International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society (2019) 32:337–355
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-018-9297-7

“It Was the State”: the Trauma of the Enforced Disappearance of Students in Mexico

Nelson Arteaga Botello[1]

Published online: 19 September 2018
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2018

Abstract
In 2014, 43 students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers’ College in Mexico were kidnapped by a police force and handed over to a group of drug traffickers, who subsequently killed and incinerated them. In the main protest for demanding the investigation of the crime, a series of symbolic and performative references were mobilized to represent what occurred as a cultural trauma. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that the performances and symbols of pain that were used during the protest—during which intellectuals, artists, politicians, students, and civil society leaders participated—were able to establish the nature of the pain and the victims in the media but were not successful in garnering the same degree of support for their assertions concerning the perpetrators. This was an issue to complete the cultural trauma process.

Keywords Cultural trauma · Distant suffering · Social protest · Symbolic struggle · Civil sphere

Introduction

On September 26th, 2014, a group of students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers’ College was attacked by the Iguala Municipal Police in the State of Guerrero, Mexico. Forty-three students were kidnapped by the police force and handed over to a group of drug traffickers. The kidnapping was covered by several national news outlets, causing great public consternation (Moguel 2015; Álvarez 2015; Cordoba 2016). On October 8th, the parents of the disappeared held one of the first protests to demand that their children be found, organizing a caravan to Mexico City. This action laid the groundwork for the mass protest that came to be known as the “Global Day of Action for Ayotzinapa.” On that day, the Attorney General’s Office (Procuraduría General de la República—PGR) announced that, according to the investigation that had been conducted, the individual responsible for the crime was the mayor of Iguala, who ordered police under his command to shoot the students and turn a group of them (*Animal*

✉ Nelson Arteaga Botello
nelson.arteaga@flacso.edu.mx

[1] FLACSO, Mexico, Carretera al Ajusco 377, Colonia Héroes de Padierna, Tlalpan, C.P. 14200 Mexico City, Mexico

politico 2014a) over to drug traffickers who subsequently killed and incinerated them in a local landfill near the municipality of Iguala (*Animal politico* 2014b).[1] Despite this statement from the authorities, two more protests were held to demand that the students be found and declare that municipal authorities were not the only ones involved in the violent acts. In fact, even after the parents of the disappeared met with President Enrique Peña Nieto, they asserted their distrust of the investigation that was being conducted.

Support for the parents' movement grew quickly among different sectors of society and even at the international level. For example, on November 11th, during a soccer match between the Mexican and Dutch national teams in Amsterdam, signs appeared in the stands accusing the federal government with the slogans "It was the State" and "We are all Ayotzinapa." On November 13th, an informational caravan known as the "National Brigade for the 43 Disappeared" was launched with the goal of traveling throughout the country to decry the kidnapping of the students. By this time, a significant number of national and international organizations—among them, the Organization of American States, the United Nations, and Amnesty International—had called on the government to investigate whether there were more people responsible. Even when the demonstration of support and solidarity was evident, a poll conducted by the company *Parametría* that was published at the time showed that seven out of 10 Mexicans did not believe that the parents would achieve justice (Animal politico 2014c). Despite skepticism, the Brigade stated that it would organize a large protest in Mexico City on November 20th. The president asked citizens to not transform a legitimate demand into an opportunity to create social chaos.

This protest was the largest organized to date to demand that the events in Iguala be investigated, and no other protest of this magnitude and scope has since occurred (Reynoso and Alonso 2015).[2] During the protest, a series of symbolic and performative references were mobilized to represent what occurred as cultural trauma, in other words, as a process in which a collective "feel[s] they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Alexander 2012, p. 6). The experiences of the previous protests came together in this march, making it possible to refine the symbolic frameworks through which the suffering of a particular community was transformed into a broader social experience. More importantly, the idea that the State and the president were somehow responsible for the disappearances was thus established, despite the fact that a group of drug traffickers directly operated the disappearance and incineration of the students from Ayotzinapa. If drug trafficking had a secondary, or even a marginal, role in the construction of the narratives of cultural trauma, it was due to the fact that the students' disappearance was considered to be unfeasible without the involvement of municipal, state, and federal authorities. Thus, the latter—including the president of the republic—were considered to be directly or indirectly responsible for the students' disappearance.

The accusations surrounding the responsibility for the disappearance did not relapse in the same way throughout the different areas of the municipal, state, and federal power. There were those who accused the municipal authorities, others held the state government accountable, while others considered the federal government to be behind the facts. Those who considered the municipal authorities to be the only ones responsible argued that the collusion they established with organized

[1] The chronology by Iliades (2015), as well as the one by Reynoso and Alonso (2015), was also taken into account.

[2] Another protest was called on December 1st, but it did not reach the same number of people nor had such a strong repercussion as the meeting being analyzed in this paper. Actually, the previous protest had the main square in Mexico City as the final destination, a place known to be the political heart of the city, whereas the protest in December had a different destination.

crime did not include state and federal authorities. However, as will be seen later on, an important part of the public opinion asserted that it was not possible to deploy a forced operation the magnitude of the one experienced in Iguala, without the involvement of the state and federal authorities, particularly the army—which has a military base in that municipality since the middle of the last century.

The day following the disappearance, newspaper editorials agreed that the protest was the expression of an authentic demand for justice. Nevertheless, some disagreed with the accusations against the president and the State, suggesting that behind the parents' legitimate demand were radical groups that sought to destabilize the country. Thus, the debate over who was truly responsible was a particularly sensitive issue in the process of the construction of trauma. This concern is not insignificant if we consider that, as Alexander (2012) asserts, this process requires not only establishing the nature of the pain and its victims among a broader audience but also attributing the events to a key perpetrator. Alexander (2012), Eyerman (2004), and others (Alexander and Gao 2012; Eyerman 2008, 2011; Goodman 2009; Eyerman 2011) have used these concepts to show how actors identify the causes of trauma, assume moral responsibilities, and define relations of solidarity that allow them to share the suffering of others. Their works have demonstrated that this process, while difficult, can be achieved. This study investigates sources of contingency in the formation of this process and illuminates how conditions of asymmetrical power—with the victims having some media on their side, such as the written press—inhibit generalization and collective catharsis.

The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that the performances and symbols of pain that were used during the protest—in which intellectuals, artists, politicians, students, and civil society leaders participated—were able to establish the nature of the pain and the victims in the media but were unsuccessful in garnering the same degree of support for their assertions concerning the perpetrators.[3] For some columnists, the mayor of Iguala—and not the president or the State apparatus—was responsible for the violence against the young people, whereas for other columnists, they were all responsible.

Both standpoints in the debate over the perpetrators were established as a response in favor or against the accusations made toward the president of the republic during the November 20th mobilization. As for the fact that Enrique Peña Nieto and the State were accused in such mobilization of being responsible, positions in favor and against this point were generated. The dispute established in the media held the argument of whether the responsibility for the events fell on the local, state, or federal authorities as the core topic. This is the center of the debate. While there are arguments sustaining that it is necessary to highlight the conditions of poverty, inequality, and social exclusion—as well as the fact that Guerrero is a "traditionally" violent state—the construction of narratives around what happened in Iguala tends to systematically present the nature of the victims, the horror they went through—and their families go through—as well as define which government level is liable for being linked with organized crime groups. In this sense, both positions were built regarding the possible perpetrator.

The central argument of this paper contends that both positions generated different processes in the construction of the cultural trauma. In the former case, the perpetrator and his victims were viewed as actors who were located within a delimited social space in which the pain that was

[3] It is worth noting that, while the 43 students' disappearance may, at first, evoke the student massacre perpetrated on October 2, 1968, at the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* (the Square of the Three Cultures), in Mexico City, in the information revised in this article, it is not really possible to find this event within the public debate as a historic landmark. This is due to the specific context in which the events of Iguala happened. In this sense, the case of Ayotzinapa is not read as a memory of the October 2 massacre—more than very tangential in two or three banners being wielded in the street mobilizations.

produced felt like a “distant suffering” (Boltanski 1999). In the latter case, the perpetrator and his victims are considered to be groups—students and parents—and institutions—the State and the presidency—comprising a national collective. Therefore, the suffering affects and belongs to all citizens. The dispute over the identity of the perpetrator created a segmented or incomplete cultural trauma process in which, even if the whole society agreed in acknowledging and standing in solidarity with the horror and pain of the families of the disappeared, there was disagreement regarding who was responsible. The differences around this point generated an incomplete process of construction of cultural trauma and thus a partial response to the demands for justice made by different civil society groups. This paper contends that these antagonistic positions not only defined the framework for interpreting the November 20th protest but also shaped the patterns of solidarity that are being built today in terms of the families of the disappeared.

The analysis focuses on a very specific period, for it is interesting to account for the elements that construct the cultural trauma around the disappearance of the students from Ayotzinapa as of the November 20th mobilization. This mobilization is considered to be relevant due to the fact that it sets the bases on the sense of horror, on the victims, and most of all, on the allocation of responsibility and identification of the possible perpetrators. It is interesting to analyze how the debate in the public opinion is built out of that mobilization as an act of collective effervescence, which crystallizes into a specific debate that starts to fade away days later—a debate that, in addition, marks the subsequent construction of the civil reparations which, while they have not yet materialized, are held as a possibility in the public debate. Technically, this approach is important because few times is attention given to the weight protesting events have in the configuration of the fields of dispute and competition around the production of cultural trauma.

In this sense, it seeks to understand the cultural trauma process and to broaden the framework of interpretation by pointing out that such a process is sometimes characterized by segmented solidarities in which, even if the victims’ pain is almost unanimously acknowledged, there is no agreement regarding the perpetrators.[4] The article begins with a section that defines the process of the construction of trauma from the perspective of cultural sociology (Alexander 2012). This section analyzes how a painful event experienced by a particular group can transform itself into a generalized crisis if certain carrier groups are able to present this event as something damaging that affects society more broadly. The following section describes the symbolic representations and discourses of the pain of the parents of the disappeared made by carrier groups, in addition to their definition of the aggressors, during the November 20th protests. The third section analyzes how the written press interpreted these symbolic representations and discourses, in what ways it believed the victims’ pain to be authentic and self-generated, and how a debate surrounding the identity of the perpetrators was constructed. As observed in the final section, this debate ultimately shaped debates about the meaning of the protest and the process that followed the construction of segmented or incomplete cultural trauma.

[4] In this regard, this paper does not seek to understand the causes of damage, but to get a glimpse of how a traumatic event was socially constructed. There is a body of work about the causes that suggestively interpret the structural dynamics in different social spheres that led to the tragic events of Iguala, see: Estrada (2015), Adame (2015), González (2015), Iliades (2015), and López (2015). On the dynamics of the social movement that led to the slaughter of students, see: Aguilar and Albertani (2015) and Reynoso and Alonso (2105). A list of papers around enforced disappearances occurred in Iguala and its political and social implications collected by Krotz on the blog Consejo Mexicano de Ciencias Sociales.

The Construction of Collective Trauma

Cultural trauma theory, as Debs (2013) suggests, considers traumatic narratives to be, in Durkheimian terms, "social facts" that allow for the construction of collective identities. A cultural trauma is an event interpreted as sacred/evil that defiles the values deemed sacred in a society with such strength that it is placed before others as a relevant event (Durkheim 2012). When this occurs, as Douglas (1979) suggests, different purification rituals are displayed that tend to remove the impure elements that have entered the center of a society's moral life. Nevertheless, the process of construction of the cultural trauma involves competition among several actors in order to impose a master narrative that makes it possible to interpret what happened and its possible effects (Wagner-Pacifici 1986; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991). Thus, the intensity of the trauma does not depend on the characteristics of the event that engendered it but rather on the effort certain groups exert to turn the trauma into something meaningful that ought to be remembered by society (Hashimoto 2011). Therefore, cultural trauma is not the result of a natural process but rather something that is socially constructed (Alexander 2004). In this sense, we must distinguish between events that cause suffering and the symbolic representations and discourses signifying them. Trauma does not simply result from the experience of pain, but rather, it is the result of that pain having had a meaningful impact at the center of that which gives form and sense to the identity of a collective (Eyerman 2004). Collective actors "'decide' to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want to go" (Alexander 2012, p. 15).

Cultural traumas can permanently fragment society (Eyerman 2011), heal certain conflicts, or breed new ones (Alexander and Breese 2011). Debs (2012, 2013) suggests that the diversity of results depends on their importance for the carrier groups who interpret and pose an event as a cultural trauma. The path between a painful event and its symbolic representations as a traumatic event can be conceived of as a process in which meaning is assigned to pain by victims and carrier groups (Connerton 1989; Giesen 1998; Eisenstadt 1982; Eyerman and Jamison 1990; Alexander 2009), or agents who operate as spokespersons or as representatives of collectives that feel affected or victimized by some injustice or harm. They can be elites or marginalized classes, religious leaders, spiritual pariahs, opinion leaders, intellectuals, or artists. Carrier groups translate victims' demands into discourses and persuasive narratives through symbolic resources and bring them into the public sphere. Carrier groups are therefore responsible "for the range of outcomes that results from linking a trauma to a variety of social messages" (Debs 2013, p. 637), which must also appear authentic to a broad audience.

The symbolic representations and discourses of pain that carrier groups and victims perform can result in an amplification of the resonance of trauma (Eyerman and Jamison 1990). Nevertheless, for this amplification to occur, the symbolic resources and narratives must do the following: (a) establish the nature of the pain by explaining what occurred; (b) define the victims, specifying which people were affected by the traumatic pain; (c) situate the relationship of the victims' trauma vis-à-vis a broader audience so that they may identify with the experience of the victimized group; and finally, (d) attribute responsibility to a key perpetrator (Alexander 2012). When these elements come together in a particular narrative, they account for outrage over what happened, identify and prosecute those responsible, and in some cases, demand reparations for damage suffered (Boltanski 1999). Other times, the narrative of the cultural trauma is not adequately articulated and remains of little significance to society. In other instances, it can contribute to shaping the collective identity in the future. But it can also end up generating a segmented or incomplete cultural trauma. Regardless of the result, Debs

(2013) suggests that amid competing narratives regarding the meaning of a violent event, one will end up prevailing at a specific moment, even if an opportunity arises in the future to question its prevalence.

There can sometimes be a deep and widely shared feeling around the nature of pain, identification with the victims, and the acknowledgement that their pain is shared by all, but if there is open disagreement regarding the identity of the perpetrator or perpetrators, this produces a segmented process of cultural trauma that does not override the acknowledgement of the pain suffered by a group. Rather, it ends up limiting solidarity and in some cases causing the legitimacy of the cultural trauma to be questioned. The case of the disappeared youngsters analyzed in this article demonstrates how the dispute over the perpetrator ends up producing differential and, therefore, segmented, solidarities.

The dispute confronted, on the one hand, those who believed that the group of drug traffickers who disappeared and murdered the students acted in collusion with municipal authorities and the government of Guerrero, and on the other, those who stated that the criminal group acted in collusion with the federal government. Therefore, when the victims' parents—as well as the carrier groups supporting them—insistently accused the federal government of being involved in the events of violence in Iguala, they did so because they considered the government to have specific information on what had occurred, which suggested they were somehow involved in the disappearance and incineration of the youngsters from Ayotzinapa rural college.

Naturally, this process depends not only on the performative abilities of the victims and carrier groups (Thompson 1998; Rohloff and Wright, 2010). We must also acknowledge that differentiated and asymmetrical access to material and symbolic resources and the weight of different institutional arenas—for example, churches, the mass media, the legal system, the State bureaucracy, and groups of scientific experts—are relevant in the construction of cultural trauma (Alexander 2009).

Thus, for example, the federal authorities always had press and television coverage in order to show the forensic evidence and their interpretation of the law and of the events, of course, always highlighting the investigation's impartiality and the scientific handling of the data on the events that occurred. The parents of the disappeared and the carrier groups supporting them expressed their discontent, on their part, on the streets and through the social media, using narrative textual and image resources which underscored the State's responsibility. The mass media provided—at first—a lesser visibility for these groups and their demands. Nevertheless, some church representatives and scientific groups from universities inside the country provided information and knowledge, in order to provide support to the construction of the cultural trauma around the events in Ayotzinapa. Despite this disparity in the asymmetrical access to material and symbolic resources, the social protests and the constant questioning of the authorities ended up having an important echo in the press and television, not only on the streets and the social media.

It is analyzed how the families of the disappeared and certain carrier groups translated the events into discourses, performative narratives, and symbolic resources in the public sphere during the protests on November 20th and how these discourses and symbolic resources were interpreted by certain public opinion leaders in print media who ended up translating concrete situations into general codes through evaluations and narrative descriptions (Alexander 2006), inhibiting the generalization of certain narratives in favor of others. Two concerns are highlighted, in particular: the assessment of the authenticity of the movement and the identification of the perpetrators. An analysis of these elements makes it possible to understand the tensions involved in the process of the construction of cultural trauma in the case analyzed.

Methodology

With the objective of discussing how the process of cultural trauma was built out of the November 20th social movement, interpretations of the event expressed by public opinion leaders in political columns in the national written press were analyzed. I took into consideration the way in which these opinion leaders found expressions in the mobilization—by families and carrier groups—that they deemed authentic or inauthentic regarding the nature and pain of what occurred, whether it allowed them to identify their pain with a broader audience, and if the identification of those responsible was ultimately adequate.

This period of analysis is chosen, because it is here that the elements that make up the stage of the cultural trauma, the place where the dispute's contours over the definition of the perpetrator are drawn, and therefore, the different interpretations subsequently constructed around the events in Iguala are defined. Thus, the paper focuses between November 21st and 27th, for it seeks to account for this dispute. It is also the period with the greatest social movement surrounding the case, and where the press gives an account of the event with greater vehemence. After the November 20th march, the movements lose strength, and they cease to be massive. While it is possible to record other mobilizations, the parents, supported by some civil society organizations directly linked to the case, participate, but do not achieve to massively summon other actors, nor draw the attention of the mass media. Thus, the analysis does not go beyond November 27th because the movement goes into another stage, characterized by the loss of presence in the sphere of public opinion. When this subject is discussed in this sphere, the attention is focused on analyzing the legal minutia, the forensic investigations, and contradictions by the municipal, state, and federal authorities. After November 27th, the ability to generate large protest mobilizations where several and different social actors are involved significantly decreases, to the point of almost disappearing.

However, even though mass mobilizations cease to arise and the press to intensively present the case, the dispute kept operating around the sense of the cultural trauma that opens up due to the November 20th mobilization. The methodological proposal guiding this paper is structured, therefore, by highlighting the way in which the dispute around the meaning of violence was constructed, and how it was characterized by the production of segmented solidarities. Even if there was rejection toward the violence on the students and solidarity was created toward the parents of the aforementioned, a dispute was sustained over the designation and specifying of the perpetrators. The result was the construction of a partial cultural trauma—which is still in construction process—where reparation for the damage and justice remain a possibility, to this day.

My review is based in 60 articles published in Mexico's five national newspapers (*Reforma*, *La Jornada*, *El Universal*, *Excélsior*, and *Milenio*) between November 21st and 27th (that is, from commentaries appearing 1 day after the mobilization until the last day a reference was made to it, according to the review). It should be noted that each of the newspapers analyzed, with the possible exception of *La Jornada*, has a pool of columnists with different profiles and perspectives. These columnists represent a spectrum of conservative, liberal, and leftist perspectives. This diversity makes it possible to find different political opinions in one newspaper, making it difficult (with a few exceptions) to identify a single political tendency per newspaper. Nonetheless, examining the editorial line that defines the news presentation and the newspaper's position with regard to public opinion, we can observe that *Excelsior*, *El Universal*, and *Milenio* are on the right or center-right side of the political spectrum, whereas *Reforma* is located in the center—as liberal media—and *La Jornada* is on the left side of the spectrum.

Using the press as a source of analysis makes it possible not only to obtain information about some of the characteristics of the events (their location and date, the participants' profiles, their actions and consequences), but it also provides a broad portrait around them (Earl et al. 2004). Nevertheless, columns sometimes deviate in the interpretations they offer regarding the motivations of participants, attribution of causes and responsibilities, and the overall explanation of what occurred (Ortiz et al. 2005; McCarthy et al. 1996). This is because journalists construct their arguments based on frameworks of interpretation that are anchored in particular moral references and linked to the interests of newspapers' agendas (Oliver and Maney 2000; Río 2008). This process is intertwined with the way the media operates in Mexico (Strawn 2008). While this represents a problem in terms of the accurate reconstruction of a fact or a particular social process, bias is in fact central to the analysis in the present article, for it is interesting to observe how frameworks of interpretation compromise a set of values and principles based on which the actions of a person or the results of an event are measured. Thus, the opinion pieces were analyzed taking into account the way in which the actions of the characters involved were judged based on binary narratives regarding the three spheres in which actions by any actor are classified and typified. For that purpose, opinion pieces were read in the print versions of newspapers and other formats such as online.

Attention is paid to the classifications, judgments about, and characterizations of actors participating in the protest and their performative execution. Following the methodological approach of Alexander (2010) and Alexander and Mast (2011), an attempt is made to observe how the media constructed binary narratives according to three spheres based on which the performative action of actors in a social protest is classified and cataloged. The first of these is the sphere of motives, in which there is a classification, for example, of whether actors are inspired through a free and autonomous process or by forces that control and manipulate them. In the sphere of relationships, the types of ties actors construct are categorized based on the degree to which they are open, critical, frank, closed, discretional, and strategic. Finally, in the sphere of institutions, the space into which actors are inscribed is classified according to whether they are regulated by rules and norms, whether they are inclusive and impersonal, or whether the discretionary use of power, exclusion, and personal relations predominates. In this manner, for example, the demands of a certain group are placed in the public sphere under the crucible of who, why, and to what ends they make their demands (motives), the manner in which they structure their ties to other groups making demands or institutions (relationships), and the way they function as a group (as an institution). Groups and their demands acquire legitimacy in the public sphere provided that their motives, relationships, and institutions are interpreted within the framework of the universally held values of the public sphere. In this way, a moral space is defined in which values of what is good and bad, pure and impure, what deserves to be included or excluded, and who is a friend or a foe are crystallized in an organized framework of symbolic patterns that is understood and interpreted in different ways by various actors. Thus, it is interesting to observe the accusations and judgments by which the actors involved in the November 20th mobilizations are explicitly described in political columns.

The Great Protest

According to organizers, the objective of the November 20th protest was to demand that the government find the disappeared students, investigate the violent acts that occurred in Iguala,

and apprehend those responsible. For analytical purposes, its development can be divided into three moments: the march to the Plaza de la Constitución or Zocalo (central square)—the political heart of the country, the speeches given there by the parents of the disappeared, and the confrontation between the police and some of the participants. The first moment involved marches by three contingents that departed from different points in Mexico City toward the Zocalo—which was recorded and streamed live online, with photos and videos shared on social media in real time. Marching in silence at the front of the mobilization of the main group were the parents and relatives of the 43 students, who held photos of the missing youth. Different carrier groups marched behind them, the largest comprising students and professors from public and private universities. Members of social organizations were also present, including religious groups, popular organizations, farmers, and indigenous organizations. Participants also included different associations working on issues of sexual diversity, feminists who carried pink crosses to remember the victims of femicide in Mexico, and a group from Amnesty International and other human rights organizations. Citizens without any particular group affiliation who wished to express their support for the families of the disappeared also joined the mobilization. According to figures from the Mexico City police, the protest mobilized over 30,000 attendees. However, the Tlachinollan Human Rights Center estimated that approximately 500,000 people marched. The protest was so large that some could not reach the Zocalo because the plaza was completely full.

The carrier groups offered a discourse and narrative that sought to give meaning to their pain through songs, chants, and messages on posters, banners, and walls. This was in contrast to the silence maintained by the parents and relatives of the disappeared who led the protest. Most participants shouted phrases such as "You are not alone! You are not alone!"; "We are missing 43 and we have a surplus of Peña!" (touching upon the fact that there were 43 missing students and that the presence of the president was unnecessary); "One, two three, four […] 43, they took them alive, we want them back alive!" (replicating, in a way, a roll call in a classroom); "Not one, not three, we want all 43 alive!" (demanding that all of the disappeared be found); and "Ayotzinapa Lives!" Religious groups—particularly from the Catholic church—chanted: "Ayotzi, hold on, the Church is rising up!" pointing out that the church was joining the fight alongside the families of the disappeared. Meanwhile, people carried photos of the disappeared students to provide a face and a presence to the missing youth and Mexican flags in black (substituting the red and green colors on both sides of the flag) to symbolize mourning. One group posted paper silhouettes of hands on the walls with the number 43 in the center that had been made by children. Yogis carried a banner that read "Light, love, peace, justice for all."

The first moment in the mobilization ended with the arrival in the Zocalo of the families of the disappeared, who came forward as victims of local and federal authorities and accused the federal government of faking the investigation, playing with their pain, and wanting to close the case. They demanded that the president step down if he could not find the students, saying, "The motherland demands this of him and calls for his resignation." A key moment in the speeches was when the concern was raised that the government's delayed response raised suspicions that it had participated in the students' disappearance. According to this argument, if drug traffickers had taken them, "they would kill them and that is it," rather than causing their disappearance. For the parents, the fact that their children had been kidnapped indicated that the government had participated in some way in the events of September 26th (Olivares et al. 2014). Thus, the president and federal institutions were responsible in two ways: for failing to conduct an adequate criminal investigation and perform an adequate search for the

students, and for being linked to their kidnapping and assassination. Both interpretations gave rise to the idea that the federal government had participated, either directly or indirectly, as a perpetrator. With these statements, it is evidenced, for the relatives of the disappeared, that the federal government—the Ministry of the Interior, as well as the Federal Police and the army—directly participated or had some kind of information on what was happening in Iguala the day the students from Ayotzinapa disappeared. In contrast, the mayor of Iguala was barely mentioned in the parents' speeches as an important actor. When the speeches were completed, the families of the disappeared left the Zocalo, while various groups and citizens remained on site to express their anger about the missing students and demand that federal authorities clarify the facts and detain those responsible.

The third stage of the mobilization began with the exit of the parents of the disappeared, which was marked by two moments. The first was the burning of a carton effigy made by a group of art students that represented Peña Nieto holding the presidential sash. While the figure burned, people around it called out, among other things, "Justice, Justice!"; "Burn, burn, Peña, for being a coward"; and "He will fall, he will fall, Peña will fall!" (*Quema de Peña Nieto en el Zócalo 20Nov14Mex* [Video]). The second moment was marked by the confrontation between alleged anarchist groups and law enforcement agencies when the former attempted to break through the security fence erected in the Zocalo in front of the National Palace. As the "anarchists" threw rocks and Molotov cocktails, the police tried to keep the fence standing. Some protestor groups still onsite tried to dissuade the "anarchists" from using violence, arguing that it was an excuse for the government to justify the use of public force and to legitimize the criminalization of the protest. Their calls were in vain. Soon, the police shot tear gas and charged those trying to break the fence, illegally beating and arresting almost all citizens in their path.

These acts of violence read differently the following day. Opinion pieces were published in liberal, right-wing and center-right newspapers such as *Reforma*, *Excelsior*, and *El Universal* applauding the police's ability to contain the violence, highlighting that the balance had been positive, considering the number of people who were in the plaza. Two columnists in particular—Fondevilla, 2014 and Melgar, 2014—noted, "a mass protest without an incident is practically impossible." However, other columnists (see: D'Artigues 2014; Soto 2014) from the same newspapers viewed the police's performance in another way: as being outside the bounds of protocol, characterized by all types of abuse—including physical abuse against older adults and even children—and a significant number of arbitrary arrests.

In contrast, according to columns of the left-wing newspaper *La Jornada*, the acts of violence were not interpreted as a confrontation between anarchists and police. The former were considered to be government shock groups mobilized to create violence and justify the actions by the police. In each of the articles published in the newspaper (see: Bátiz 2014; Martínez 2014; Rodríguez 2014; Sánchez 2014; Saxe-Fernández 2014), it was noted that the "altercation" between police and anarchists was designed and executed by the government, a type of "infernal choreography" in which people were hired to incite violence and justify the police's brutality and illegal arrests of peaceful protesters (Raphael 2014). According to these opinions, the objective was to convince citizens that marches and protests were dangerous—a strategy that, it was argued, was used to contain the social protests of the 1960s.

The Pure and Impure Force of the Protest in the Press

The November 20th social mobilization was marked, on the one hand, by the speeches of parents as victims who directly accused the federal government of being involved in their

children's disappearance and President Peña Nieto of not ensuring an adequate investigation. Thus, the families reiterated their request for the president's resignation. On the other hand, in their slogans, carrier groups demanded that the 43 disappeared students be produced. They assumed the idea of the federal government's responsibility for the disappearances as their own and accused the president of seeking to intimidate them by accusing them of being potential agents of political destabilization. Therefore, different groups agreed, in the same place, to demand the appearance of the 43 students and the carrying out of a broad investigation to identify those responsible for the violence in Iguala. They added the demands that the protest not be criminalized and that the president resigns. This group of demands was differentially interpreted by public opinion leaders in the main national newspapers who translated the November 20th mobilization in general codes through evaluations and narrative descriptions, thus creating a field of dispute around the mobilization's authenticity and its demands.

The relevance of examining interpretations of the November 20th mobilization in print media lies in the fact that the Mexican media, despite the democratic transition and the end of authoritarian one-party rule, functions as a means through which citizens interested in politics—but primarily political and government elites—seek to decode the different intentions and motives of political and social actors (Adler-Lomnitz et al. 2004). Thus, the media, but mostly the publishers and political columns, work as exegetic devices to decode a great number of political messages (Adler 2004), an unnecessary input to establish future scenarios for action (Adler 1993). In this way, political events are always symbolically interpreted, according to Lomnitz (2000), including above their instrumental dimensions. Therefore, the hermeneutic reading of opinion pieces and publishers is a means by which the political class communicates with each other and with the citizenry (Adler-Lomnitz et al. 2004), one that allows for both the reproduction of the authoritarian logics of the Mexican State and the opening of political democratization and liberalization processes (Lawson 2002).

The national press highlighted the massive nature of the protest, the social diversity of its participants, and the shared feelings of grievance, pain, indignation, and anger over the disappearance of the 43 students. However, two different interpretations of the protest were developed. The first argued that the expressions of protest reflected the bankruptcy of the political system and the deterioration of the State, reasons for which the president should resign. The second considered that the protest should be read as a warning to the government that it was performing poorly and that, although the president and the State were not responsible, the government needed to change course. Within this second interpretation, there were two positions. One position suggested that the protesters' chants and demands should be taken seriously as an expression of discontent, for they express the authentic motives of free and autonomous social actors. The other position claimed a distinction had to be made between legitimate demands and those that, because of their radical nature, made it possible to suspect that the movement had been infiltrated by anarchists and "forces that supported a coup from the Left." In other words, from this discursive field, the protesters were interpreted as actors controlled and manipulated by interest groups or factions that sought to harm democracy. According to the latter position, the government had to curb and stop these groups before they could push for any political change.

Two columnists from the left-wing newspaper *La Jornada* are associated with the first interpretation. They argued that the protest questioned the symbols of power, which is why it was not enough for the president to express his political will for change (Muñoz 2014). In their view, the protest undermined the symbols of government legitimacy such that it was impossible to recover control of the country with a simple change of direction: "the events of

November 20th made visible the enormous social energy that not only was born out of the exasperation felt in the face of the authorities' persistent criminal conduct but also evidenced the incurable and progressive condition of a despotic and lost regime" (Miguel 2014, p. 16). However, other columnists from this newspaper with long careers in the Mexican left-wing—such as Gilly (2014), Gordillo (2014), Roitman (2014), and Semo (2014)—did not support demands for the president's resignation and instead believed that the mayor and municipal police of Iguala were the guilty parties, as the Attorney General's Office had previously stated.

However, they stressed that the president should consider the demands voiced during the protest because they revealed the presence of true outrage over the way politics work in Mexico. They were particularly emphatic in stressing that the pain and social anger evident in the slogans, chants, and performances condensed a set of generalized grievances for which the government was partially responsible. The grievances were based on acts of violence in which, for example, organized crime's association with the political sphere was clear, the impunity and cowardice of authorities in the face of crime was evident, or government corruption was obvious. This opinion was shared by other columnists from liberal, right-wing, and center-right newspapers such as *Reforma*, *El Universal*, *Excelsior*, and *Milenio*, which noted that chaos was not caused by those who went out to the streets to protest, but rather by those who had pushed through structural adjustments, covered up corruption, and fostered poverty, inequality, and violence in the country (see opinions by Meyer 2014; Gil 2014; Fuentes 2014; Ojeda 2014 on the matter).

The liberal newspaper *Reforma* called on the president to avoid confusing his allies with his enemies—see Delgado's (2014) and Lozano's (2014) columns on the matter—and to view the protests as an opportunity to make changes in his government and within his cabinet. Even in right-wing and center-right newspapers such as *El Universal*, *Excelsior*, and *Milenio*, columnists invited the president to address the demands raised in the protest as soon as possible, before social mobilization overwhelmed the government's ability to respond (García 2014a, b; Beltri 2014; Valencia 2014). In this sense, the people who mobilized on November 20th were classified as free and autonomous actors, who forged open, critical, and frank links with the government.

However, not everyone believed that authentic social anger was expressed in the protest. These opinions, expressed in right-wing and center-right newspapers such as *El Universal* and *Excelsior*, asserted that the poor performance of politicians and the malfunctioning of institutions had resulted in favoring the arguments of radical groups that confused citizens, entangling everything and providing justifications to the "enemies of the state"—see the respective columns of Reyes (2014), Esquinca (2014), García (2014a, b), and Aranda (2014). According to this conservative vision, the mobilization was the result of manipulation and control by interest groups—particularly on the left—seeking to destabilize the country. Demands for justice and reparations had been transformed, according to these interpretations, into the demand for the president's resignation, which meant that the movement was already contaminated. In other words, the legitimate painful and indignant grievances had been replaced by a

> conflict […] between two sides: those who believe and opt for the institutions and those who are bent on destroying them […] It is clear that Mexico's democracy is facing an all-out war from those who want to put an end to the institutions, especially the Presidency. The morphology of the protests makes this clear (Reyes 2014).

According to this discourse, the groups attacking the institutions were the same groups that had not accepted Peña Nieto's victory in the 2012 presidential elections. A columnist from the

liberal newspaper *Reforma* thus noted: "They were able to convene and bring together thousands to the Zocalo of the country's capital to protest, but they were not capable of winning an election through the ballot" (Sarmiento 2014). In this way, the attempt was made to contaminate the motives and social relations of the people who mobilized on November 20th. For right-wing and center-right newspapers such as *Excelsior* and *Milenio*, the groups manipulating the protest movement through discretionary and strategic relations were mostly "populists" (Grabinski 2014), "professional troublemakers whose goal was to disrupt the social order" (Fernández 2014; Sierra 2014; Cárdenas 2014), pro-insurgent coup supporters who "do not have political flags to offer (only the vulgar Marxism that is taught at Ayotzinapa and other indoctrination centers)," and obscure, authoritarian, and anti-democratic groups (Villarreal 2014; López 2014; Guerrero 2014; Mohar 2014). According to these columnists, the government had to reestablish the rule of law before it changed direction, thereby putting an end to the discouragement that the enemies of order were using to their advantage. Their suggestion was to "without repression and while respecting human rights, apply the law to the groups of radicals, anarchists, and vandals," disruptive groups that were able to act because of Ayotzinapa, "a drama without victims or perpetrators that has petrified the government's enthusiasm for reform" (Rubistein 2014).

The Debate over the Perpetrator

The discursive positions expressed in the press concerning the November 20th protest recognized the pain of the parents of the disappeared as authentic. They agreed in highlighting that society's sense of being fed up with corruption, collusion between the government and drug traffickers, and violence against the population at the hands of police forces and criminal groups was added to the parents' demand for justice. According to this set of discourses in the press, the protest was a reflection of deeper social discontent. This is largely attributed to the fact that there is evidence that some violence events generated by drug trafficking groups have been possible thanks to the collusion or the direct participation of the federal forces—police as well as military—therefore, the violence those criminal groups generate is also considered State violence. Not disregarding the fact, that is, that the army has constantly been mentioned for systematically violating human rights, at the time, it was involved in violence events against the population.

Therefore, it could be said that the victims and carrier groups who participated in the November 20th mobilization gave symbolic and narrative meaning to the horror and violence that was experienced in a convincing and authentic manner: they established the nature of the victims and their pain and situated and identified the trauma of a specific collective within a broader audience. They were less successful in asserting that the president and State institutions were key perpetrators. This is due to the fact that the narratives of the events that happened in Iguala contrasted this interpretation with the idea that the responsibility had to be assigned only to the collusion between the municipal police and criminal groups, excluding the state and federal authorities—specifically the army—under the argument that the latter did not have to be informed of what was happening in the municipality.

As was noted above, only some columns in the left-wing newspaper *La Jornada* supported the claim by the parents of the disappeared and protesters that federal authorities were responsible for the disappearance of the young students and that the president of the republic was thus directly responsible. Nevertheless, most of that newspaper's columns argued that

state and municipal authorities in Iguala and Guerrero bore direct responsibility. In any case, the federal government and the president could be held responsible for not acting in a timely manner in searching for the kidnapped youth and for not adequately investigating the case. The rest of the national newspapers reviewed, either liberal or right-wing, supported the idea that the mayor of Iguala was the main individual responsible, which is why attributing any type of responsibility to the president and State institutions should be interpreted as an expression of society's weariness.

Each of the opinion pieces reviewed established its position by acknowledging the arguments wielded by the families of the victims—and by several groups in the mobilization—as either authentic or inauthentic and that the federal government and, in a way, the president, were behind the disappearances, either due to concealing what had happened or obstructing the investigations. Columns that interpreted the accusations made by the victims and their carrier groups as inauthentic or implausible ended up highlighting that the victims were a specific collective that faced corrupt and criminal local authorities. Thus, they acknowledged that only local institutions had made discretionary use of power, outside of every norm or rule, for the benefit of an interest group. Therefore, it was a distant suffering (Boltanski 1999). This contrasted with columns that considered the accusations against the federal institutions and the president to be authentic and plausible. For the columnists who defended this position, federal authorities produced or were complicit in the horror and pain. Thus, the perpetrator was not far away; it was someone close, capable of making any citizen his next victim. In a way, the slogan "We are all Ayotzinapa" summarized this feeling. In this sense, it was reported that it was the institutions, which were functioning outside of every norm and rule, making discretionary use of their power.

This way, the federal institutions—particularly the army and federal police—were placed in the center of the accusations. The argument was that it was not very believable that the institutions did not know about the collusion among local authorities and organized crime; it was even argued that the army and federal police operated alongside the organized crime within the region, a hypothesis that has gained strength over time in the public opinion for explaining the disappearance of the 43 students from Ayotzinapa rural college.

The difference in terms of the definition of the identity of the perpetrator is relevant because it influences the manner in which solidarity with those who suffer is constructed. As Rorty (1992) suggests, if the person who suffers appears to be close to us, then he or she evokes a horror and terror that afflicts everyone; however, if this person appears to be far away, then his or her situation does not affect us very much. Following this idea, those who considered the president to be the perpetrator established a closeness with the families of the disappeared, while those who believed the president was not guilty supported not only his innocence but aimed to single him out as the institutional guarantor of national order operating in an unbiased and impersonal way, for which they took destabilizing efforts by anti-democratic groups into consideration.

Thus, the carrier groups accompanying the march displayed performative and discursive abilities that competed to place before the print media, in terms of audience, a credible narrative concerning its pain. However, they did not succeed in establishing an authentic narrative in the press about the State's and the president's responsibility for the violence, particularly because that demand read as if it were induced by groups with private interests aimed at harming the figure of the president and undermining the State and its institutions. The positions expressed in the media around the president's and the State's responsibility or lack thereof condensed the positions found in public opinion. Days after the November 20th

mobilization, a national poll by the Public Opinion Study Center (2014) revealed that half of those interviewed accused the president and federal institutions of being directly responsible for the disappearances, while the other half accused local authorities. While it is true that it is possible to find these two viewpoints in the press, it is also true that the conditions of asymmetrical power possessed by print media—particularly its strength as a mechanism through which the political class communicates with each other and with the citizenry—favored the definition of a distant suffering, inhibiting the generalization of cultural trauma and collective catharsis, thus fostering a segmented solidarity.

This disputed issue influences the current debate over what occurred in Iguala, with each side attempting to show that there is information that supports the distant or close character of the victims' suffering. The report presented by the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (Grupo Interdisciplinario de Expertos Independientes Ayotzinapa 2015)—created by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in November 2014 to investigate the events—has in fact been used by both sides to bolster their arguments. This paper does not attempt to analyze how this debate has developed recently; rather, with this example, it seeks to highlight the fact that the conflict over interpretations about who the perpetrators are, which began with the November 20th protest, continues to shape the construction of cultural trauma in the case of Ayotzinapa. A poll conducted at the end of August 2015 by the company *Demotecnia* stated that the opposing positions in public opinion regarding who was responsible of the students' disappearance remained: half of the interviewees believed that the state, and thus the president, was behind their disappearance, while the other half blamed the mayor of Iguala and the authorities of the State of Guerrero.

Conclusion

This paper analyzes the construction of cultural trauma as a process of assigning meaning that is performed by victims, carrier groups, and the media. Thus, the students' disappearance was inscribed in the process of cultural classification in which, although carrier groups were able to establish the importance of the victims' pain in the written press, they were unable to consolidate the perpetrators' profile to the same degree. Not only did this issue become a debate to establish who the perpetrators were, but it also made it difficult to merge the other elements comprising the cultural trauma process (the nature of the pain by explaining what occurred, who was affected by the traumatic pain, and the relationship of the victims' trauma to a broader audience). It is true that efforts to make suffering symbolic do not necessarily, nor in all cases, result in the successful construction of cultural trauma. Sometimes, they are processes that take years.

The connection between an event and its symbolic representations and discourses is a contingent process that is never closed, which means that the spirals of creating meaning remain always open. Their construction begins with specific social events—as this article has suggested—and a post hoc reconstruction of the painful events takes significantly more time (Alexander and Gao 2012). In the construction of cultural trauma, the pain of the other is sometimes denied, and the victims may occasionally be blamed for their own suffering (Boltanski 1999). In the case of Ayotzinapa, what exists to this day is a debate among those who wish to construct a distant suffering and those who assert that it is a suffering that involves all of society.

A central aspect that marks social life in contemporary Mexico is precisely that context of violence, which is produced not only by groups linked to drug traffic and crime but also by

government authorities toward certain groups of the population in specific regions. The authorities use violence through police and military forces against social and collective groups resisting the implementation of certain politics being pushed by the government, or they use unjustified and excessive force against people considered criminals or offenders—they have even carried out judicial executions. This type of violence has generated debates that appeal to and convince broad sectors of society to relate to the victims and their suffering, although they unfortunately end up producing competing discourses and narratives that establish opposing positions in attributing responsibility for the violence to certain authorities. The positions generally tend to point toward either low-ranking authorities located at the lowest hierarchy of bureaucracy or high-ranking authorities at the highest levels of government. It is the polarization of these disputes that inhibits the generalization of the cultural trauma process and the collective catharsis linked to it.

Despite this result, the dispute allowed to make the presence of collusions visible among government authorities from municipal, state, and federal areas with some organized crime groups. In this sense, the incomplete cultural trauma built around the disappearance of the 43 students from Ayotzinapa rural college allowed to perceive the links that had been established by state institutions and drug traffickers. This allowed for issues left behind in the public agenda to be retaken, such as the police and penal reforms and the laws on forced disappearances, as well as the implementation of supervision and accountability mechanisms for local and state authorities. Nevertheless, the movement's greatest contribution was, on one hand, that it revealed the inadequate workings of the law enforcement system, mostly the poor quality of their investigations and event reconstruction; and on the other hand, that it generated the necessary media juncture so that the independent entity of technical cooperation from the Interamerican Human Rights Committee operated almost as a mechanism which forced the Mexican State to render permanent account of the investigations carried out.

However, the debate around the assigning of the responsibility to the local or federal authorities is still standing, despite the fact that the Interamerican Human Rights Committee's last report, as well as the evidence that has come to light in recent years—which aims toward the federal government being aware of what was happening the night of the students' disappearance and of drug trafficking groups having links with different authorities from different government levels—has not helped to close up the debate, rather it has updated it. The report by the Committee, as well as the new data published, feeds the dispute on the importance the authorities had in the disappearance of the students, in collusion with organized crime.

The case analyzed here may act as a reference point for examining similar cases in Latin America in which there are conditions of asymmetrical power in the construction of the process of cultural trauma that authorities, victims, and carrier groups have deployed. The analysis of the 43 disappeared students in Mexico is just one of many examples that force attention to how the nature of pain and of the victims of a violent event is socially constructed before an audience and also stresses the relevant role of the identification of a perpetrator or perpetrators in the construction of cultural trauma. This is a key element, and thus, more attention must be paid to it, for this element acts as a thread that allows us to weave together the identified causes of the trauma, moral responsibilities, and relations of solidarity that ensure that suffering can be widely shared by society.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

References

Adame, M. A. (2015). *Iguala-Ayotzinapa y el nuevo despertar antisistémico: análisis críticos de la crucial coyuntura en México*. México: Navarra.

Adler, I. (1993). Press-government relations in Mexico: a study of freedom of the Mexican press criticism of government institutions. *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture, 12*, 1–30.

Adler, I. (2004). Prensa y elecciones 2003. *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, 46*(190), 128–138.

Adler-Lomnitz, L., Salazar Elena, R. and Adler I. (2004) *Simbolismo y ritual en la política mexicana* México: Siglo XXI/UNAM.

Aguilar, M., & Albertani, C. (2015). *La noche de iguala y el despertar de México: textos, imágenes y poemas contra la barbarie*. México: Juan Pablos.

Alexander, J. C. (2004). Toward a theory of cultural trauma. In J. C. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. J. Smelser, & P. Sztompka (Eds.), *Cultural trauma and collective identity* (pp. 1–30). California: University of California Press.

Alexander, J. (2006). *The civil sphere*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, J. (2012). *Trauma. A social theory*. London: Polity.

Alexander, J. (2009). *Remembering the Holocaust*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, J. (2010). *The performance of politics: Obama's victory and democratic struggle of power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, J. C., and Breese, E. B. (2011). Introduction: On social suffering and its cultural construction. In Eyerman, R., Alexander, J. C., & Breese, E. B. (2015). *Narrating trauma: on the impact of collective suffering. London: Paradigm Publishers, pp. xi–xxxv.*

Alexander, J. and Mast, J. (2011) 'The cultural pragmatics of symbolic action' in J. Alexander (ed.) pp. 7–49. Performance and power. Cambridge: Polity,

Alexander J. and Gao R. (2012) Mass murder and trauma: Nanjing and the silence of Maoism, In, pp. 118–165. Trauma. A social theory. London: Polity.

Álvarez, A. (2015). Necrología incómoda de México. La náusea de los crímenes de Iguala. *Revista Internacional de Comunicación y Desarrollo (RICD), 1*(*1*), 181–185.

Animal politico (2014a) PRG Confirma que el alcalde de iguala ordenó el secuestro de las estudiantes de Ayotzinapa. Retrieved November 30, 2014, From: http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/10/la-pgr-confirma-que-el-alcalde-de-iguala-ordeno-el-secuestro-de-los-estudiantes-de-ayotzinapa/

Animal politico (2014b) Cronología el día a día del caso Ayotzinapa. Retrieved November 30, 2014, From: http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/11/cronologia-el-dia-dia-del-caso-ayotzinapa/

Animal politico (2014c) 7 de cada 10 mexicanos cree que se hará justicia por caso Ayotzinapa. Retrieved November 30, 2014, From: http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/11/7-de-cada-10-mexicanos-cree-que-se-hara-justicia-por-caso-ayotzinapa-parametria/].

Aranda, E. (2014, November 24) ¡Es el sistema..! *Excelsior*, pp. 32.

Bátiz, B. (2014). Amenazas y avances en la ciudad. *La Jornada,* pp.6.

Beltri, V. (2014). Semana mayor. *Excelsior*, pp.4.

Boltanski, L. (1999). *Distant suffering*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cárdenas, J. (2014). Los intocables. *Excelsior*, pp.21.

Connerton, P. (1989). *How societies remember*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Córdoba, E. (2016). Veracruz, entre seguridad ciudadana y derechos humanos. *Lex Social, No., 6*(2), 222–238.

D'Artigues, K. (2014). En el corcho. *El Universal*, pp.11.

Debs, M. (2012). The suffering of symbols: Giotto frescoes and the cultural trauma of objects. *Cultural Sociology, 7*(4), 479–494.

Debs, M. (2013). Using cultural trauma: Gandhi's assassination, partition and secular nationalism in post-independence India. *Nations and Nationalism, 19*(4), 635–653.

Delgado, R. (2014 26) ¿Qué atenta contra el Estado? *Reforma*, pp.10.

Douglas, M. (1979). *Purity and danger: an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Durkheim, E. (2012). *Las formas elementales de la vida religiosa*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Earl, J., Martin, A., McCarthy, J. D., & Soule, S. A. (2004). The use of newspaper data in the study of collective action. *Annu. Rev. Sociol., 30*, 65–80.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (1982). The axial age: the emergence of trascendental visions and the rice of clerics. *European Journal of Sociology, 23*(2), 294–314.

Esquinca, V. (2014). A río revuelto… *Excelsior*, pp. 14.

Estrada A. T. (2015) 'Ayotzinapa 2014: la crisis de estado y el resurgimiento cívico de México'. Memoria. Revista de Crítica Militante 253.

Eyerman, R., & Jamison, A. (1990). *Social movements: a cognitive approach*. London: Polity.

Eyerman, R. (2004) Cultural trauma: slavery and the formation of African American identity. In Alexander et al. (eds.) Cultural trauma and collective identity. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Eyerman, R. (2008). *The assassination of Theo van Gogh: from social drama to cultural trauma*. Duke University Press.
Eyerman, R. (2011). Intellectuals and cultural trauma. *European Journal of Social Theory, 14*(4), 453–467.
Fernández, J. (2014, November 21). *A dos años, relanzar el gobierno* (p. 10). *Excelsior*.
Fondevilla, G. (2014) En flagrancia. Un Jueves tranquilo. *Reforma*, pp. 10.
Fuentes, M. (2014). *Un resumen de los detonantes* (p. 10). *Excelsior*.
García, H. (2014a). De Infiernos y buenas intenciones. *Milenio*, pp.3.
García S. (2014b). EPN. ¿Algo más que discursos? *El Universal*, pp. 8.
Giesen, B. (1998). *Intellectuals and the German nation: collective identity in an axial age*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Gil, M. (2014). La desaparición del futuro. *El Universal*, pp. 4.
Gilly, A. (2014). La sublevación nacional del 20 de noviembre. *La Jornada*, pp.10.
González S. (2015) Los 43 de Iguala. México: verdad y reto de los estudiantes desaparecidos. México: Anagrama.
Goodman, T. (2009). *Staging solidarity: truth and reconciliation in a new South Africa*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
Gordillo, G. (2014). El futuro de un derecho no pronosticado. *La Jornada*, pp. 28.
Grabinski S. 2014. Populismo y violencia. *Excelsior*, pp. 21.
Grupo Interdisciplinario de Expertos Independientes Ayotzinapa (2015). *Informe Ayotzinapa: investigación y primeras conclusiones de las desapariciones y homicidios de los normalistas de Ayotzinapa*. México.
Guerrero, F. (2014). *Expulsar el golpismo* (p. 12). *Excelsior*.
Hashimoto, A. (2011). The cultural trauma of a fallen nation: Japan, 1945. In: Eyerman, R., Alexander, J. C., & Breese, E. B. (2015). *Narrating trauma: on the impact of collective suffering. London: Paradigm Publishers,* pp.27–52.
Lawson, C. (2002). *Building the fourth estate: democratization and the rise of a free press in Mexico*. Univ of California Press.
Lomnitz, C. (2000) "Ritual, rumor y corrupción en la conformación de los 'sentimientos de la nación', en *Vicios públicos, virtudes privadas: la corrupción en México*. México: CIESAS-Porrúa, pp. 241–274.
López, F. (2014). *Anarcócratas* (p. 3). *Milenio*.
López, N. (2015). *Ayotzinapa: un grito desde la humanidad*. México: Ocean Sur.
Lozano, G. (2014). *Más allá de Ayotzinapa* (p. 26). *Reforma*.
Martínez, C. (2014). *A rostro descubierto* (p. 2). *La Jornada*.
McCarthy, J. D., McPhail, C., & Smith, J. (1996). Images of protest: dimensions of selection bias in media coverage of Washington demonstrations, 1982 and 1991. *American Sociological Review*, 478–499.
Melgar, I. (2014). EPN y el reto de los duros. *Excelsior. pp., 7*.
Meyer, L. (2014). *Discurso y realidad muy cargados* (p. 5). *Reforma*.
Miguel, P. (2014). *Gobierno extraviado* (p. 16). *La Jornada*.
Moguel, J. (2015). Crisis de régimen, cambio de régimen. Díptico: Ayotzinapa. *El Cotidiano, 30*(189), 37–44.
Mohar, G. (2014). *Serenidad y Estado de derecho* (p. 8). *Excelsior*.
Muñoz, G. (2014). *Los de abajo* (p. 28). *La Jornada*.
Ojeda, N. (2014). *La crisis del sexenio* (p. 3). *Milenio*.
Olivares, E., Camacho, F., & Urrutia, A. (2014). *El gobierno sabe dónde están los 43 normalistas* (p. 12). *La Jornada*.
Oliver, P. E., & Maney, G. M. (2000). Political processes and local newspaper coverage of protest events: from selection bias to triadic interactions. *American Journal of Sociology, 106*(2), 463–505.
Ortiz, D., Myers, D., Walls, E., & Diaz, M. E. (2005). Where do we stand with newspaper data? *Mobilization: An International Quarterly, 10*(3), 397–419.
Public Opinion Study Center (2014). *Encuesta Nacional de Opinión Pública: Caso de la Normal Rural Ayotzinapa*. http://www5.diputados.gob.mx/index.php/camara/Centros-de-Estudio/CESOP/Opinion-Publica/Encuestas/Encuesta-Nacional-de-Opinion-Publica-Caso-de-la-Normal-Rural-Ayotzinapa
Raphael, R. (2014). *El anarquista abominable* (p. 10). *El Universal*.
Reyes J. (2014 20) ¿Quién contra quién? *El Universal*, pp. 7.
Reynoso, C., & y Alonso, J. (2015). *Ayotzinapa: una fuerte indignación que se convirtió en movimiento*. Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara – Unidad de Apoyo a las Comunidades Indígenas.
Río, M. (2008). Usos y abusos de la prensa como fuente de datos sobre las acciones colectivas. *Revista de Metodología de Ciencias Sociales, 16*(2), 59–84.
Rodríguez, O. (2014). *De infiltrados y provocadores* (p. 2). *La Jornada*.

Rohloff, A., & Wright, S. (2010). Moral panic and social theory: beyond the heuristic. *Current Sociology, 58*(3), 403–419.

Roitman, M. (2014). *Ayotzinapa en la agenda neoliberal* (p. 7). *La Jornada*.

Rorty, A.O. (1992) The psychology of Aristotelian tragedy. In A.O. Rorty (ed.) Essays on Aristitle's poetics, pp. 1–22. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Rubistein, J. (2014). Golpe de timón. *Excelsior*, pág. 12.

Sánchez, A. (2014). *La represión y una renuncia histórica* (p. 1). *La Jornada*.

Sarmiento, S. (2014). *El Ultimátum* (p. 25). *Reforma*.

Saxe-Fernández, J. (2014). *Ayotzinapa: salto al abismo* (p. 1). *La Jornada*.

Semo, I. (2014). Los padres de Ayotzinapa. *La Jornada*, pp. 8.

Sierra, Y. (2014). *Los encapuchados* (p. 22). *Excelsior.*

Soto, C. (2014). *No hay y no debe haber un proyecto de nación* (p. 10). *Excelsior.*

Strawn, K. (2008). Validity and media-derived protest event data: examining relative coverage tendencies in Mexican news media. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly, 13*(2), 147–164.

Thompson, K. (1998). *Moral panics*. London: Routledge.

Valencia, J. (2014). *Puede o debe cambiar* (p. 12). *Milenio*.

Villarreal, E. (2014). *Golpismo proinsurgente* (p. 27). *Excelsior.*

Wagner-Pacifici, R. (1986). *The Moro morality play: terrorism as social drama*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Wagner-Pacifici, R., & Schwartz, B. (1991). The Vietnam Veterans memorial: commemorating a difficult past. *American Journal of Sociology, 97*, 376–420.