, memory policies can be conceptualized as "the discourses and practices through which it is decided who, how, when and under what conditions, a society chooses what to remember or forget" (Vargas Álvarez 2013, 10). These processes are rooted in subjective understandings of historical events and current social and political realities and are thus situated within a constant process of negotiation and dispute. Such policies can take on distinct forms and functions, but typically share a common goal of the preservation of memory or the establishment of truth or reconciliation. These are inherently complex and contested concepts and thus present a complicated context for policymaking.

This report seeks to establish a framework of general knowledge related to processes of memory and memorialization of state and political violence in Latin America, and critically identify and describe a series of issues which arise in relation to these processes. While there is a great deal of existing literature on policies related to memory of political violence of the 1970s and 1980s, situated within what has been called a "second wave of memory, truth, and justice mobilizations" (Villalón 2016, 7), there are a number of unresolved considerations within the field. This report identifies a series of issues, divided into three broad categories, which include the essentialization of identities and experiences within memory policies (1), the shifting nature of conflict and policy application in dissimilar contexts (2), and the tensions present between official initiatives and civil society actions (3). Within each category a subset of issues are discussed in general terms, borrowing from various regional examples. In addressing these issues this report aims to demonstrate several of the many challenges which complicate the institutionalization of memory policies, stimulating critical consideration to better inform further analysis.

## Objectives and rationale

This report will be submitted as an annex to the thesis for which it lays the groundwork, scheduled for submission in July of 2020, and therefore does not aim to fully contextualize the issue or provide a complete historical background for its understanding. Rather, the objective of this report is to demonstrate and synthesize a broad base of knowledge, constructing a blueprint for further research. This report can be viewed as an advanced proposal for the thesis, but also strives to maintain value as a standalone document and avoid repetition. To accomplish this objective, it seeks to introduce the topic, summarize core scholarly contributions, and briefly establish the conceptual bases within which it is grounded. It then proceeds to identify a series of issues related to memory and provide insights into the implications for policy contexts. In doing so, this report serves a dual purpose: as both a useful starting point for the conceptual construction of the thesis, and, as an annex to the thesis can guide the reader in understanding parallel issues which merit further consideration. These problems can be

conceptualized as gaps within the literature, and warrant further study not only to better problematize the concepts themselves, but to understand the potential impact they can have in policy contexts. Assuming that the direction of the planned research will shift and develop over the course of the upcoming academic year, this approach ensures the relevance of the report and avoids unnecessary specificity which may limit its future applicability. Specific information related to the thesis is included in the appendices, including a proposed outline, definition of provisional research questions and cases, and a research timeline. Throughout the project, an effort is made to avoid historicizing or romanticizing fraught or contested periods or the resistance to them. When deemed appropriate, clarifications, potential avenues for further study, and references to details of specific cases are included as footnotes, so as not to interrupt the fluidity of the text. While the thesis will greatly narrow its focus, this report seeks to maintain an expansive outlook.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of memory in the social sciences is identifiable from the late nineteenth century onwards, and the emergence of memory as its own field of study is most commonly linked to the work of Maurice Halbwachs; particularly the posthumous publication of *On Collective Memory* (Halwachs 1950, Vargas Álvarez 2013, 10). This marks the emergence of the concept of memory as socially constructed and as "mediated through complex mechanisms of conscious manipulation by elites and unconscious absorption by members of society" (Kubik and Bernhard 2014, 531). The wake of the Second World War precipitated a rising interest in collective memory, often referred to as the 'memory boom' (Verovšek 2016, 529), which was centred around the Holocaust and maintained a mostly European focus. The scope of this interest was gradually diversified to include other contexts, with the South African Apartheid and the Latin America's wave of military dictatorships claiming a central position (Vargas Álvarez 2013, 10).

A rich and growing body of literature on memory, truth, and reconciliation in Latin America has emerged in recent decades, largely focused on transitions from dictatorship to democracy. The most represented cases in the literature are Argentina and Chile, although countless studies on other contexts exist, detailing experiences from Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru, Guatemala, and El Salvador, among others. The nature of this topic necessitates borrowing from a number of fields of study, including history, anthropology, sociology, political science, and the expanding interdisciplinary field of 'memory studies.' These diverse perspectives can inform a broad understanding of the topic, to which a policy-focused lens can be applied. Elizabeth Jelin's (2003) *State Repression and the Labors of Memory* is a useful source in building a theoretical framework and exploring the social construction of memories of conflictual pasts. The 2016 special issues of *Latin American Perspectives* on *The Resurgence of Collective Memory, Truth, and Justice Mobilizations* (Vol. 43 No. 5 and 6 and Vol. 42 No. 3) aid in diversifying knowledge on the topic and situating oneself within the current scholarly debates on

regional memory studies. A number of chapters within *The Politics of Memory and Democratization* (Barahona de Brito et al. 2001) were fundamental to this research, especially those by Adler and Barahona de Brito. Most sources do not frame this issue specifically as a policy problem, and in doing so, *Public Policies of Truth and Memory in 7 Latin American Countries (Políticas Públicas de Verdad Y Memoria En 7 Países de América Latina)* (Garretón Kreft et al. 2011) is an indispensable resource. Although dated for a work of its nature, it is amongst the most comprehensive policy-oriented texts, compiling data on 247 public policies related to truth and memory and making note that there had never before been an extensive effort to systematize and analyze this sort of data on a broad regional scale. *Memory Politics, Identity and Conflict* (Wang 2018) has provided an effective theoretical overview for situating the issue of memory politics and collective identities in a broader global context. Especially relevant is Wang's chapter on *Memory, Perception, and Policy Making*, which "conceptualizes how historical memory influences the actor's interpretation and understanding of the external world" (Wang 2018, 27) with implications for policy contexts. This project seeks to situate the topic within current and rapidly evolving political realities, necessitating a supplemental reliance on media sources, including both recognized news outlets and less formal means of communication.

There are a number of crucial gaps within the literature, especially with regard to the centralization of these issues as a policy problem. Many sources have a strong conceptual foundation or offer an astute analysis of memory politics as a social or political phenomenon, but very few situate the topic within a clearly defined policy framework. The practical applicability of much of this research is therefore extremely limited, and very few sources are accessible to a bureaucratic or policy-focused audience. Debates are often contained to academic mediums and their location, length, and language, among other more complex factors, impede their absorption into policy. There are also a number of topical blindspots which surface, and the principal objective of this report is to identify and problematize these issues. The three issues which are isolated here are just a few of many and have been chosen for their relevance to the anticipated content of the thesis.

**A note on theory**

A great deal of attention will be paid to developing a strong theoretical framework for the thesis, which, while not fully developed in this report, is crucial to defining the concepts and understanding the interrelation between them. Essential texts for the development of the framework will include Kubik and Bernhard's (2014) *A Theory of the Politics of Memory,* which, although focused on post-communist countries, is useful in that it conceptualizes memory as a political practice. Their typologies of 'memory regimes' and 'mnemonic actors,' and the implications of such in political contexts are integral to understanding how this issue manifests as a policy problem. Assman (1995) provides a useful chronology of developments in the field of study and breaks down the concepts to unite memory, culture, and society, introducing the concept of 'cultural memory,' which will also be of use. Piper Shafir and

Íñiguez-Rueda (2012, 28-29) incorporate theory on performativity to  expand their conception of the social psychology of memory. In doing so, they move beyond viewing memory policies as the product of institutional actions with clear objectives and implemented by state actors, and include citizen actions, arguing that the two are mutually reinforcing and constantly in negotiation.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: UNITING MEMORY AND POLICY

The complex nature of this topic necessitates a strong conceptual framework and will involve the delineation of numerous background and systematized concepts (Gerring 1999); a task which falls outside of the scope of this report. Within this report a number of words are used interchangeably to facilitate a broad understanding of the issues at hand. The thesis will further interrogate a number of said concepts, such as those of 'truth' and 'reconciliation,' which, although often lumped together, can be at odds with one another (Barahona de Brito 2001, 120). It will also be necessary to make distinctions between 'state' and 'political' violence, amongst other complexities. Within this report, a focus will be maintained on the conceptualization of memory policies.

### Memory as contested and collective

At any given time there is a struggle to assign value and meaning to a multitude of historical events and periods, especially those which are marked by violence, domination, or contestation (Nascimento Araújo and Sepúlveda dos Santos 2009, 81). Memories of contested histories, and the policies which legitimate (or de-legitimate) the perspectives and experiences linked to them, should not be seen as static, but as in constant transformation and rearticulation (Brescó de Luna 2019, 44; Garretón Kreft et al. 2011). Competing narratives can be instrumentalized, both by dominant and elite groups and those who oppose them, and therefore 'memory,' as both a concept and practice, occupies a contested terrain. The articulation of contested memories can be seen as an act of resistance to repressive tactics, which often aim to erase or further marginalize memories of past and present conflict. The primary tools of transmission of collective memory are through national archives, curriculums, media, literature and arts, museums, and other means. Although dominant narratives can be channelled through an equally broad toolset, governments maintain control over official mediums, and thus the preservation of memory is a fundamental function of the state.

### Policies of memory and memorialization

Memory policies can be loosely defined as those which seek to avoid the forgetting of certain aspects of the past, and promote their being "revealed, valued, conserved, or transmitted" (Garretón Kreft et al. 2011, 20). There is always selectivity involved, and memory policies can also function as mechanisms of forgetting of certain aspects of history. The central concepts of truth, reconciliation, justice, and reparation all require a reconstruction of pasts which have been conflictive and contested, but the plurality of memories which exist on a societal level complicates the construction of public

policies. There is typically no single universally accepted interpretation of the past, and from this fact stem a number of multifaceted and enduring policy problems.

Before moving forward, it is crucial to differentiate between memory and truth policies and justice policies, as the two categories serve different functions and are affected by distinct challenges. In general, "truth policies are easier to implement, and have a 'softer' impact, than punitive policies involving trials or administrative purges" (Adler 2001, 304) and typically do not provoke a comparable level of destabilizing impact. While very different, they are often implemented in unison and are conceptually intertwined. In many cases, truth and memory policies precede and provide moral and political justifications for more concrete judicial policies (Adler 2001, 303-305).

**Categorizing and conceptualizing memory policies**

Garretón Kreft et al. (2011, 12-13) divide memory policies into seven categories, represented in Figure 1, which are important to understand for both conceptual and methodological purposes. They are listed in the table with an example of their implementation in Chile, which has been identified as having amongst the strongest and most sustained institutionalization of such policies in the region. Policies which fall within this classification will be the main focus of analysis for the thesis. Still, it is crucial to recognize that the capacity to guide discourses related to history gives institutions a great deal of power, and these processes are embedded within many actions. While sometimes constructed as singular policies, as in this typology, they are often woven into other broader initiatives and are not always easily identifiable; especially when concerning the erasure or absence of certain narratives.

**Figure 1: Classification of memory policies in Chile**

| Type of Policy | Example and year of implementation |
|---|---|
| 1. Commemorative dates and holidays | National Day of Politically Executed Persons (October 30) Established in 2009 |
| 2. Spaces for memory (such as museums, monuments, and parks) | The Museum of Memory and Human Rights (MMDH) Inaugurated in 2010 |
| 3. The creation of institutions and networks (such as truth commissions) | Establishment of National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (CNVR - Rettig Commission) Created in 1990 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 4. The re-location and re-naming of historically significant spaces | Villa Grimaldi Peace Park<br>Inaugurated in 1997 |
| 5. Public acts of recognition, including commemorative plaques, recognition of victims organizations, or the removal of commemorations for dictatorial actors and events | Public declaration of Casa Presidencial de Tomás Moro as a National Monument<br>Declared in 2006 |
| 6. Education and research, including student contests, workshops for teachers, general pedagogical programs | Educational activities of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights<br>2010 - Ongoing |
| 7. The generation of documentation and archives, including the opening of public archives and declassification of information | Documentation Center of the Museum of Memory and Human Rights<br>2010 - Ongoing |

**Sources:** Typology from Garretón Kreft et al. (2011, 12-13), examples compiled from various sources (Garretón Kreft et al. 2011, Sodoro 2018, Villalón 2016).

Therefore, while this typology is a useful starting point, the thesis will task itself with creating an original typology and mapping this out visually; taking care not to establish false divisions between policy types, and distinguishing between productive and symbolic functions. Additionally, this framework will situate policies within the broader contexts within which they operate, recognizing that they are not constructed in isolation. This will draw upon theory developed by Piper Shafir and Íñiguez-Rueda (2013, 28) which argues that public policies related to memory influence civil society actions, which in turn are embodied within official policies. In doing so, the conceptual framework will be grounded in the argument that memory and policy regimes are intrinsically linked and exert mutual influence upon one another.

## METHODOLOGY

The thesis will be heavily informed by bibliographic sources and research conducted between June and August of 2019,[7] details of both of which are listed as appendices. This report employs an interpretivist

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[7]During July of 2019, I completed an internship at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights (*Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos - MMDH*) in Santiago, Chile, and was stationed primarily in the Documentation Centre of the museum, which houses a library of resources, documents donated by relatives, victims groups, and state institutions, and archives of civil society and human rights organizations. The collection includes official documents and decrees, judicial and police records, testimonials, letters and correspondence, posters and illustrations, archived press and radio publications, and other physical, electronic, and audiovisual resources. I conducted semi-structured interviews and surveys for a separate research project, which although not directly linked helped to contextualize the issues discussed in this report. This project was especially useful in building an understanding of the role of memory policies in educational contexts, a facet which may be further explored in the

approach, and anticipates that the thesis will utilize primarily qualitative research methods. A variety of techniques for data collection and analysis will be utilized following an exploratory sequential design; building upon the insights gained through qualitative analysis to design the empirical framework. It is expected that the analysis will rely much more strongly on qualitative aspects given the grounding of this topic within mostly non-positivist traditions in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and political science. The use of both qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis (Achard 1987) is anticipated for the thesis, which will examine policy and legislative frameworks, press conferences, political speeches and discouses, archival records, news reports, and web content. Some of this data will be collected from primary sources, such as historical archives and government databases. Attention will also be paid to the emergence of civil society initiatives, and social networks such as Twitter and Facebook will serve as integral sources. The thesis may also opt for the inclusion of semi-structured interviews, surveys, or other methods of data collection if deemed appropriate and of use to answering the research question. While provisional information regarding the thesis is included in the appendices, it is expected that the details will shift and develop over the course of the upcoming year. Therefore, the specifics of the thesis research design and methodology are not centralized in this text, which aims, rather, to encompass the core idea of the project and create a base for further research without limiting its scope or potential.

## BRIEF CONTEXT AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On a global and regional scale, countries have chosen radically different paths to address their fraught pasts. The 1970s and 1980s saw a wave of military dictatorships and subsequent transitions to democracy throughout Latin America, all with their own complexities. Chile is used as a benchmark for understanding the institutionalization of memory policies within this report. The country has a particularly long history of the institutionalization of memory policies related to the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet of 1973-1990, beginning in 1990 with the creation of the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (Garretón Kraft et al. 2011, 61). This was sustained throughout the 1990s, and the implementation of policies with a memorializing function accelerated after the year 2000, with 2006 seeing the highest number of policies implemented (Garretón Kraft et al. 2011, 62). Chile is recognized as having "wide-ranging truth telling policies" and a particular emphasis on memory sites; there are over seventy across the country (Sodoro 2018, 122). Additionally, Chile has put the highest number of responsible military actors through judicial processes (Adler 2001, 307), but this should not be seen so as to imply harmonious coordination of truth and justice processes. Only in 1998 did the Supreme Court rule not to apply the Pinochet-era 'Amnesty Law,'[8] passed in 1978, in cases of human rights abuses.

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thesis. During this time, I also visited a number of museums, historical sites, and partook in several academic workshops and conferences, and cultural events including plays/theatrical projects, art exhibitions, and film screenings, all of which informed my general understanding and which are listed as an appendix.

[8] *'Ley de Amnistía' Decreto Ley No. 2191* (Ministerio del Interior, 1978)

Additionally, while the proliferation of memorialization sites is often framed as an example of the breadth of memory policies, others argue that this is in fact symptomatic of the lack of a coordinated and consolidated national policy (Piper Shafir and Íñiguez-Rueda 2013, 29). There are many challenges and imperfections which persist in the Chilean context, and this case is not intended to serve as a model to follow but offers a useful reference point for understanding processes related to the institutionalization of memory policies.

In several other contexts, amnesty laws remain firmly in place, blocking the potential for legal repercussions for perpetrators of human rights abuses. Brazil, for instance, passed an Amnesty Law in 1979 (Nascimento Araújo and Sepúlveda dos Santos 2009, 81) which was later upheld by a 2010 ruling (Smink, 2010).[9] Uruguay offers a unique case as "the only country in the world whose citizenry voted for amnesty for perpetrators of gross human rights violations twice, 20 years apart (in 1989 and in 2009)" (Fried Amilivia 2016, 104). Still, there is a strong tradition of civil society memory initiatives (D'Orsi 2015), and it also remains "the first country in world history to have prosecuted its civilian dictator for crimes against the constitution" (Fried Amilivia 2016, 104).[10] Argentina has put forward diverse policies related to memory and memorialization as well as justice policies; involving truth commissions, punitive actions, and memory sites, among other initiatives. This provides an especially useful case for understanding debates related to uses and representation in memory policies, and processes of negotiation between a plurality of actors in both institutional and civil society spheres (Guglielmucci 2011).

Collectively, these examples illustrate the challenging, and often ambiguous, broader domain within which memory policies exist. The presence of memory policies in a given context should not be seen to imply the implementation of legal mechanisms to ensure accountability for past crimes or broader state capacity or willingness to implement justice policies. Equally, no universal approach or linear process should be assumed, as there is a great deal of variation among cases.

**EMERGING ISSUES IN MEMORY POLITICS**

Piper Shafir and Íñiguez-Rueda (2013, 25) understand memory as social, political, and cultural actions within which a multitude of subjectivities exist; "be it in dialogue, in parallel, or in conflict." This report seeks to identify three broad underlooked issues related to these processes. Each of these issues are

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[9] Only in August of 2019 was its legal validity successfully challenged when a judge ruled, for the first time, that it was not applicable to a specific case (BBC News 2019).

[10] Another interesting question highlighted within the Uruguayan case is that of the impact of the invisibilization of historically significant sites of repression and the general trend towards the 'spatialization' of memory policies. In contrast to the Chilean and Argentine cases, which have seen a proliferation of 'memory sites,' Uruguay has relatively few publicly accessible such sites. Guglielmucci and Scaraffuni Ribeiro (2016) offer an interesting analysis on the former Punta Carretas Prison, now a shopping centre. They detail arguments to have it re-designated as a 'site of forgetting' but conclude that "the absence of public and explicit material references to the past does not necessary [sic] lead to forgetting," (138) and that this warrants "critical attention on this increasing politicization and spatialization of collective memory" (142).

problematized in general theoretical terms, identifying a number of sub-issues and drawing examples from various cases to substantiate them. While these issues are examined critically, drawing from arguments within the literature, this report does not aim to offer evaluative findings or identify solutions to them, but rather to establish a base of understanding upon which to build the thesis.

**Essentialization of identities within memory policies**

Most memory and memorialization policies related to state violence centralize, as is logical and warranted, the figure of the victim of said violence or repression. This is heavily reflected in the aesthetic and textual aspects of many policies, an example of which is displayed in Figure 2, and the implications of this merit further consideration. First, Piper Shafir and Íñiguez-Rueda (2013) argue that this can eclipse or invisibilize the experience of those who were not directly affected, and that this broader social impact is another important element. Other accounts conclude that maintaining a focus on victims has been linked to a shifting of focus away from aggressors or responsible actors (Impunity Watch 2011). This can be manifested in narratives which emphasize a shared national experience of victimhood, sometimes equalizing all actors and integrating military or state actors into this framework (Salvi 2016, 45-46). This can have the effect of building 'universal complicity' in the guise of reconciliation and "disguises the responsibility not by equalizing blame but by establishing feelings of solidarity and compassion in order to equalize the sufferings and, consequently, the behaviors" (Salvi 2016, 48).



**Figure 2:** Mounted photographs of victims of Chile's military dictatorship and parallel viewing platforms in the Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Santiago de Chile (Image source: Photograph by author)

Furthermore, this raises a number of issues related to the essentialization of the figure of the victim and the construction of 'victimhood' as a political identity. This process risks detaching periods of conflict from the broader social contexts within which they were formed and mythologizing the figure of the victim. Sodoro (2018, 134) argues that Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights, for instance, neutralizes accounts and "presents a decontextualized and depoliticized set of martyrs to some unknown and unnamed higher cause." In policy contexts, this is a crucial consideration, as initiatives can provoke fragmentation and dispute even amongst audiences with a shared central goal of the preservation of memory. This is also linked to the difficulty of including other perspectives, which may involve parallel or overlapping experiences of victimhood or struggle, influenced by gender, class, ethnicity or other factors, and can result in a hierarchization of positionality within a historical period (Piper Shafir 2012, 105-107). The centralization of a singular conception of victimhood, either of a group of individuals or as a component of national identity, complicates the relationship between groups which attribute the experience of struggle or marginalization to distinct sources (Piper Shafir 2012, 105).

It is crucial to keep in mind that there has been a profoundly gendered impact in instances of political violence in the region. In the case of Chile, an already entrenched patriarchal rhetoric was amplified and manifested in social policy and patterns of violence and repression. Women's resistance to violence and repression is often framed as a negotiated response to the imposition of culturally-ingrained gendered roles (Baldez 2007, 126). While it is crucial that policies recognize this differential impact, care must also be taken to avoid reinforcing or replicating a simplification or naturalized conception of women's roles and experiences. Nascimento Araújo and Sepúlveda dos Santos (2009, 89) recall the tendency of state reconciliation policies to favor victimhood over heroism in accounts of the past, prioritizing the experience of suffering over that of

resistance to a dominant political force.[11] This risks perpetuating a binary understanding of gender and resistance which fails to represent a more nuanced reality (Cubitt and Greenslade 1997). Additionally, these narratives can have implications in current contexts, impacting how states and societies define acceptable forms of civil resistance and modes of protest, which often take on a highly gendered tone, posing an interesting question for further study.[12]

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[11] This is amplified when women are involved, and within institutionalized memory policies, gendered forms of resistance are routinely highlighted and championed. In the Chilean context, these are primarily associated with resistance activities involving communal kitchens (*ollas comunes*) and the creation of applique textile art with political themes (*arpilleras*). As in other contexts the role of motherhood is crucial (Burchianti 2004), but care must be taken to avoid limiting women's role as peripheral to that of their family or partners. These initiatives have historically been framed as 'acceptable' forms of resistance because they uphold or defend gendered roles, whether intentionally or strategically, while women's participation in more direct revindications has been demonized, and is often still erased or minimized in official narratives.

[12] This question could be applied to a number of Latin American cases where women's role in protest is legitimized or delegitimized based on gendered assumptions or definition of acceptable modes of conduct. Of particular interest are the August 2019 protests in Mexico City related several reported cases of sexual violence by state (police) actors, the subsequent declaration by the city's mayor that the protests were unequivocal "provovations" (La Jornada 2019, @Claudiashein 2019), and subsequent media discourses with heavily gendered condemantions.

Problems also emerge from the common construction of histories of conflict as a marker or source of national identity (Wang 2018; Poblete 2015, 92), especially when detached from broader sociopolitical contexts or distinct regional experiences. This is especially of interest in the context of shifting patterns of intra-regional migration. These processes can be identified in Chile,[13] which has seen an increase in immigration in recent years, and while numerous policies have been implemented to improve access and inclusion within the public school system (Poblete Melis y Galaz 2016, 42-43) this continues to be viewed as a primarily administrative issue. In general, curricular context has not been adequately responsive to this changing context, and the implications of increased migration have not been fully problematized within regional memory studies. Graciela Rubio's (2015) conception of 'pedagogy of memory,' for example, which guides much of the theory related to the integration of memory policies within curriculums, is based on the construction of 'communities of meaning' tied to a genealogical understanding of national identity (Rubio 2015, 103). These demographic shifts necesitate a revaluation of how discourses within memory studies are framed, as this tone can create a barrier to fostering truly intercultural and inclusive settings (Stang Alva 2019).

**Shifts in patterns of conflict and violence and lack of policy reflexivity**

Within Latin America, these topics have been extensively studied in the context of transitions from authoritarian to democratic governments (Barahona de Brito et al. 2002), especially in Chile and Argentina (Hite 2017, 192). There is much less written on memory policies in formal democratic contexts or more recent (post-)conflict settings, despite many of them reflecting the structure and style of those implemented in the Southern Cone. While political violence has persisted in many parts of Latin America beyond the democratic shift of the 1980s, it has taken on different forms and patterns, and the lack of policy responsiveness to these shifts is identified as a second broad issue for consideration.

An interesting question which arises involves the extent to which policies implemented in post-dictatorship contexts have influenced other national and sub-national policies. Adler (2001, 308) speaks of the 'contagion-learning effect,' where "the elite in any given country will act according to inherited 'knowledge' or 'know-how' gathered from the accumulated experience," a process which in its implementation can be linked to policy diffusion. She goes on to note that "government sponsored truth commissions spread throughout Latin America and travelled to South Africa, following the Chilean example" (Adler 2001, 308). Sodoro (2018, 132-133) makes not of the transcultural nature of practices and policies related to memorialization, Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights' "adherence to the many tropes of memorial museums suggests that the form has successfully made its way around the globe and crystallized into its particular shape." In Colombia, for example, initiatives have "[used] a

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[13] This paragraph draws upon research conducted in July of 2019 for the Museum of Memory and Human Rights ("*Migración y el sistema educativo chileno: Desafíos y oportunidades para una enseñanza de la historia con enfoque en la memoria y los derechos humanos*") but has been modified and adapted.

format that resembled the memorialization efforts in postdictatorship Argentina, Chile, and Brazil" (Marquéz 2016, 79).

From this arise a number of questions regarding the applicability of similar policies in dissimilar contexts, as much of the research on the nature of these policies is intrinsically tied to the system of governance. The study of these processes in democratic contexts is complicated by the inherent departure from the 'transition types' established in much of the literature (Adler 2001, 304-305), as there is an absence of a clear political rupture. While Garretón Kreft et al. (2011, 15) refer to the seven countries they researched as in periods of authoritarian rule or armed conflict, they offer no clear conceptual differentiation between these two experiences. Transitions from dictatorship to democracy often establish newfound relative legitimacy for incoming governments, allowing for a clear division between past and present state actors and corresponding values. This should not be interpreted as simplifying the implementation of memory policies, and as Adler (2001, 309) notes, "the more prolonged and institutionalized a dictatorship, the more difficult a new democracy will find it to carry out truth and justice policies, because these would stigmatize social groups and institutions that supported the dictatorship."

Still, political shifts are much more ambiguous in democratic contexts and there is often no clear purge of responsible actors, complicating processes of establishing accountability. The conflict in democratic contexts, then, arises not from the legitimacy to govern but directly from instances of violence, for which there is often no consensus of centralized state culpability. In a number of cases this brings forth the question of whether responsible actors are acting as functionaries of the state, or have been co-opted to the degree that their primary function is no longer linked to the state itself, but rather to other armed groups or non-state actors. In many cases, the existence of abuses is not denied in itself, but debate remains about whether the perpetration of such is understood to be an act of the state. In other contexts violence has taken more abstract and fragmented forms. Colombia's status as a formal democracy and the lack of clear turnover of state actors between successive governments, therefore, poses a challenge to the goals of these initiatives (Marquéz 2016, 79-81), and formalized initiatives often do not enjoy the same level of legitimacy that they have in other country contexts. In Colombia, this has been highlighted recently by a number of shifts related to state policies and which impact their legitimacy and efficacy,[14] and would seem to be increasingly complicated by the lack of clear resolution to the conflict being memorialized.

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[14] The appointment of Darío Acevedo as the director of the National Centre for Historic Memory (CNMH) in February of 2019, for instance, offers an opportunity to explore this question. Acevedo has openly challenged the veracity of the findings of the 'Victim's Law' (*Ley de víctimas y restitución de tierras*; 1448 of 2011) and denied Colombia has experienced a period of 'armed conflict,' which motivated numerous organizations to announce the withdrawal of their archives from the centre. Colombia's president, Iván Duque, also received criticism in August of 2019 for announcing the museum as part of the country's bicentennial celebrations when it was in fact established by the Victim's Law, thereby, in the eyes of many, depoliticizing its function and affecting its perceived political autonomy, and therefore legitimacy.

Since memorialization actions typically draw upon the concept of difference to delegitimize past actions, drawing a clear line between past and present, this process is inherently different in contexts where conflict or repression was not linked to authoritarianism. This issue would seem to be of increasing importance, as violence takes on an increasingly nuanced form and involves a complex set of actors with both political and economic interests, but "[w]here repression has been based on widespread social complicity, devising limits of legal culpability and implementing a justice policy is a more complex matter" (Adler 2001, 310).

**Tensions between civil society initiatives and institutionalized policies**

A third issue involves the tension between civil society initiatives and institutionalized policies. Civil society organizations often exert a great deal of influence in this realm, and policies are more likely to be institutionalized when there is pressure "from mobilized human rights organizations or other bodies" (Adler 2001, 307). In their analysis of 247 policies implemented in Latin America, Garretón Kreft et al. (2011, 12) note that the majority of these initiatives are rooted in efforts by civil society organizations, listing external participation in each initiative. Still, in many cases, public policies related to memory and memorialization rely heavily on the labours of advocacy organizations, but are routinely accused of not adequately representing their interests or perspectives. Chile's Museum of Memory and Human Rights, for instance, has received criticism for a lack of participation from civil society groups during its inception (Piper Shafir 2012, 105; Sodaro 2018, 112). Garretón Kreft et al. (2011, 12) identify that most state-sanctioned policies have tended to favor reconciliation and pacification of past conflict over direct remembrance. The memory of past conflict has been interpreted by many administrations as an obstacle to collective healing and national unity, and from a purely strategic policy perspective, 'successful' implementation can depend on the homogenization of a centralized public perspective.

Critiques have also emerged regarding the neutralization or 'banalization of memory' (Gago 2016), and some have interpreted state initiatives as rooting themselves in an overly universalized and pacified conception of human rights (Gago 2016). Sodoro (2018, 134) maintains that in its "apolitical, universal message of human rights, the [Museum of Memory and Human Rights] undermines its efforts to reveal and impart the truth about the political past in Chile." In particular, she notes the lack of contextualization of broader political interests, including the role of the United States. Piper Shafir and Íñiguez-Rueda (2013, 28-29) argue that while post-dictatorial states have successfully put forward symbolic reparation policies, a comprehensive memory policy has not been achieved, and that policies are characterized by 'avoidance of conflict.' Here, we circle back to the tendency to conceptualize the victim as an object of universal compassion, often distanced or detached from the political stances

inherent within the core conflict. In doing so, initiatives can risk dismissing the lasting impacts of violence or absolving state actors or institutions of responsibility.

In contexts where the state has been unable or unwilling to enact memory policies, civil society organizations have often taken the lead, in many instances mirroring the style of official policies. Victims associations have, by some accounts, exhibited more dynamic initiatives which succeed in "[converting] memory into a living force, a field of political practices that enable the collective creation of new meanings about the past, present and future"[15] (Piper Shafir 2012, 107). The concept of such policies as a moral or ethical obligation of states has been explored by Gálvez Biesca (2007, 100), who, in reference to the Spanish context, speaks of the 'right to memory.' While the goal is not to delve into the impossible question or whose right or responsibility it is to preserve memory, an interesting question emerges as to the links between state involvement and legitimacy.

## CONCLUSION

This report does not intend to affirm or negate critiques related to memory and memorialization but stimulate engagement with the issues and establish a critical understanding of the complex nature of memory policies. At the core of these issues lies the assumption that the nature of political or state violence has differed greatly through historical and geographical contexts, and that the capacity to generate memory is rooted deeply in sociopolitical context. As Burchianti (2004, 135) asserts, "historical consciousness is intricately connected with [the present]," and therefore policy is guided by shifting social and political realities. In many cases, it can be argued that policies which aim to address or memorialize violence have lacked reflexivity or responsiveness to these differing contexts, and it is crucial that an understanding of these problems precedes further analysis. In identifying issues related to the institutionalization of memory policies, we can better understand the many complexities and challenges which surround the issue and inform further research.

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[15] Translated by author (Original text for reference: *"...convertir la memoria en una fuerza viva, en un campo de prácticas políticas que posibilita la creación colectiva de nuevos sentidos sobre el pasado, el presente y el futuro."*)

## APPENDIX 1:
## SELECTED RELEVANT CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND EVENTS

| Date and Location | Site and event |
| --- | --- |
| June 23, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Centro Gabriela Mistral (GAM): "Proyecto Villa"<br>Play directed by Daniela Contreras López y Edison Cájas. |
| June 26, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Centro Gabriela Mistral (GAM): "Eva"<br>Exhibition by Marcela Said |
| June 28, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende<br>● Exposition curated by Josefina de la Maza - 'Tejido Social: Arte Textil y Compromiso Político'<br>● Sala de Escucha telefónica CNI |
| July 3, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Centro Cultural de la Moneda: Capacitación de interculturalidad<br>● Chile and other nations: intercultural construction (presented by María Fernanda Stang Alva.)<br>● Presentation by Fundación Acción Quimera "Luz, Cámara, Inclusión"<br>● Workshop on interculturality and inclusion |
| July 5, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Museum of Memory and Human Rights<br>● Theatre Cycle: "Histories of Dictatorship"<br>  ○ "Érase una vez… 571 días de un preso político"<br>     Play by Teatro la Escotilla |
| July 8, 2019<br>Santiago, Chile | Museum of Memory and Human Rights: Launch of Research Project and Conference<br>● Conference: *¿Cuál es el rol de a enseñanza de la historia en las democracias post dictaduras?* Sandra Raggio<br>● Project Launch: Tecnologías Políticas de la Memoria: usos y apropiaciones contemporáneas de dispositivos de registro de pasadas violaciones a los derechos humanos en Chile (Conicyt PIA - SOC180005: Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, and Universidad Austral de Chile) |

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